

# Coffee to Go | Proper 25 | Year B

## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Jesus, journey, blind beggar, Bartimaeus, healing, social outcast, spiritual reflection, sacred voice, spiritual practice

## SPEAKERS

Blake Smith, Karin Peter

### **Karin Peter** 00:28

Welcome to Coffee to Go where we center ourselves in the scriptures, seasons and holy days of the Christian tradition. I'm Karin Peter, here with Blake Smith, and we welcome you on the journey. So where are we with Jesus this week, the proper 25 of Ordinary Time. We're getting to the end of the Christian calendar, and we have been traveling with Jesus for some time. We started in Galilee in the north, been headed towards Jerusalem. We've gone about 100 miles south. It's a long way on foot, been a lot of stops on the way, but today, we have made it as far as Jericho, about 15 miles from Jerusalem. And the way that the trail went, it went through Jericho, and we make a pit stop here, where Jesus has an encounter with a blind beggar. So, let's hear what happens.

### **Blake Smith** 01:34

Alright? Well, we are in the 10th chapter of Mark again, and we pick up at the 46th verse and go through the 52nd verse.

They came to Jericho. As he and his disciples and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, Bartimaeus, son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the roadside. When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me." Many sternly ordered him to be quiet, but he cried out even more loudly, "Son of David, have mercy on me." Jesus stood still and said, "Call him here." And they called the blind man, saying to him, "take heart. Get up. He is calling you." So, throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. Then Jesus said to him, "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man said to him, "my teacher, let me see again." Jesus said to him, "Go. Your faith has made you well." Immediately he regained his sight and followed him on the way.

So why does this matter? Well, as you mentioned, they have been on a very long journey, Karin, and we are at the conclusion, or very close to that, to the end of that long journey from Galilee to the last stop before Jerusalem. At the beginning of the journey, Jesus healed a blind man. So, we reach back to the eighth chapter, the 22nd verse, the blind man at Bethsaida. And here, at the end of the trail, or near the end of the trail, he heals another man, a blind man, Bartimaeus. So, we see that "book ending" we talk about, we talked about book ending a couple of weeks ago in one of our other episodes where Mark uses a way of, kind of sandwiching the heart of his message at that particular place in the Gospel, between a repetition, something that happens very similar. And so, this is one of those times, and as

Jesus approached, Bartimaeus calls out for mercy. This is also one of those places we spoke about in a previous episode where it is clear that certain people seem to get the disdain, or the disciples attempt to quiet them. And this passage doesn't specifically say the disciples told him to be quiet. It said many urged him to be quiet. But certain people seem to be allowed to come to Jesus without any trouble, and others, those who are marginalized or less than pleasurable or acceptable, in the eyes of the cultured status people, they tend to get shewed away. So, this is one of those examples. The thing is that Bartimaeus would have been seen as a social outcast, disfigured and unclean. This blindness perhaps due to some kind of sin, either on his part or on the part of his parents. Because this particular passage, he talks about regaining his sight, then it would probably be affiliated with his sin, not that of his parents. If he'd been blind from birth, it would have perhaps been blamed on his parents, but ultimately, it was due to some kind of sin, and the people told him to be quiet, but he didn't listen to them. We remember a story of a woman who came and asked for a blessing from Jesus and was told that it wasn't her time. And she says even the crumbs, she was determined. Here is another individual coming to Jesus, very determined. He was focused on Jesus. And when Jesus acknowledges him, and this is really important, he jumps up and hurries to him, doing something very significant. He leaves his cloak, which is probably his most valuable possession behind. It reminds us of the passage we have recently talked about, where Peter says we got up and left all of our possessions to follow you. So just like Peter, Bartimaeus leaves everything behind to follow Jesus. And here the beggar, who is one of those, who is the least of these, and Jesus' devoted disciple, are shown as equal in discipleship. They've both given up the same amount. They both have left everything to follow Jesus. Yeah, so just something important for us to pick up on there, and some questions we might ask ourselves this week are, have I been on the long trek of discipleship, or am I at the beginning of my journey? Another one is like the crowds that told Bartimaeus to be quiet, whose voice do I try not to hear?

**Karin Peter** 06:58

I find that question really interesting, because it makes me put myself in those in the crowd who were sternly trying to keep this person from being heard, rather than putting me in as one, a faithful disciple, I find unsettling but perhaps revealing as I look at that question, maybe some of our listeners will find that as well.

**Blake Smith** 07:33

Yeah, the last question that I would raise up is, what do I need to leave behind as I continue on my spiritual journey. What is that cloak that's weighing you down that you need to leave behind?

**Karin Peter** 07:47

Yeah, all good journey questions, as we kind of mark this almost 100-mile trek that they went on. I think about how we can experience it this this week. Well, they were taking it one step at a time, and so this week, let's do the same. Let's take a walk each day this week, and as we walk, let's take the time to reflect on our own spiritual journey. Ask ourselves, where did I start my journey? Where am I now? And how to how do I sense the sacred voice calling me to continue on? And each of us can do that. Ask ourselves that as we take a walk to kind of memorialize, if you will, this long journey that Jesus and his disciples have taken from Galilee to Jerusalem.

**Blake Smith** 08:43

So it's a win, win. You get to take a walk and do this spiritual practice, and it's good for you,

**Karin Peter** 08:49

for us, yes, in many ways, the exercise as well as the reflection. Yes,

**Blake Smith** 08:58

Alright, well, our blessing comes today from Sandra E. McBride, and it is called "Letting Go: a Blessing for the End of a Journey. I brought you to the mountain, the climb is yours. I brought you to the shore, the sea is yours. I brought you to the sky, the wings are yours. I brought you through the shadows. The light is yours. I brought you to this day. Tomorrow is yours. Amen. Well, thank you everybody for joining us as always, here at Coffee to Go, we invite you to join us next time for the next part of our journey through the liturgical seasons and holy days of the Christian tradition.