

“So he began shouting, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”
 “Be quiet!” the people in front yelled at him. But he only shouted
 louder, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” Luke 18:38-39 NLT

[lectio] // LUKE 18:35-43

The blind beggar becomes my teacher. I am not blind, physically, nor have I ever begged, on a street corner, to be able to sustain my life. I don't mean to underplay the fact that I know very little about THAT kind of suffering. However, for the blind beggar to teach me something, I had to understand that I am blind and I have had to beg for a living. I'm blind because of my past, my failures, my fears and my selfishness. I'm a beggar because I've had to lower myself to the stupidest, demoralizing, politically charged office antics (both IN ministry positions) and come groveling to the boss for my next paycheck. I've had to keep my eyes down and my mouth shut, extending my shaky hands forward with a pitiful, british-accented, charles-dickens-esk “please don't fire me sir” posture. Here, in Luke, I learn from a man who has found his voice and he won't be SILENCED. He cries out, as he had done many times, and it told to “shut it,” as I'm sure he has heard many times, but this amazing human, who has ZERO societal worth, stays the course. JESUS! He cries, “have mercy on me!” And this time, he is HEARD. This time he is SEEN! The crowd hears and sees, but can offer nothing. The friends of Jesus hear and see, but they too can offer nothing. But Jesus hears and sees and says, “help him over to me.” Then in a awkward turn of events, the plot twists when Jesus asks him a question. A question! It's as though the climax of the story has risen to the pinnacle of blissful resolution, then collapses into nothing. But question marks bring curiosity. And curiosity often leads to learning. And that process is a detour to hope. This all happens in a fraction of a second both in the story and now, in the mind of the reader. Jesus: “What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus is so bold, so intuitive, so patient. And in that moment, the blind beggar not only teaches me the valuable lesson of crying out, but he rises above my status of wisdom, experience, education and intelligence to teach me yet another lesson. How you ask? It's so simple, I'm surprised we both missed it. The simplest lessons are often the easiest to miss? Are you ready? The blind beggar has an answer for Jesus when he is asked! Oh, you gaffe, that's ridiculous! Of course he has an answer, he's blind and poor and a beggar. But wait a minute, is that an easy question to answer? The blind beggar responded “Lord,” he said, “I want to see!” Here's the second lesson: Do I even know what I want? After I have learned to cry out to Jesus, and not be silenced by anyone or anything, I cry out - “JESUS! Have mercy on me.” Then, Jesus turns to me and asks, “What do you want me to do for you?” Well, miss/mr sophisticated reader, what is YOUR answer? I was schooled because I DON'T know what I want! The blind beggar wanted to see, but what do YOU want?

Dad,
 I am humbled by this story. I am humbled by this man's ability to use his voice to cry out, but even more so because he knew what he wanted when asked. I cry out and ask for mercy but I am stumped by the thought of telling you what I'm crying out FOR. I've always wondered what I would say if you asked me, like Solomon, “What do you want?” Now, the blind beggar has challenged me because he knew what he wanted. God, what do I want? I do not know.

[contemplatio]

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root