

Sunday Sermon: October 28, 2018

Sermon Text: Mark 10:46-56

Sermon Theme: Amazing God..... Amazing Gifts

⁴⁶ Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (that is, the Son of Timaeus), was sitting by the roadside begging. ⁴⁷ When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

⁴⁸ Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

⁴⁹ Jesus stopped and said, "Call him."

So they called to the blind man, "Cheer up! On your feet! He's calling you." ⁵⁰ Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus.

⁵¹ "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked him.

The blind man said, "Rabbi, I want to see."

⁵² "Go," said Jesus, "your faith has healed you." Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.

For a moment this morning think back to when you were a child. It was right around your birthday and you were just waiting for those birthday cards. Then one day you get home from school and mom or dad show you a letter and it has your name on it. You grab it and rip it open because there was one thing you were looking for. What were you looking for? Money.

If you got money you were really happy. You ran and told mom or dad that you got money. But, how did you answer when they asked who you got it from? You probably had to go find the envelope or card and check who it was from.

The anticipation of the gift completely overshadowed who it was that gave it. Even if we glanced at the return address, we probably didn't read the letter that was in the card. You saw that there might be some writing in the card, but you didn't take a moment to see who sent it to you.

There may be many reasons why this might happen, but in the end it is usually because we had one thought in our mind. We didn't really care who sent the card, just as long as there was money inside.

There are many times that our focus on the gift overshadows our thoughts about the giver. We might place more emphasis on the giver if the gift comes at an unexpected time, or it is a much better gift than we want. If something is amazing we will probably remember who gave it to us.

This morning as we look at Jesus healing a blind man named Bartimaeus we will take some time to notice how amazing our God, the giver of these gifts are and we'll take time to notice how amazing the gifts he gives are.

How do you feel when someone approaches you at the gas station or in the store parking lot and says, "I need help, do you have any change?" Maybe once isn't bad, but imagine how you would feel if that would happen many times at the same gas station or parking lot? What about if there was a line of people waiting to ask you that same question over and over and over?

Imagine you are Jesus for a moment. The people that came to him were needy. They truly needed something from him. Many of the people who came to him were in worse shape than the people at the gas station or the parking lot. Many of them were sick, suffering, diseased or deformed. These people needed help and they lined up to see Jesus. They all came to Jesus with the same question, "Jesus, I need help can you help me?"

Even if you were the nicest person in the world, you would probably be worn down by the sheer number of people that were waiting for you, the amount of time that you would spend, or the amount of times you heard the same thing. But not Jesus. One of the things that makes our God amazing is his patience with us.

On this day, the crowds are there following him, which might have been a challenge in itself for most of us. We might have been tempted to say, "Leave me alone. Go away!" But Jesus was as patient with the people following him as he is with a man who begins shouting from the side of the road. "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me?"

I don't know about you, but I would have probably been one of the people who rebuked this man and told him to be quiet. I am not the best in social situations, I do not always respond well when things get awkward and this was an awkward situation. To this crowd of normal people, this man was different. This man was different, he was probably dirty from sitting on the side of the road, he was clearly a beggar with some sort of problem and not he is screaming loud enough to be heard. If I have to choose between listening to Jesus and some crazy man yelling, I would have wanted to be quiet too.

Unlike you or me, or the people in the crowd, who showed a lack of patience and even a little contempt for this man, Jesus did not want him to be quiet. He did not want to ignore him and move on. Jesus loved him, called the man to himself, talked with him and healed him.

We are blind in a difference way. We are blind in sin. We are much like the crowd that we lose our patience with others. How many times do we lose our patience with our children, our spouse, or each other? How many times do we just get irritated with another person and want them to go away? How many times does that lack of patience show with an irritable word or action towards another person? All of these are sins.

I am just as guilty as any other person of running out of patience with my children, my spouse, in my life and relationships with others. There are times that just like you, I have to rely on a patient Savior to love me and help me by forgiving me.

Our God shows just how amazing he is when he does not punish us as our sins deserve. He does not say, "there you go again and send us away." Instead, God has patience with us. This patience is not that God doesn't see our sins, he does. This patience is not that God doesn't care about our sins, he certainly does. This patience is not because God thinks we do enough good, he tells us we don't. God shows patience with us because of Jesus.

God makes it clear in his Word that he does care about sin. He tells us in his Word all sin must be punished. Every time we sin, we are judged and it is clear what the verdict should be: death and hell. But, instead of the lightning bolt coming from heaven to strike us down, God is patient with us because the punishment for these sins has already been given, not on us, but on Jesus. Jesus takes our sins on himself. He received the punishment we deserved so that we will not be punished for them. Through Jesus, God is not angry with us, he is patient with us graciously forgiving our sins fully and freely now and forever.

What God has done for us in Jesus is far more than sinners like us could ever expect or imagine from a perfect God. Instead of death and hell, he has given us forgiveness and eternal life with him. It is like opening the envelope and not only finding a gift, but a check that has a million dollars written on it. We did nothing to earn it, we were not expecting this kind of gift, but in Jesus we have a gift greater than any other.

If we got a million dollar gift, it would be an amazing gift and probably one that we would never forget who gave it.

Our God is amazing because he loves us. He put that love into action by giving us amazing gifts. When Jesus spoke with Bartimaeus, it was clear what he wanted; his sight. No one else could have done this for Bartimaeus. Only Jesus could help him and he did. Jesus granted him that sight through an amazing miracle.

But Jesus has already helped Bartimaeus in an even greater and more amazing way. Bartimeaus already had a gift that was much better and more amazing than his new found sight. God had already worked the amazing gift of faith in Bartimaeus' heart.

Remember what Bartimaeus was yelling? He was yelling, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me?"

This was a statement of faith that not everyone in that crowd believed about Jesus. Bartimaeus was telling people Jesus was not just anyone. He was not just a superstar or someone who had all the right qualifications to rule on David's throne as David's descendant. Bartimaeus is confessing that here is the Messiah that was promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. This was the one that Nathan prophesied would have a kingdom that was established forever. This was the Messiah, the Son of David, who had come to save his people.

Yet, while many of these people did not believe that Jesus was the Son of God and their Savior, Bartimaeus did. This amazing gift had come to him through the work of the Holy Spirit. Although, this man could not see physically see Jesus or his miracles, he believed that Jesus was his Savior.

There are many times that we are blind to our Savior, Jesus. We just don't think God is all that amazing. We take him for granted. Yes, we have Thanksgiving right around the corner where we thank God and maybe

when we come to church we are more aware of God's goodness, but we also have times that we take God for granted and we don't think about him a lot.

Just as we take our amazing God for granted, we also take his great gifts for granted to. We take the gifts of health and life for granted. We take our forgiveness for granted. Instead of being truly repentant about something, we figure that God has to forgive us. We're really not sorry, but we are forgiven right? We take our salvation for granted. I know my Savior, Jesus, I know that I will be saved. I don't need to be in the Word. It will be there when I need it. As long as I am on the member roster I am OK. We also take God's earthly gifts for granted seeing only the work of our hands and not the grace of God.

Many times we are blind to the thankfulness that we should have to our God for what he has done for us. We are blind to the faith that the Holy Spirit has worked in our hearts. We are blind to the gifts of faith, forgiveness of sins, life and salvation that God gives to us. When we are blind, we need a Savior who is amazing. We need a Savior who is patient, who continues to love and care for us even when we sin against him. And that is the amazing God and Savior we have.

The blood that was shed on the cross washed these sins away so that there were no sins left that we had to work off or take care of ourselves. The apostle John says, "The blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin." That means our amazing God washes us completely clean of sin once and for all, now and forever.

Although he was blind, Bartimaeus saw an amazing God. He knew that this was his Savior. He also saw an amazing miracle, he was healed of his blindness. After this, Bartimaeus does not just walk away, he got up and followed Jesus the object and source of his faith.

May we see our amazing God who has shown his love in an amazing way by sending his Son to give us amazing eternal gifts of faith, forgiveness of sins, life and salvation that we do not earn. May we thank that amazing God by continuing to follow him, walking in faith every day.