

The Thirty Fifth Sunday after Pentecost Luke 18:35-43

And it came to pass, that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way side begging: And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant. And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by. And he cried, saying, Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me. And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, Thou son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him, Saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee. And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God. (KJV)

The blind man in the present Gospel was resolute in reaching out to the Lord Jesus Christ for healing. The blind man was not silenced or deterred when others told him to hold his peace. He pressed on in crying out to Jesus.

The blind man's persistence in reaching out to Jesus resulted in his healing. Jesus recognized the depth of the man's faith. Believers of each generation are inspired by the faith of the blind man and seek to follow his example.

In every generation there are people who try to silence people of faith. There are naysayers who discourage efforts of believers crying out to Jesus in faith and in hope. The present Gospel has been preserved through the centuries as truth.

Healing by Jesus Christ is truth. Jesus Christ is Truth. Having strong faith in Jesus Christ reveals the Truth that is Jesus Christ. The Church proclaims the Gospel at each Divine Liturgy to strengthen, heal and unite believers with Christ.

Attentive believers heed the Gospel and incorporate the message in their lives. People of faith value and love the Gospel. The Gospel is truth. Believers learn from and about Jesus Christ when reading or listening to the Gospel. The Church does not force the Gospel on believers.

The Church does not force people to hear the Gospel. The Gospel is proclaimed in the Church faithfully for those freely choosing to attend the Divine Liturgy. God's Church has proclaimed the Gospel through the centuries.

Preservation of the Gospel has come at a high price for the faithful of the Church. The Church has been persecuted. Martyrs have given their lives to proclaim the Gospel.

Just as there existed individuals wanting to silence the blind man in crying out to Jesus, there have been governments and groups in every century trying to silence efforts of faith. Resolute faith in Christ will not be silenced or defeated.

Resolute faith in Christ results in peace and healing. The man knew what he was doing when he reached out in hope and in faith. The man stuck to his principles of faith. He was resolute.

The blind man was healed by Jesus Christ. In today's world much hedonism exists. Many distractions and perils to the soul abound. Commercial distractions and leaders of falsehoods seek to capture believers' hearts, minds and souls.

Believers' hearts, minds and souls belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. The blind man kept his focus on Jesus Christ. The man directed his cries in full attention to Jesus Christ.

The blind man did not give in to distractors or naysayers. His faith and effort did not weaken in the face of differences. Jesus recognized the depth of the man's faith. Jesus acknowledged and responded to the strong faith.

Mothers and fathers, husband and wives, sons and daughters in every generation benefit from the Gospel lesson of the blind man being healed. Church leaders do well to keep the focus on Jesus Christ when distractions arise.

Through Jesus Christ healing and peace occur. Distractions are always present in life. Evil is always present. Jesus Christ triumphs over distractions. Jesus Christ triumphs over evil. Strong faith is always beneficial.

Believers honestly searching their hearts, minds and souls will determine if Christ is held in firm faith and hope. Attentive believers will heed the healing of the blind man. Attentive believers will seek to duplicate the blind man's faith.

Faith needs to be focused on Jesus Christ. Efforts of faith need to be directed toward following Christ. It is all too easy to depart from the path to God's Kingdom. It is very easy for faith to become diluted.

The Church offers nourishment to keep believers strong in faith. The Gospel is strong and necessary nourishment for believers. The Body and Blood of Christ are essential for faith to remain strong and resolute.

Repentance has a part in faith remaining strong. Repentance involves keeping the focus on Christ and removing from life all that is not of Christ. Prayer, fasting and self-assessment facilitate keeping the focus on Christ.

The blind man greatly appreciated being healed by Jesus. He glorified God because of the healing. The man set an example. When Jesus answers prayers of believers, giving thanks and glorifying God is very important

Being able to hear and learn from this Gospel lesson is reason to thank God. Thanking and glorifying God has a place throughout daily life. Jesus Christ is always present to offer healing for those reaching out in faith and hope.

The Thirty Fifth Sunday after Pentecost. Holy Apostle Timothy of the Seventy.
Holy Monk Martyr Athanasius the Persian. January 22/February 4, 2024.
Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic