



Bartimaeus Cohousing

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Who Was Bartimaeus?

His name is known by very few. However, an obscure story in the Gospel of Mark tells us about the namesake for the Bartimaeus Community:

They spent some time in Jericho. As Jesus was leaving town, trailed by his disciples and a parade of people, a blind beggar by the name of Bartimaeus, son of Timaeus, was sitting alongside the road. When he heard that Jesus the Nazarene was passing by, he began to cry out, “Son of David, Jesus! Mercy, have mercy on me!” Many tried to hush him up, but he yelled all the louder, “Son of David! Mercy, have mercy on me!” Jesus stopped in his tracks, “Call him over.” They called him. “It’s your lucky day! Get up! He’s calling you to come!” Throwing off his coat, he was on his feet at once, and came to Jesus. Jesus said, “What can I do for you?” The blind man said, “Rabbi, I want to see.” “On your way,” said Jesus. “Your faith has saved and healed you.” In that very instant he recovered his sight and followed Jesus down the road. (Mark 10:46-52; The Message)

Bartimaeus was sitting, begging. He could not see, but he could hear the approach of Jesus. He shouted for mercy and grace; others, not being merciful, tried to shut him out. Jesus heard; Jesus called; Jesus healed. Bartimaeus followed. The story of Bartimaeus demonstrates what Jesus declared in Luke 4 as his mission:

God’s Spirit is on me; he’s chosen me to preach the Message of good news to the poor, sent me to announce pardon to prisoners and recovery of sight to the blind, to set the burdened and battered free, to announce, “this is God’s year to act!”

We are all Bartimaeus. There are times when we all cannot “get it together” and find God's healing in the midst of our circumstances. At times, we are all “the crowd” who would push someone else to the sidelines so we can have the ringside seat. Jesus speaks to both.

The story of Bartimaeus inspires us to grow out of the likeness of the crowd, and into the likeness of Christ. We also grow into the likeness of Christ by welcoming those marginalized by society and being family with them.

