

The Jesus Prayer

There is a prayer from the Orthodox tradition, which is called the 'Jesus prayer'. It is a very short prayer, and these are the words:

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner

There is a tradition of saying it, and repeating it many times over.

The words of this prayer are based on two passages from the gospels – one is the story that Jesus tells about a Pharisee and a tax collector praying in the temple (from Luke 18. 9-14), in which the tax collector humbly prays:

God, have mercy on me, a sinner

And the other passage is our gospel reading this week, the story of Jesus restoring the sight of Bartimaeus, who cried out to him:

Son of David, have mercy on me

A Prayer

Loving God,
as Jesus heard the cry of Bartimaeus
and met him with healing and love,
so may we receive mercy as we turn to you,
and find your grace to help us in our time of need.
Amen.

The Brickhills and Stoke Hammond

Lent Course 2017

Pilgrims: Meeting God on the journey

God of our pilgrimage,
you have willed that the gate of mercy
should stand open for those who trust in you:
look upon us with your favour
that we who follow the path of your will
may never wander from the way of life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

5. **Bartimaeus: What do you want me to do for you?** Mark 10. 46-52

These were the Bible readings for Holy Communion on Sunday:

Isaiah 35.1-6

The promise of God's blessings for his people, using the image of water flowing through the desert.

Hebrews 4. 14-16

In Christ we may have confidence as we seek God's mercy and grace.

Mark 10. 46-52

The healing of Bartimaeus, a blind man who called out to Jesus for mercy, as he was passing through Jericho.

Today, in the reading for the final week of our Lent course, it is Jesus who was travelling, and who met a man sitting at the roadside as he came by.

This man, whose name was Bartimaeus, knew who to ask for help, and he knew that this was the right time to ask, this was his great opportunity. The people around him tried to shut him up, but he just kept on shouting. He believed that Jesus could help him, so he asked for mercy, he asked for love. He wasn't afraid to ask for help when he needed it.

Jesus responded by calling Bartimaeus to come to him, and, as the man came forward, Jesus asked him:

What do you want me to do for you?

Perhaps you could put yourself in the story, and imagine that you had cried out for help, and that Jesus stood before you and asked you that simple, but powerful question:

What do you want me to do for you?

How would you respond? What would you ask for? What are the deep longings of your heart – for yourself, or for others?

Some questions for reflection

Take some time to reflect on this gospel story:

from the point of view of Bartimaeus

from the point of view of a bystander

What would be your response to Jesus' question:

What do you want me to do for you?

What do we think and feel when we have prayed, perhaps for healing, and our prayers are not answered as we had hoped?

Reflect on the other readings listed on the front of the sheet, and the other gospel passage that is mentioned on the back page, in reference to the 'Jesus prayer'.

Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy, and find grace to help us in our time of need.

(Hebrews 4. 16)