

ADULT UNIT I: Jesus, the Heir of David
ADULT GENERAL LESSON TITLE: The Merciful Son of David
ADULT TOPIC: A Miracle in Jericho

LESSON 5

DATE: December 29, 2024

DEVOTIONAL READING: Luke 4:14-21
BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: Luke 18:31-43
PRINT PASSAGE: Luke 18:35-43

Home Daily Bible Reading

Dec. 23	M	Luke 4:14-21	<i>Mercy for Those Who Suffer</i>
Dec. 24	T	Luke 6:27-36	<i>Show God's Mercy to All</i>
Dec. 25	W	Micah 7:14-20	<i>God Delights in Compassion</i>
Dec. 26	Th	Psalms 25:1-10	<i>Remember Your Mercy, O Lord</i>
Dec. 27	F	Psalms 25:11-22	<i>God Relieves a Troubled Heart</i>
Dec. 28	Sa	Luke 18:9-14	<i>Mercy for Sinners</i>
Dec. 29	Su	Luke 18:35-43	<i>Lord, Let Me See Again</i>

EXALT!

Invocation – Teacher or learner

Celebration – “Pass Me Not, O Gentle Saviour” #291 *AME Zion Bicentennial Hymnal*

Declaration – Luke 18:35-43 (*Read together by class, by a volunteer or responsively*)

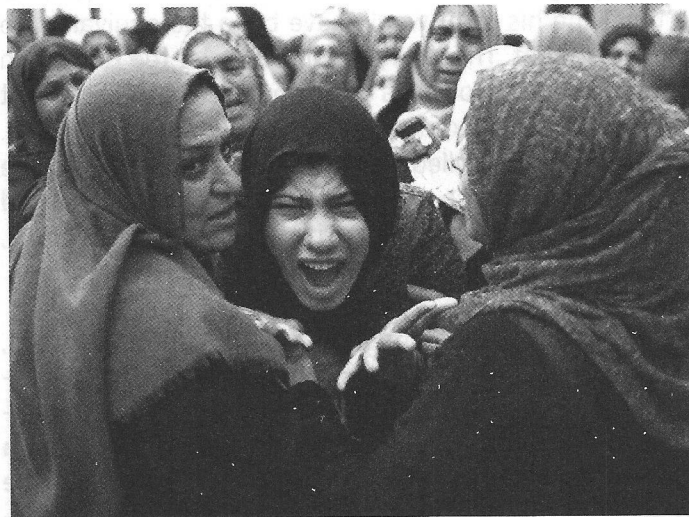
Jesus Heals a Blind Beggar

³⁵ As he drew near to Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging. ³⁶ And hearing a crowd going by, he inquired what this meant. ³⁷ They told him, “Jesus of Nazareth is passing by.” ³⁸ And he cried out, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” ³⁹ And those who were in front rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” ⁴⁰ And Jesus stopped and commanded him to be brought to him. And when he came near, he asked him, ⁴¹ “What do you want me to do for you?” He said, “Lord, let me recover my sight.” ⁴² And Jesus said to him, “Recover your sight; your faith has made you well.” ⁴³ And immediately he recovered his

sight and followed him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

Affirmation – We will help guide the church’s effort to hear and respond to the cries of the needy. (*Spoken together by class and teacher*).

ENGAGE: (5-10 min.)



People who ask for help are sometimes silenced. How can we respond to those who call for help? When the crowds tried to silence the cries of a man who called out, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” Jesus stopped to ask the man what he could do for him. Often, people are silent about their fail-

ing health conditions and disabilities and do not openly and aggressively seek help. Why is this the case? Are they embarrassed about certain diseases they may have contracted? Are they afraid of the negative responses they may get from relatives and friends? Break into small groups and discuss the following questions: 1.) Is deteriorating vision a problem of advancing age or of neglect and failure to take care of one’s eye conditions or some other reasons? Explain your answers. 2.) Do those who take charge of their health live happier and longer lives? Elaborate on your replies. How might you respond to the well-known statement, “God helps those who help themselves”? 3.) Are people troubled by desperate cries for help from people whom they do not know, or from people they deem derelict? Explain your answer and discuss what, possibly, should be people’s responses to such?

EDUCATE: (10-15 min.)

Luke 18:35-39: Luke’s placement of this story seems intentional and strategic. The four preceding verses 18:31-34 contain Jesus’ words to the disciples about Jesus’ arrest, persecution, death, and resurrection and end with Luke’s conclusion as the fact that these disciples, who knew Jesus best, were actually

blind to his real purpose on earth (“But they understood nothing about all these things; in fact, what he said was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what was said”). Luke 18:35-43 isn’t simply about healing a blind man as much as it is about truly seeing and how we are saved (18:26). By naming Jesus, “Son of David,” the beggar acknowledges Jesus’ identity and places himself under Jesus’ authority as the Davidic heir. The beggar’s insistence draws Jesus’ attention and presence in a perfect example of James 4:7-8. In the first century, blindness was considered a judgment from God for sins committed (see for example, John 9:2), so receiving his sight would have been the equivalent to being rescued from God’s judgment. Those attempting to quiet the blind man may have been doing so out of respect to Jesus as an honorable and important person. “The blind man, however, showed no concern for such a social norm. Instead, he *shouted all the more* and called again for Jesus’ mercy. Like the widow who pestered the judge in search of justice (Luke 18:1-8), the blind man ignored barriers in his way and persisted in asking Jesus for help” (*Ibid.*, P.157).

Luke 18:40-43: “Based on ancient ideas of honor and the value of persons, the blind man had very little worth.... Thus, it is likely that the crowd didn’t expect this reaction by Jesus. But Jesus was an expert at subverting expectations” (*Ibid.*). The blind man could have heard Jesus’ question (18:41) as a superficial query into his post as a beggar (see Acts 3:4-6), but instead, let the question sink deeply in to expose his true need, his helplessness, and his vulnerability; and Jesus answered him, healed him, at the level he internalized Jesus’ words. It is important to note that where Jesus says, “Your faith has saved you” (for example, Luke 8:48), he refers to someone’s belief in Jesus’ ability to rescue them, not their faith that Jesus will do as they ask (Mark 9:24): our faith is in God’s strength and goodness to rescue/save, while accepting God’s sovereignty and what might seem the strangeness of God’s plan. We know God can do it; we ask that God’s will be done. Again, we see Luke’s emphasis on witness. Here we see the contagiousness of witness: we who experience God’s rescue find our testimony bubbling over out of us. Those who hear, then bear witness themselves, honor God for God’s actions.

ELEVATE: (10 min.)

In small groups, engage one another regarding the following questions and suggestions: 1.) The fundamental question posed by today’s text: Do you see who Jesus is, or are you blind? How do you answer that question? 2.) When in your life have you gone from begging at the side of the road to walking with Jesus? What made the change? What role did you play in making the change? 3.) Notice that the blind man recognizes Jesus as “Son of David.” The Son of



David heals; the Messiah's authority is at work. Is the designation "Son of David" important to you? Why? 4.) Do you believe God for the impossible? Why? Why not? 5.) The blind beggar paid attention to his surroundings and recognized the movement of God in the world. Recall a time when paying attention enriched your understanding of a relationship, an event, or the world. 6.) On a notepad, daily list things you see clearer than you've ever seen them before.

iTHINK: (5-7 min.)

1. Consider what the good news is in Jesus' announcement of good news in Luke 4:18-19. Watch "The Gospel of the Kingdom" at bibleproject.com.
2. The background text includes the seventh allusion to Jesus' death in Luke. (The previous mentions of Christ's death are found in Luke 5:35; 9:22, 44-45; 12:49-50; 13:32-33; 17:25.) Each time Jesus mentioned his death, it elicited the disciples' inability to see the truth, now juxtaposed with the blind man's insight about Jesus's true identity. Discuss the disciples' blind spot that led them to reject the difficult moments of Jesus's ministry.
3. Considering the blind man's persistence, note the stories in 18:1-17 that illustrate who pursues the kingdom of God—a persistent widow; a repentant, humbled tax collector; a child.
4. Note the irony in the comparison between the rich man (Luke 18:23), who refused to follow Jesus and thus could not inherit eternal life (vv. 18-25), and the blind beggar who is healed because of his faith (v. 42) and follows Jesus (v. 43).
5. Brainstorm times when social outsiders came forward in light of public rebuke to embrace the grace and mercy of God.
6. Discuss how persistence, even to the point of annoyance, can be a mark of faith. Who comes to mind as an example of faith-filled persistence?

KEY VERSE: *Those who were in front sternly ordered him to be quiet; but he shouted even more loudly, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"*
Luke 18:39