Jesus Is Able!

Matthew 9:27-31 And as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed Him, crying aloud, "Have mercy on us, Son of David." When He entered the house, the blind men came to Him, and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord." Then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith let it be done to you." And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, "See that no one knows about it." But they went away and spread His fame through all that district.

And the text continues. Jesus goes on to teach and heal, while some believe, but most challenge, doubt, and eventually cast Him toward the cross. I was listening to the text read aloud on a walk, and my heart ached for Jesus. Though it's not a perfect comparison, it makes you see Jesus as the ultimate "Giving Tree." You remember that book. The tree gives to the boy throughout his whole life, giving everything he has. The boy takes and takes, but the tree always gives, doesn't it?

As I sat down to write this sermon, Braelyn was home sick, and we looked at this passage together. I've never walked through the process of writing a sermon with her. I described what writing this lesson during my first few years of preaching would have looked like: pointing out the location, if possible; describing everyday life for blind individuals; social stigma; etc. I could break down the phrase "Son of David" and how significant that was, and so on. None of that would be wrong. But these days, I look at the text differently. I want to get a feel for the setting for sure, but I want to really see Jesus in that moment. I want to appreciate His point of view and what He wants us to see.

I asked Braelyn if she thought Jesus ever felt lonely, and if so, how so? She thought He may have because He was different than everyone. In particular, what He had to bear. You know, Jesus said that He was never alone because He had the Father, but being alone and feeling alone are two different questions. Jesus knew God had not ultimately forsaken Him, but that cross must have been horrible, don't you think? Jesus' time in the garden seems difficult, given that angels came to minister to Him. Jesus Himself said that His time had come and His soul was "troubled." And then there's that strange passage reminding us how Moses and Elijah, on the mount of transfiguration, spoke to Jesus about His departure. Wonder what that was about? And surely, moments like Peter refusing to support Jesus' statement of dying in Jerusalem didn't help. "Get behind Me, Satan!" Peter wasn't setting his mind on things above. I wonder if Jesus felt that.

I agree with Braelyn that the focus of the passage is Jesus' role as the Messiah and growing popularity, but I can't help but think about how Jesus felt. Jesus wasn't stoic, and God is described as having emotions throughout the Word. Yes, Jesus is a sympathetic savior, and I can't imagine Him sympathizing with me without knowing a little something about sadness, anger, fear, and loneliness. Am I sorry they couldn't help or comfort Jesus as He did them? I'm sorry that I can't bring to the table what He did. However, there's one thing I can give to Him: my belief that He is able. And Jesus is able.

As time goes on, I take comfort in offering my trust and love to God, because that's all I can do. No one else in my life can ask me that question the way Jesus can. "Do you believe that I am able to do this, Shawn?" Think about that for a moment: nothing outside of Jesus' love and ability is certain. Go through the people in your life - sub them in for Jesus, from least to greatest, and ask if they replace Him.

- **Mechanic**: Do you believe I am able to do this? I believe you're able to rip me off without me knowing and miss something broken. That's happened more than once. I bought a classic truck recently, and it's proven more stressful than joyful because there's too much to fix or worry about. Don't scratch it. Will it start? Why is it making that noise? Will the exhaust clear the garage? Yep. I know it's silly, but I prayed to Jesus in the middle of the night because this stupid truck reminded me of how stable and dependable He is. I'm not saying there hasn't been anxiety that comes from following Jesus, but at least I now know Jesus is dependable and the stress is worth it. There's no solid ground in a truck or the mechanic. Now that's silly, isn't it? So let's raise the bar.
- **Doctors**: I don't know if you've noticed this, but everyone is dying. They haven't found the cure yet, and I don't know if it's me, but I'm beginning to think they never will find the cure for the curse. "Jesus didn't heal everyone." That's true. But it's not because He couldn't, but wouldn't. Before that truth turns into bitterness, we should be aware of how we're turning Jesus into a giving tree, and how what He gave on the tree is losing its power and value. He's not a genie in a bottle. We love Him when He gives us what we want, though we don't deserve. Jesus didn't heal everyone. Jesus had a hard time getting people to follow Him if He didn't give them bread, didn't He? God forbid we do that to Jesus after what He gave to us: His heart.
- **Body**: You're probably thinking, "Careful, Shawn," and understandably so. But you're not there for me all the time, and guess what: neither am I for you. We see each other from time to time and have very limited time to spend together. You have friends, family, perhaps spouses and children. Lots on your plate. But let's be honest - we can let one another down, and we are weak and limited. You can't tell me, "We're here for you," or "it's gonna be okay," or "I'm sorry that's happening," but I gotta tell you. There's been a lot of lip service in my life, and even those who mean what they say can only do so much. Just to be clear - you can say the same about me. Who's the Savior? Isn't Jesus the Savior of the body?
- **Family**: No doubt they're the closest thing to it. I don't have a problem getting real blunt. My immediate family have proven to be great help. But they've not saved me from trials and tribulations. They've helped. But many times they don't know what to do (and that's okay). And we've let one another down over the years. And then there's my beloved: Jordan. If God is most closely understood in marriage, then she's the closest person to God in my life. And I gotta tell you - she's the worst. KIDDING. She's such a beautiful soul. But the greatest thing she's done, besides comforting me as best she can, is pray to the One who can do something. And while I believe Jordan won't leave me, I acknowledge she's human, and my weakness could turn her away if she didn't put her faith in Jesus. I trust her more than any other human, but Jordan isn't Jesus.

What Paul wrote rings true: "Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unreachable are His judgments and how inscrutable His ways! 'For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been His counselor?' 'Or who has given a gift to Him that He might be repaid?' For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be glory forever. Amen." Romans 11:33-36.

Brethren, I'm a grown man with a wife and children. I have expectations; among them, I need to provide for and protect my family. I am to train my children and mentor those in this local body of Christ. But honestly, I feel more like a poser trying to keep a good game face on. I only make it through the guidance, grace, and help of Jesus. I want to give Him the reins. I want to be with Him, in His caring arms. I want to see My Father face-to-face, surrender every role I have, and embrace a life of son-hood forevermore because He's the only one who is able. Yes, Jesus. You are able. Who should increase and who should decrease? Who should know?