**SUNDAY 10/24/21**

**SERMON**

**MARK 10:46-52**

 In 2009 forty-nine-year-old Susan Boyle

 was a contestant on "Britain's Got Talent."

Slightly overweight, and plainly dressed, Susan shuffled onto the stage.

Immediately the audience started smirking and laughing at her appearance.

The television camera focused on a teenager girl who rolled her eyes as if to say:

 "How dare this unattractive, untalented woman,

 come out and waste my time."

Simon was very patronizing as he began to interview her.

When he asked where she was from,

 Susan stumbled over her words in a thick Scottish accent.

Simon asked "What are you going to sing?"

Susan answered, "I'm going to sing "I Dreamed a Dream" from Les Miserables."

The three judges looked at each other as if to say,

“Why did she choose such a difficult song?”

Not one person in the audience thought Susan was worth listening to.

Then the musical introduction began and Susan Boyle began to sing.

The audience was shocked and stunned into silence.

Before long the cheering and clapping began.

The judges looked at each other as if to say, "This is unbelievable."

The event was seen on You Tube over 175 million times.

When she walked out, everyone was blind to her talent.

By the end of the song, the audience gave her a standing ovation.

Blind Bartimaeus faced a similar situation as Susan Boyle.

Bartimaeus was a poor blind beggar sitting by the roadside.

To the crowd of people, he was not even worth noticing.

Bartimaeus was totally dependent upon the generosity of others in order to survive.

He could not do very much except sit by the road side,

 begging for a coin or two, or something to eat.

Bartimaeus could not see Jesus, but in some way he knew who this one was.

He began to shout out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Many sternly ordered him to be quiet, but he cried out even more loudly,

“Son of David, have mercy on me!”

He recognized who Jesus was, and what He was able to do.

Jesus stopped and stood still and said, "Call him here."

And throwing aside his garment, he rose and came to Jesus.

Throwing aside his garment meant Bartimaeus was throwing aside all that he had.

His garment was what he laid out on the ground for people to toss their alms into.

His garment was what kept him warm at night.

To the poor blind beggar, his garment was everything.

But nothing was going to stand between him and Jesus.

Bystanders called the blind man, saying to him,

“Take heart; get up, he is calling you.”

Then Jesus said to him, "What do you want me to do for you?"

The blind man said to him, "My teacher, let me see again."

Jesus said to him, "Go, your faith has made you well."

Immediately he regained his sight and followed Jesus

 as He continued to travel along the road.

Jesus cares about each one of us.

He hears our pleas.

And He answers them.

If Bartimaeus had sat still that day and said nothing,

 then the next day would have been like all the others before.

He would have sat by the road begging until he died.

He may have been blind, but even he could see

 that unless he did something about this situation,

 he was doomed to a life of misery and darkness.

And so he called out to the only one who could help him.

This is the story of Bartimaeus.

But it could be the story of any of us.

For all of us have blind spots in our lives.

Each of us at one time or another has found ourselves stalled along the road of life.

Jesus is still passing by.

His ears are open to our cries for mercy.

He is still willing to stop for those who seek his help.

What if Jesus asked you, "What do you want me do for you?"

What would you answer?

Mrs. Florence Terry went to the doctor's office.

She had been suffering with constant hiccups for almost two weeks.

She was seen by one of the new young doctors she had not met before.

The doctor asked what he could do for her and she demanded an immediate cure.

After about 5 minutes in the examination room,

 Mrs. Terry burst out of the room,

 screaming as she ran down the hall.

An older doctor who knew Florence stopped her in the hallway

 and asked what the problem was.

She told him what had happened with the new young Doctor.

After listening, he told her to go sit down in the waiting room and try to relax.

The older doctor marched down the to the exam room

 where Mrs. Terry had been evaluated.

He found the young doctor and demanded, "What's the matter with you?

 Mrs. Terry is 63 years old,

 she has four grown children,

 and seven grandchildren,

 and you told her she was pregnant?"

The new doctor continued to write on his clipboard,

 and without looking up he said,

“Does she still have the hiccups?”

The woman got the immediate cure she was originally looking for.

Although it was unusual,

 she got what she asked for – relief from the never ending hiccups.

We ask God in prayer to help us.

And often we are surprised by God's help.

He does listen to us.

He does love us.

Yet often the help He gives is unusual and unexpected.

Wade Martin Hughes told about a time years ago

 when a friend invited him to fly across central Florida in his private plane. His friend had 50 years of experience as a pilot, had flown all over the world,

 and had faced every possible condition, so Wade felt safe with his friend.

Yet on their return trip, the airplane began to shake,

 and the engine started coughing, and losing power.

As Wade looked down from an altitude of a few thousand feet, terror gripped him. He felt an incredible urge to do something, but there was nothing he could do.

He had no experience in flying, landing, or fixing a plane.

Then Wade looked at his friend at the controls.

He was utterly calm as he adjusted knobs and switches,

 and continued to pilot the plane to a safe landing.

After the incident, Wade said:

 There are times in life when I desperately want to grab control.

My experience in the plane reminds me that if I take control,

 I will ruin or destroy my life.

At those moments, I must resist the urge and trust the one

 who has seen it all before, and who knows what he is doing.

Jesus knows what He is doing.

He cares about each one of us.

When we try to control our lives, we often make a mess of things.

It isn't always easy, but when we trust Him, it makes all the difference in our lives.

AMEN