



7th Sunday of Matthew

In today's gospel lesson, Jesus encounters two blind men who ask for his mercy. As we saw, from the last two Sundays, Jesus is making it a point to show that God's community and mercy is extended to both the Judeans (i.e., the insider) and the Gentiles (i.e., outsiders). The blind men represent these two communities, which have *both* been blind to God's will and instruction. But, through Jesus's preaching, their eyes have been opened to the one gospel presented to all peoples. The Law requires two witnesses and, now, these two men can witness that Jesus is, indeed, the long awaited Anointed One who brings with him the Good News.

Scripture: Matthew 9:27-35

Bottom Line: When our eyes are opened, we see the "other" as "neighbor."

Discussion Questions

1. Two weeks ago, Jesus healed the demoniacs in the country of the Gadarenes. Last Sunday, in his own country, he healed the paralytic. He's making great efforts to reach out to all people. Who are the insiders in our society? Who are the outsiders? How might you "be Christ" and help bring them together?
2. In today's reading, Jesus also heals a man who couldn't speak. What does this symbolize? Why might it be important for the gospel for people to speak? If asked about the gospel, what would you say?
3. Why do you think people would accuse Jesus of working for the "prince of demons"? What about Jesus's message scared them? What scares you about his message? How does our trust in God overcome these fears?

Moving Forward

Our society today seems more divided than ever. We're divided over politics, class, race, gender . . . you name it. It was the same in biblical times. As we've seen this week and over the last two Sundays, the New Testament divide was between Judeans and Gentiles. But Jesus shows that our only hope is to have our eyes opened to the gospel, which speaks of love of neighbor. Coming together for "table fellowship" with the one you despise is the way that leads to life. This week, our challenge is to break bread even with those we fear and detest.

Changing Your Mind

"And their eyes were opened. Then Jesus sternly ordered them, 'See that no one knows of this.' But they went away and spread the news about him throughout that district." (Matthew 9:30-31)