

**“Master, I want to see.”**

**The great German 18<sup>th</sup> century poet, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, is said to have exclaimed at his death bed: *Mehr Licht* – give me more light!**

**Since he was a typical representative of the Age of Enlightenment, or Age of Reason, this has often been interpreted as a cry for a deeper understanding of life.**

**A skeptic of today may be excused for thinking he suffered from an eye cataract.**

**Be that as it may, the search for true insight into the meaning of life has always been the mark of a thinking human being.**

**“Who am I? Why am I here? Where do I go?” are the perennial questions of Man.**

**Only the shallowness of the present age tries to suppress these questions. When a philosophy of relativism denies our ability to find answers to these questions, and when academics at our leading institutions of higher learning ridicule these very questions, we ought to recognize these as signs of cynicism and lost intellectual vigor.**

**On the contrary, Bartimaeus, the blind man on the road from Jericho, is the archetype of the searching soul: “Master, I want to see.”**

**Not only did he ask the right question. He asked the right person.**

**On the physical level, if you are blind, or – like me - suffer from a cataract – you would like to see what you no longer see clearly, or maybe never have seen – of the beauty of creation.**

**But - like Bartimaeus – what is of essence is not the physical eyesight, but the sight of the soul – the vision of Truth and Beauty.**

**As we live here on Earth, we can only hope to attain that vision through Faith. Faith is the key to a deeper understanding of life. Faith stands in no contrast to Reason, but through the eyes of Faith, we can attain a higher understanding of a reality beyond the physical world.**

**This is the litmus test of true Faith, that it does not lead us to a dream world of phantasmagoria – of illusions – but to an inner reality where God dwells.**

**Jesus stopped and said: “Call him.” “Take courage,” they said to him “Jesus is calling you.” Immediately the blind man threw aside his cloak, sprang up, and came to Jesus.**

**He threw away his cloak. He threw away what bogged him down. Mark makes a point of naming him and also his father Timaeus; the normal way of identification during that age. The fact that Mark does so indicates that Bartimaeus, blind and begging, had**

**fallen from a high place. The Church Fathers saw that as a symbol of the wretched state of fallen humanity. It begs for God's mercy, but God's grace calls for responsiveness on our part. God does not coerce our will or preempt free response.**

**We are called to do like Bartimaeus: To throw away what bogs us down.**

**Get rid of our resentments, our jealousies, our unresolved issues with others. When our eyes are healed, when our heart is opened, then we shall receive light – then we shall see Truth. Then we shall see the light of Christ.**

**“Every one who is of the truth hears my voice,” said Jesus to Pontius Pilate. The blind man heard Jesus. Pontius Pilate, the ultimate cynic, asked Jesus, “What is truth?” and threw him at the mercy of the people.**

**To Bartimaeus Jesus said, “Go your way; your faith has saved you.”**

**Salvation lies in listening, for in listening we shall hear the call, and in hearing the call, we shall see like the blind man on the way from Jericho; and in seeing we shall attain the Truth.**

**When we die, we no longer need Faith, because then we shall see God as He truly is. We no longer need Hope, for hope has been fulfilled. What is left is Love alone.**

