

Friday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2020

I wonder if, like me at this time, you have taken the opportunity to acknowledge the many blessings we take for granted in our lives and the wider world? Do we allow gratitude in with this awareness or do we sometimes forget to give thanks to the Almighty God?

“As Jesus approached Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging. When he heard the crowd going by, he asked what was happening. They told him, ‘Jesus of Nazareth is passing by.’

“He called out ‘Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!’

“Those who led the way rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, ‘Son of David, have mercy on me!’

“Jesus stopped and ordered the man to be brought to him. When he came near, Jesus asked him, “‘What do you want me to do for you?’

“‘Lord, I want to see,’ he replied.

“Jesus said to him, ‘Receive your sight; your faith has healed you.’ Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus, praising God. When all the people saw it, they also praised God.” Luke 18:35-42

I am especially aware of the five senses that God has given us. Sight, hearing, touch, taste, smell. Often it is not until we experience the loss of one or more of them that we realize the true value of these blessings. To illustrate this I will share with you one of my own experiences and how I am able to relate to the story of the blind beggar.

We were living abroad and regularly returned to Scotland to visit family and friends. During one of our visits I banged my forehead sharply on a closed glass shop door causing a lump which disappeared after a few days. When my husband and I subsequently returned to our home overseas I noticed that the sight in my left eye didn't seem as clear as it should. I had forgotten my bumped head and thought it was my imagination and I tried to ignore it. As the day progressed my eyesight steadily deteriorated, it was like a curtain gradually closing until eventually all I could see was a sliver of light. We contacted the eye specialist and were instructed to visit him without delay. The news was not good. I had detached the retina in my eye and if it was not operated on at once I could be blind in that eye for the rest of my life. I was afraid and all of my thoughts went into panic mode. My husband phoned our friends on the prayer chain asking them to pray for me. How wonderful it is to know we have friends to turn to in our troubles, who will pray for us when we are sometimes unable to pray for ourselves. My sight was restored thanks to the skill of the surgeon and the power of prayer. I am thankful to be able to see the beautiful world God has created, to hear the singing of the birds, to smell the perfume from the flowers, taste a strawberry, and to hug our loved ones and friends. The blind man also was full of joy praising God for his restored sight. Many people are disabled because they have lost one or all of their five senses and live with ongoing difficulties. Remember them and their families in your prayers that our Heavenly Father will supply for their every need in their bodies, mind and spiritual wellbeing. Let us remember to give thanks for the many blessings that we can so easily take for granted.