

THE HOPE JOURNAL

LEARNING TO LOVE, TOGETHER



October 24, 2021

LOUD

Of what are we afraid?

by Drew Downs

One of the things that strikes me about this week's reading from Mark (10:46-52) is how much loudness is seen as a problem. The man is shouting and the disciples want him to be quiet.

Who among us *can't* relate? The person in the checkout line shouting at her kinds, the person talking into his phone and unintentionally giving the world his password, or the person interrupting church with calls

to repent. Hearing someone shouting *loudly* is unnerving. So much so that we call it inappropriate, wrong, or even sinful.

It is striking then that Jesus asks the disciples to be loud back. *Call him.*

How often we think loud equals bad. But calling and proclaiming are not quiet words. The problem is not the volume. We're afraid of something and blaming the messenger.

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WHAT'S GOING ON

*"You know we've got to find a way
To bring some loving here today".*

-Marvin Gaye

Visiting the Covered Bridge Festival this year felt so familiar. We drove out to Bridgeton through farmland and countryside, pulled into our usual parking place: a makeshift parking lot that will return to a field this week. We walked the main street, planning on what food we'll need to taste and what knick knacks the kids *must have*.



There is a strong sense of familiarity. Everything felt the way I remembered from 2019.

Of course, that sensation, of looking back, invites the particulars into the conversation. Was *that* stand there last time? Where is the favorite breakfast place? Who is missing this year?

There is something human about this process – inviting nostalgia to come in and look around. Use our eyes to remember how things were *before*. What we loved and who we loved. What is changed? A tug-of-war for our emotions between sadness for what is gone and delight at what is new.

I'm reminded of the words in *The Book of Common Prayer* regarding the Burial rite:
The liturgy for the dead is an Easter liturgy. It finds all meaning in the resurrection.

It further names that the challenge of burying a loved one in the name of Christ is an act of both mourning and hope. It is both. Like nostalgia and the pandemic.

What Easter are we experiencing now?

Drew+

ORDINARY TIME

Fall 2021

FOR SUNDAY

Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost

October 24, 2021

Collect

Almighty and everlasting God, increase in us the gifts of faith, hope, and charity; and, that we may obtain what you promise, make us love what you command; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Reading

From Mark 10:46-52

"Many sternly ordered him to be quiet, but he cried out even more loudly, "Son of David, have mercy on me!""

Reflection

One of the most famous themes in the gospel we call Mark is Jesus telling people to *not* speak. Throughout the whole book, he constantly tells people to be quiet; tell know one about what they have seen. He says this to strangers, followers, and even disciples.

This idea is so recognizable and pervasive that scholars refer to it as "The Messianic Secret". *What* he is keeping hidden and *why* is far less clear.

How different this moment is! A man is *shouting*. And not just shouting random things, he is shouting for Jesus to do what he has been keeping secret.

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It should also be clear to us by now how this is going to play out.

- His followers do what they think is right.
- (What Jesus has told them to do before.)
- Jesus will tell them why they are wrong.

It's a funny pattern when we lay it out like that. But it is what we've seen all through chapters 8-10 of Mark. It makes Jesus seem like a bad teacher. But I don't think that's fair.

More commonly, the disciples go on assumptions - taken as much from culture as Jesus's teachings. While this moment certainly seems to run counter to the Messianic Secret, it seems more telling that perhaps they thought that being silent *was* the teaching. As if this were a permanent order...and not a temporary condition.

Here, at Jericho, where their ancient ancestors shouted the walls down, Jesus is inviting this man *who himself is shouting* by inviting the disciples to *shout right back*.

Both Jericho stories are about *change*. God-initiated change.

And the irony is that, while we're so worried about consistency, rules, and what God is "really" doing here, we might miss the far more profound example in front of our eyes. Of a man seeking repentance, turning toward God, calling out for mercy, and receiving it. And then he follows Jesus.

This is a beautiful example of Jesus's Way of Love.

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