

**LW:** No, no, exactly. But I suppose again, just thinking about the passion story actually, that Jesus puts himself into the hands of others, so becomes very - I mean, has to become patient, and at the mercy of Pilate and others who have power over him. But I've always read that the love that he's exhibiting there is both undefended and undefeated. Which is a paradox in itself. And that is a way of life which is possible to live: undefended and undefeated. But it's hard. And most of the time if we're undefended, then we end up being defeated. And it's trying to get that paradox, which I think just involves ever deepening trust in God. That's the only way to, kind of, get to that point.

*Jesus is, in no way is he, ever 'docile' - is he? He's quiet, he runs the whole gamut of feelings. But not 'docile'.*

**LW:** No, maybe, I think maybe that is right. I think, because he's chosen to put himself into that situation, so that he's free at all times. Even being led to the cross - I think that has been freely embarked upon by him.

*Ok, we'll leave 'docile' behind now.*

[16] *I liked your interpretation about the healing of Blind Bartimaeus. Are you suggesting that we should be more direct in our asking - and our replying, I suppose. Like the Quakers: 'Our yes should be our yes, and our no, our no'. Going straight to the point?*

**LW:** I mean, he's a remarkable example of discipleship, Bartimaeus, I think, and that's in itself a very remarkable thing for when you reflect on people with disabilities. That this person with a disability is held up as an example of discipleship for everyone to follow.

Everyone. With or without a disability. That's really important, and so I would always want to emphasise that. And that it is while he's blind that he is exhibiting this persistence, patience, relentlessness, you know - he's absolutely going to keep going. And there's that persistence in discipleship that's all through the Gospels: the widow who's banging on the door, you know, those kinds of stories. So persistence is a really important aspect of intercessory prayer. I think also, I also want to reflect on the fact that Jesus doesn't assume that he wants his sight. And I - he doesn't assume that that's obviously what he's lacking, or that that's what he's asking for. He just says to him: 'What do you want me to do for you?' It could be anything. And I love that open dialogue as well, that Bartimaeus is simply calling out his name which, and you know, people are trying to prevent him, but he's very persistent and Jesus' reply is not, you know, with a magic wand, oh well, obviously you want to be able to see. He just says: 'What do you want me to do for you?' And that to me is - it describes something about praying, which is that we might pray the same prayer for fifty years, and we don't know whether it's been answered or not, but our calling is to keep praying the same prayer directly. Yeah.

*Yes, thank you.*

[17] *Our voices have some interesting views as to why the crowd tried to stop Bartimaeus calling out.*

**Sara:** **There's something to do with the nakedness or honesty of what he's saying. He's asking for something that he really needs and it's almost like people are**

**embarrassed by it, I think. Hearing people speak honestly about their needs, I think. I think it's something to do with that.**

**Grace:** **Jesus was leaving somewhere, and probably on his way to somewhere else - he had a pressing engagement and maybe they just didn't want Bartimaeus to slow him down.**

**Johan:** **I do a lot of work - have a lot of relationships with people with disabilities. And I think when blind people, deaf people, disabled people in general, cry out, there can be a lot of frustration from society, you know: we're getting on fine. It's much easier to ignore those on the margins; those who ask for our help.**

[18] *Anything you'd like to say about those at all?*

**LW:** I like the fact that somebody being very direct, I mean he says: 'have mercy on me'. But - so that's open to interpretation what he's asking for, what he means. But I also think it's important to see this person as a role model for the rest of us, disabled or not.

[19] *Good. You write about 'an unexamined life'. Can you say more about that? That's an interesting idea.*

**LW:** I think that's probably why, if I am thinking about hurry, haste, going from one thing to the next, and I'm probably finding that that's in the end an unsatisfactory way to live fundamentally, it's because that tells me - or kind of indicates to me - that I might be trying to avoid something. So, when I get too busy, and I'm really,

you know, I could be like that cartoon, you know: the Roadrunner cartoon, who runs off the edge of a cliff and keeps running. And it's quite a while before the Roadrunner realises that there's nothing there, and falls down. I suppose what I mean is that it takes a lot of courage to sit unprotected before God. For me that's in silence, but for other people it will be a different form of prayer. But for me it is in silence. And it's a brave thing to do, because everything that you try to avoid will come. And then you are asked, gently by God - but it's hard to hear the voice as a gentle voice sometimes - to look at that. And to see yourself as God sees you, which is nearly always some colossal muddle of motives and, you know, fabulousness and, you know, disaster and it's all kind of going on. And it's really easy in a kind of full - and what looks like a very productive life - simply not to see who you are before God, and to see both the beauty and the difficulty of that.

[20] *Who's examining? Who's doing the examining? Are you examining yourself? Is God examining you? Or is God simply watching you doing the examination?*

**LW:** I think probably what I would say is that the initial prayer is all a kind of desire that God will show you who you are. So: 'God, you show me my day'. I'm not going to sit at the end of my day and go through all the things that I did wrong, or the things that I could have done better - it's not a list. What my prayer is: 'God show me my day. Show me the life that you see me living.' And kind of rest - or try to rest - or sit in that prayer. Now in the middle of that, of course, I will have my own ideas about all that stuff