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Bartimaeus Among Us



DEBBIE & KEITH MYERS



SUPPORT PLEDGED



MEXICO

One of my favorite stories in the Bible occurs in the 10th chapter of the book of Mark. It is the story of blind Bartimaeus. I admire the fortitude and passion that he demonstrated as he cried out to Jesus passing by on the road outside of Jericho. His cry was, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" Throughout our journey in missions we have crossed paths with many Bartimaeus'. They are the people that society has chosen to ignore. Their value has been weighed and humanity has determined them insignificant. Hidden within our sight, but out of our view. For the past three and half years, we have had the privilege of exploring southern central Mexico. We have hit countless number of topes (speed bumps) at high rates of speed, enjoyed roadside taco stands, getting lost (45 minute drives on dirt roads that turn into 5 hours due to a wrong turn), sleeping on the floor, bucket baths and a plethora of other stories forever seared into our memories; however, relationships trump all experiences.

The average drive time to one of our churches is four hours. Along these routes, we pass through a myriad of different small communities. About three hours into our passage from Puebla to the indigenous zone of the Mixteca (Oaxaca, Mexico) we drive through a small community called Guapocingo. The town is nestled amongst the mountains of Oaxaca and has nothing that is out of the ordinary; however, it is the home Rogelio Sanchez. He sits in his wheelchair or sometimes on the ground extending his hat as passerby's drive through his town. This is his only source of income. The things that I know about Rogelio is that his smile is contagious. He enjoys his life. He always asks when we are coming back through his town. And he calls me brother. I anticipate seeing him during each drive and worry when he is not there. In a sense, this is his cry for mercy (Son of David, have mercy on me). Our visits are brief and usually only consist of pleasantries and blessings, but these times have profoundly changed me. Next week, we will pass through Guapocingo on our way to a youth event in the Mixteca. Our plan is to bake cookies for Rogelio and share the Gospel.

When Jesus was leaving Jericho, his mind was set on the cross that was before him, but the lesson that he taught along the way was the very essence of his call and teachings. No matter how busy or preoccupied we might be in our lives, there are Bartimaeus' throughout our journey of life. They may be found in your school, workplace, community or the grocery store. Our challenge is to seek them out and show them mercy.