

Just ignore it

By [Lee Canipe](#)

October 22, 2012

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"Ignore it, and it will go away." This often seems to be a way of life for me. I'm not proud of this, but I'm not going to lie, either.

On a recent afternoon, I skimmed from page to page in the newspaper, glancing at headlines about environmental deregulation, an increase in the state murder rate, schools that aren't educating their students, massacres in Syria and other grim realities. My reaction? I'm embarrassed to confess: "Not my problem, not my problem, not my problem, and not my problem." Then I turned to the sports section.

In the little corner of the world where I live, I have plenty of daily opportunities to ignore injustice, suffering and sin in hopes that, eventually, it will go away. I'm sad to say that a lot of times, that's exactly what I do. I pay attention to what, based on my limited grasp of the world, I consider to be important. It's a very me-centric list of priorities.

That's why, when I read these verses from Mark, I identify with the folks who tell poor, blind Bartimaeus to hush and quit bothering Jesus. After all, there is a big crowd gathered around Jesus, all of them eager to hear what he has to say, hoping to learn something new about God, maybe the latest parable. Moreover, I'll bet there are dozens of beggars sitting beside the road between Jericho and Jerusalem, all of them making noise in hopes of attracting attention from the passers-by, if not some spare change.

In order to hear Jesus, I can't be distracted by all this endless streetside static. If I ignore Bartimaeus, maybe he'll go away. If I can't ignore him, perhaps I can at least

get him to pipe down so I don't miss something important that Jesus might say as we walk together down the road.

Thank goodness Jesus doesn't take his cues from me. What I choose to ignore, he chooses to hear. What I choose to avoid, he chooses to embrace. What I choose to neglect, he chooses to heal.

When I read the Gospels, these are the terrible moments of grace when I realize why I so desperately need a savior.