

STUDIES IN MARK--LESSON TWENTY-ONE  
The Message of A Wonderful Miracle: Ephphatha  
Mark 7:31-37

- I. THE MIRACLE: "And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to lay his hand upon him. And he took him aside from the multitude privately, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat, and touched his tongue; and looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephpha-tha, that is, Be opened. And his ears were opened, and the bond of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain. And he charged them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it. And they were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well; he maketh even the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak" (Mark 7:32-37).
- II. THE TOUCH OF THE MASTER'S HAND imparted to the deaf and stammering man the power he needed to hear and speak plainly.
- III. IMPEDIMENTS TO HEARING JESUS EXIST NOW (2 Cor. 3:15).
- A. Some will not listen (John 5:39-42).
1. Some do not desire to hear God's word.
  2. Some seek merely to preserve the "status quo," and are unwilling to change (Matt. 18:1-4).
  3. Too deeply set in our way: Stubborn will.
  4. Will not take time to study, meditate, or put forth the necessary effort to "hear ye him."
  5. Some fear the change hearing Jesus demands.
- B. Some have closed eyes, dull ears, hard waxed hearts.
1. Matthew 13:15; Acts 28:26,27.
  2. Not honest with self in receiving God's word (Luke 8:11-15).
  3. Lack of personal faith: Dominated by doubt.
  4. Lack of concern or love to reach out to and/or teach others.

C. Prejudice and/or ignorance.

1. Acts 3:17; 1 Cor. 2:8; John 1:46.
2. Preconceived ideas (2 Cor. 3:15).
3. Bigotry: A prejudiced, "know-it-all" attitude, which ignores what is said in the word of God. (3 John 9-11; John 13:34,35; Romans 12:9,21).

D. The tragedy of Christendom: Religious division.

1. Denominationalism (1 Cor. 1:10; John 17:20,21).
2. Traditions, creeds, opinions of men (2 Cor. 13:5; 1 Thes. 5:19-21).
3. Loyalty to men above Christ: party spirit (1 Cor. 1:11-13; Gal. 5:20).

E. Worldly care, lust and pleasure choke the word.

1. Luke 8:14,15; Matt. 13:22; Mark 4:19.
2. Pleasure in unrighteousness (2 Thes. 2:11,12).
3. Preoccupied with other things (Matt. 6:19-21).
4. Enamored by, inflamed with love for, the world (James 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17).
5. Wandering mind.

IV. IMPEDIMENTS TO SPEAKING FOR JESUS NOW.

A. Truth not spoken in love (Eph. 4:14,15).

1. Lack of love for the truth (2 Thes. 2:10-12).
2. Lack of love and concern to reach out and teach others: Without genuine compassion for people. (Matthew 9:35-38; Col. 3:12; 1 John 3:17,18).
3. Lack of sustained, concerted efforts by the church as a whole, teamwork, to take the word to the world (Acts 2:42; 5:42; 6:5-7).

B. Bashfulness and/or fear (1 Cor. 15:58; 16:13,14; Ephesians 6:10-17).

1. Fear of the reaction of others.
2. Fear of being wrong, making mistakes, failure.
3. Ashamed of Christ, the faith in Christ Jesus, or the primitive gospel (Mark 8:38; Rom. 1:16).
4. Lack of conviction and/or zeal for the faith.

C. Lack of knowledge, preparation or tact.

1. Failure to "go on unto perfection," full growth, in Bible study, knowledge of the truth, etc. (Hebrews 5:12; 6:1).
2. Misunderstanding and/or wresting the Scriptures (2 Peter 3:14-18).
3. Failure to understand others: Human nature, weakness, etc.
4. Lack of faith in others.
5. Wrong attitude or disposition, tactlessness.

D. Lack of life commitment: Mere lip service.

1. Talk about what we should do, but not do.
2. Talk about what we should do, but not try to live by the word of the Lord (Matt. 7:12; etc).
3. Lack of faith in the seed (Luke 8:11; 1 Pet. 1:23).
4. Lack of persistence or steadfastness: Laziness, neglect, indifference or selfish use of time.

E. Unchristian influence silences many tongues.

1. Prayerless, worldly, guilty lives (1 John 4:20-22).
2. Unfaithfulness in attending services: Absenteeism weakens (Hebrews 10:22-25).
3. Some have only a form of godliness (2 Tim. 3:1-5).

V. THE MESSAGE OF THE MIRACLE: The power of God which worked through Christ to open the ears and loose the tongue of the deaf and dumb man, is available now, through faith in the gospel (Romans 1:16), to everyone who will receive it: EPHATHA!

- A. This lesson is not presented in a fault-finding spirit, but with a plea for self-examination and improvement.
- B. What are the major impediments to your hearing Jesus and speaking for him as God would have you to speak?
- C. When you have examined yourself (2 Cor. 13:5), will you allow "the touch of the Master's hand" to impart to your ears and to your tongue the power you need?
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