

Sermon Outlines
A Heavenly Look and An Earthly Sigh

Reading:

Mark 7:31-37

The first thing that strikes us about the healing of the deaf man, who had the impediment of speech, is that he was brought to Jesus (v. 32) "And they bring unto him [Jesus] one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and the beseech him [Jesus] to put his hand upon him."

Why bring men to Jesus?

The answer is that they are spiritually deaf and incapable of confessing Christ. This man was oblivious to his need of the Saviour and the Saviour needed to be confronted with the need of this man.

Think of the amazing gift of speech which we often take for granted. Speech depends upon our ability to hear. That is why there are so many languages and dialects in the world. So when hearing is lost, speech is lost too.

The instantaneous nature of this man's restoration of hearing and then his speech represents the miracle of regeneration. When a soul is given an ear to hear by faith he or she will immediately speak well of Christ.

The details of verse 33 show the sovereignty of the Lord's working. There were no crowds, no clay, no tools; just fingers in his ears, spittle on his tongue, and the clear one-word command, Ephphatha, meaning "Be opened."

The statements of verse 34 is an example to us on the inner longing associated with true prayer. "And looking up to heaven, he sighed ..." The look and the sigh.

This was the look of Son-ship and the sigh of intercession.

Lessons regarding the Saviour's sigh.

1) **The Sigh of Grief**

We learn of the Lord's grief for this man who was brought to him. This was a sigh of heaviness for sin. Christ by His incarnation entered into human sorrows.

- a) There is enough brokenness about humanity to make us groan. The world is filled with broken lives, broken homes, and broken hearts.
- b) The unconverted soul is spiritually deaf and spiritually speechless - incapable of hearing the voice of Christ and of confessing Christ.
- c) We lament that so few open their mouths in prayer. Their silence in confessing Christ is very much due to their inability to hear of Christ and learn of Him. Those who are prayerless are likely deaf to the voice of God. Prayer begins when we hear God speaking to our souls and we are able to tell others the story of His love to our souls.

2) **The Sigh of Intercession** (v. 34)

Our best praying for such souls is to sigh and groan for them. Though no words were uttered, we can learn a lot from this sigh.

- a) The Lord's burden was Personal.

He did not leave this issue and this man to others. The Lord Himself sighed in his heart concerning him. Intercession starts with a personal burden for souls.

- a) The Lord's intercession was effectual. The sigh was not just inward, but God-ward and accompanied by the Lord's look up to Heaven. Through this the Lord showed His fellowship with the Father and sought the Father's favour in this act of healing. Jesus worked to heal this man and the Father worked also.
- b) The Lord's intercession shows that Father and Son were in constant harmony. But it is a great example to us. Prayer shows our dependence upon the Lord Jesus and upon Christ's intercession to

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the Father. In our praying, we must look to our Lord Jesus as our intercessor in Heaven. On our behalf, the Lord calls on God to come down to work His power in His people, even us when we pray in Jesus' name.

3) The Sigh of Priority

The sigh preceded the command of healing (v. 34). The look and prayer to heaven preceded the pronouncement of "Ephphatha".

- a) The Lord got the order correct and so must we.
- b) Until there is sighing in the church prayer meetings there will be powerlessness in the church's ministry.
- c) EPHPHATHA "Be opened." This was an authoritative command. It was not an experiment. It was the power of Christ at work.

Power in prayer with God gives power with men in ministry.

- a) The man spake plain. Clarity was in his voice and diction. He could be heard and understood. This was remarkable. The miracle gave full restoration of his lost faculties. He could afterward sit at Jesus' feet to attend to His words with profit and he could shout and sing the praise of the Lord as others. God's grace restores lost faculties to enable us to worship the Lord.
- b) The witnesses were astonished. "He spake plain." This was an instantaneous miracle that could not be doubted nor denied. The man's words and ability to commune with others was proof of the Saviour's power to heal.
- c) The best advertisement is the power of God at work to open deaf ears and open mouths to confess Christ. Then the church will be awakened and the ungodly will be alerted to the power of the gospel. Then there will be agreement on the wisdom and power of the Lord, for they will say, "He hath done all things well."

This shall be our testimony on the resurrection day when the works of the Lord shall be manifest to all. On that day it shall be universally known that the Lord doeth all things well. That shall be true of His whole church and of each servant who submitted unto Him.

There will be no disappointment with our Christ on that great day!

. . . . Ian Goligher