

Daily Bible Study

“Up Close & Personal”

Mark 7:31-35

September 12 - 18, 2010

THE LORD’S DAY & MONDAY – We return this week to our continuing study of the Gospel of Mark and take for our text **Mark 7:31-37**. This lesson is entitled *“Up Close & Personal”* because in it we will see that Jesus deals with a man among the crowds and He deals with him personally and uniquely; as an individual. This is how Christ dealt with all of the people He came into contact with for healing and salvation. It is also how He deals with people today and how He will deal with all mankind at The Last Judgment. In this current chapter of **Mark 7** we move from a story of a Gentile woman who meets Jesus, exercises faith in Him and then Jesus heals her daughter from a distance. The daughter was not present and yet receives the healing from The Son of God. Now, we move in the text to this deaf and dumb man whom Jesus heals *“Up Close & Personal”*. Although we have commented of the brevity of Mark’s gospel this story of healing is only found in his record. It is one of two miracles of Jesus that are particular to him (**Mark 8:22-26**). In his record we will read of Jesus doing what may seem a bit bizarre as He puts His fingers in the mans ears as well as spits and touches the dumb mans tongue. An interesting note is found when the text tells us that Jesus *looked up to heaven and sighed* and He then commands that the mans ears be opened and immediately they were opened and the man’s tongue was loosed. As what seems to be the norm for Christ, He forbids the crowds to tell others of this incident but they not only *widely proclaim it*; they also were *astonished beyond measure* as they are moved to exclaim the praises of Jesus. Read our text in **Mark 7:31-37**: *“Again, departing from the region of Tyre and Sidon, He came through the midst of the region of Decapolis to the Sea of Galilee. Then they brought to Him one who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech, and they begged Him to put His hand on him. And He took him aside from the multitude, and put His fingers in his ears, and He spat and touched his tongue. Then, looking up to heaven, He sighed, and said to him, “Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.” Immediately his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke plainly. Then He commanded them that they should tell no one; but the more He commanded them, the more widely they proclaimed it. And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, “He has done all things well. He makes both the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.”*

(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?

Suggestion for Prayer: Father God, I thank You for Your Word and for recording and preserving it for me to read, listen to, and obey. Please teach and feed me from it this week.

TUESDAY – **Mark 7:31-32** “Again, departing from the region of Tyre and Sidon, He came through the midst of the region of Decapolis to the Sea of Galilee. Then they brought to Him one who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech, and they begged Him to put His hand on him.” At the beginning of the story of the woman with the demon possessed daughter we read that Jesus went to the region of Tyre and Sidon. Now, at the start of our text in **verse 31** we read that he was departing from the region of Tyre and Sidon and coming back toward the Sea of Galilee. Lord willing, we will speak a little concerning the geography of all this traveling as well as Jesus’ strategic movements this upcoming Lord’s Day. Suffice to say today, He is definitely covering some ground in these texts and most likely is spending a lot of time teaching The Twelve as they walked what could be some 150+ miles if you trace out the route of Jesus travels on a map. Jesus literally demonstrated to His disciples the principle and command of The Great Commission to go to every creature with the Good News of the Gospel (**Mark 16:15**). It is after this journey that the crowd surrounds Him yet again. Even in Gentile areas Jesus fame has been broadcasted and the people throng Him. We read simply that it was *they* who brought this man who was *deaf and had an impediment in his speech* to Jesus. First, let’s address the man. We know that he can’t hear and the Greek word used to describe his speech having impediment would seem to suggest he at best, stammered. The word literally means “speaking with difficulty”. So the man is physically in great need. We are not told specifically who the “*they*” are but from the story we can deduce that whoever it was, (friends, family, and neighbors) they believed Jesus could heal this man by merely putting *His hand on him*. We can and will learn a lot as we contemplate this scene. It appears the people have heard that Jesus has done wonderful miracles by laying His hands on individuals and they would have Jesus do the same for this man as they appear here to demonstrate faith in Jesus. One interesting thing to notice in the passage is that Jesus will heal this man His way; not necessarily according to the people’s preconceived ideas. The Great Physician chooses His own methods in dealing with His creation. Never should we question God in His dealings with us or others or attempt to tell Him how He should answer or prayer requests. The one thing we can and should request and seek is for Him to “place His hands on us” as it were. They begged this of Jesus on behalf of another person; they interceded for him. What about you? Read **1 Samuel 12:23, Luke 22:32, James 5:16, and 1 Thessalonians 5:25**.

(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, give me a genuine concern for the needs of others; both my family in Jesus as well as those lost without and outside of Him. Help me pray for others as I should.

WEDNESDAY – **Mark 7:33** “And He took him aside from the multitude, and put His fingers in his ears, and He spat and touched his tongue.” It is in this **verse 33** that we see Jesus deals with us as individuals and we see evidenced His love and concern for those who are hurting and in need. We can’t be dogmatic as to why Jesus *took him aside from the multitude* but it may very well be that Jesus was putting the man at ease by removing him from the spotlight of the crowd with its

pressure and scrutiny. It would also appear quite probable from what takes place next that Jesus was getting the entire focus of this man on Him, God incarnate, rather than on the crowd or his friends or anyone and anything else. Jesus wants this man to get a good look and “listen” to Him. In the following actions of this verse; the *putting of His fingers in his ears* and the *spitting and touching his tongue* we see that Jesus communicates at least visually to this man. Some commentators have even used the words “sign-language” to describe Jesus interaction with him. Regardless of what we call or label His actions Jesus’ love, concern, and power are clearly seen as He touches this man and handles him and his situation perfectly although different from others that He healed. So much is heard without words as we look on Jesus with His fingers in the mans ears and with His very spit on his tongue. There is a unity and coming together of the sinner with The Divine in this verse. There is sympathy and understanding. Read **Isaiah 53:5, Hebrews 4:15-16**.

(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?

Suggestion for Prayer: Jesus, in becoming man you are able to understand and sympathize with me in my weakness. I Thank &Praise You for such humility, also for bearing my sin and demonstrating Your power over it. I eagerly await the day You restore everything affected by the curse forever.

THURSDAY– Mark7:34-35 “Then, looking up to heaven, He sighed, and said to him, “Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.” Immediately his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke plainly.” Yesterday we closed by reading **Hebrews 4:15-16** and **verse 16** of that passage is displayed and demonstrated for us in Jesus *looking up to heaven*. We are commanded to bring our petitions to God in prayer and here Jesus as God The Son models it for us and acknowledges The Father; His Father and our Father. This helps us see that Jesus recognized His strength and help on this earth as a man was found in communion with His heavenly Father and through The Holy Spirit who was upon Him. This in no way diminishes the fact that Jesus was fully God standing there but we recognize the vastness of the eternal plan of The Holy Trinity and we see the wonderful submission and humility of Jesus The Son in the incarnation. We spoke earlier of the coming together of the sinner and The Divine God seen in **verse 32** and now it is seen again in the fact that Jesus *sighed*. Much could be said concerning this *sigh* of Christ. He sighs over wretched condition of the man before Him; living marred through the fall from God’s wonderful healthy and whole original creation. In compassion and understanding of the pain and sorrow brought through sin, we read that Jesus stenadzo, “a sigh, to groan”. Interesting is the fact that this Greek word and another form of it are used in connection with our praying to The Father with the help of The Holy Spirit in **Romans 8:23, 26**. The Savior seems to indicate He “feels” the hurt of this man if you will and expresses it in this *sigh*. The Man of Sorrows *sighs* as He not only observes the horrors of sin but also in that He realizes the cost necessary to save His people from it. He will pay the price for ransom. I would not hope to make more of this *sigh* than I should but I believe only eternity will help us understand all the majestic character we see from The Man, Christ Jesus here in this text. Jesus then commands the mans ears to “*Be opened*”. We know that what took place next;

*Immediately his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke plainly. Tomorrow we'll see something neat from this story but close today reading **Isaiah 35:5-6**.*

(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?

Suggestion for Prayer: Thanks & Praise to You Father, Son, and Holy Spirit for Your eternal plan, Your marvelous love and compassion, Your grace to the undeserving and Your power to save.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY – **Mark 7:35-37** “*Immediately his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke plainly. Then He commanded them that they should tell no one; but the more He commanded them, the more widely they proclaimed it. And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, “He has done all things well. He makes both the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.”* We see in this text that after this man was healed the people, the “they” of the earlier verses, *widely proclaimed it*. The Lord *astonished them beyond measure* and they sum it up by saying, “*He has done all things well. He makes both the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.*” Matthew records these multitudes, “*glorified the God of Israel*”. Although they were not ethnic Jews they gave glory to *the God of Israel*, the only true God; our God. Mark does something in the writing of this passage which helps his readers (who primarily seem to be Gentile) put together the prophecies of the OT concerning the Jewish Messiah with the work of Jesus. He shows that Jesus is the Savior *of the world* (Jew & Gentile), He has brought together His people, The Israel of God, and they are united as one in Him and are citizens of and in His Kingdom. In **verse 32** Mark used the Greek word mogilalos to describe this mans speech impediment. The word is used only once in the NT; right here. What’s neat is Mark seems to be alluding to **Isaiah 35:6** where in the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the OT) the same Greek word is used and again it is only used once; right there. The apparent link by Mark of this event to the prophecy of **Isaiah 35:6** seems obvious. That prophecy portrays and describes the Messianic age and Kingdom. One of the features is that God would come and do what Jesus has just done. **Isaiah 35:5-6**, “*Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert.*” The people, although sadly not all believing as seeming evident by their disobedience, were still witnessing this wonder and *were astonished beyond measure*.

(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?

Suggestion for Prayer: Lord help me truly believe & obey You for Jesus “has done all things well”.