

Be Opened!
Mark 7:31-37
Series: Christ Our Focus

1. Introduction –

- a. Christ is among the gentiles and continues his preaching among them.
- b. He is concerned for them and brings the word wherever he goes.
- c. This must of have been very disquieting for the disciples, for as Jews, they felt uncomfortable among gentiles.
- d. Yet God the father had promised that the gentiles would one day be included:
 - i. **Genesis 12:3** I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."
 - ii. **Isaiah 49:6** he says: "It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."
- e. This missionary journey into Gentile territory indicates his willful inclusion of the non-Jewish world in his ministry.

2. Verse 31 –

- a. The clamor of the crowds on Jesus' second visit to the Decapolis contrasts noticeable with the ingratitude he suffered on his first visit there.
 - i. **Mark 5:15-17** And they came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed man, the one who had had the legion, sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid. (16) And those who had seen it described to them what had happened to the demon-possessed man and to the pigs. (17) And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their region.
- b. Here we see the mercy of God being demonstrated.
 - i. They wanted him to go and never come back and yet Christ returns again and offers them redemption.
 1. **Exodus 34:6** The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God

merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and
abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness,

3. Verse 32 – They brought him a man
 - a. One of many miracles – Mark focuses on this instant only
 - b. They come to him as beggars
 - c. They come to him interceding.
 - d. Why would these gentiles bring this man:
 - i. The work of the former demoniac has not taken foot. He had proclaimed what Christ had done for him and when Christ, in his grace, returns, they flock to Christ.
 - ii. **Mark 5:17-20** And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their region. (18) As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him. (19) And he did not permit him but said to him, "Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." (20) And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled.
 - e. This is what happens when we take to heart the Lord's command to evangelize the world – Salvation becomes a reality.

4. Verses 33-34 – Be opened
 - a. Christ takes the man aside – just the two of them – intimacy
 - b. Means –
 - i. Christ does not always use the same means in healing someone –
 1. Sometimes he spoke, touched, spit, etc.
 2. The means are not important – the Lord of the means is.
 - ii. He put his fingers into his ears – I'm going to do something for your ears.
 - iii. He put spit on his tongue – I'm going to do something for your tongue.
 - c. He looks up – a sigh of engagement
 - i. **Psalms 25:15** My eyes are ever toward the LORD, for he will pluck my feet out of the net.

- ii. **Psalms 121:1** A Song of Ascents. I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come?
- d. Be opened – his own command by his own authority

5. Verse 35

- a. Verse 35 –
 - i. His eyes healed
 - ii. The bonds of his tongues were loosened

6. Verses 36-37

- a. The command to silence –
 - i. Christ main ministry is that of preaching salvation and not of miracles
 - ii. His time is winding down.
- b. They disobey the command even they are full of wonderment
 - i. **John 15:14** You are my friends if you do what I command you.
- c. He has done all things well
 - i. **Genesis 1:31** And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.
- d. Deaf and Mute:
 - i. **Isaiah 35:4-5** Say to those who have an anxious heart, "Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you." (5) Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped;

7. Benediction:

- a. **Zechariah 2:11** And many nations shall join themselves to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people. And I will dwell in your midst, and you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you.