

*August 7*

## **Tongue Tied**

Read Mark 7:31-37. Who was brought to Jesus, and what did Jesus do for him?

**31** And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, He came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis.

**32** And they bring unto Him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech Him to put His hand upon him.

**33** And He took him aside from the multitude, and put His fingers into his ears, and He spit, and touched his tongue;

1. Christ took Him aside from the multitude, Mark 7:33. Ordinarily, He wrought His miracles publicly before all the people, to show that they would bear the strictest scrutiny and inspection; but this He did privately, to show that He did not seek His own glory, and to teach us to avoid every thing that savours of ostentation. Let us learn of Christ to be humble, and to do good where no eye sees, but His ... eye.. Matthew Henrys BCC 965.27

2. He used more significant actions, in the doing of this cure, than usual. (1.) He put his fingers into his ears, as if he would syringe them, and fetch out that which stopped them up. (2.) He spit upon his own finger, and then touched his tongue, as if he would moisten his mouth, and so loosen that with which his tongue was tied. these were no treatments that could in the least contribute to his cure, but only signs of the exerting of that power which Christ had to cure him, to encourage his faith, and the faith of those that brought him. The application was all from himself, it was his own fingers that he put into his ears, and his own spittle that he put upon his tongue; for he alone heals. . MHBCC 965.28

**34** [And looking up to heaven](#), He [sighed](#), [and saith unto him](#), [Ephphatha](#), [that is](#), [Be opened](#).

3. He looked up to heaven, to give his Father the praise of what he did; for he sought his praise, and did his will, and, as Mediator, acted in dependence on him, and with an eye to him. Thus he signified that it was by a divine power, a power he had as the Lord from heaven..., that he did this; for the hearing ear and the seeing eye the Lord has made, and can remake even both of them. He also hereby directed his patient who could see, though he could not hear, to look up to heaven for relief. Moses with his stammering tongue is

directed to look that way (Exodus 4:11); Who hath made man's mouth? Or who maketh the dumb or deaf, or the seeing or the blind? Have not I the Lord?.  
MHBCC 965.29

4. He sighed; not as if he found any difficulty in working this miracle, or obtaining power to do it from his father; but thus he expressed his pity for the miseries of human life, and his sympathy with the afflicted in their afflictions, as one that was himself touched with the feeling of their infirmities. And as to this man, he sighed, not because he was loth to do him this kindness, or did it with reluctancy; but because of the many temptations which he would be exposed to, and the sins he would be in danger of, the tongue-sins, after the restoring of his speech to him, which before he was free from. He had better be tongue-tied still, unless he have grace to keep his mouth as with a bridle, Psalms 39:1. . MHBCC 965.30

**35** And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain.

**36** 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*;

6. He ordered it to be kept very private, but it was made very public (1.) It was his humility, that he charged them they should tell no man, Mark 7:36. Most men will proclaim their own goodness, or, at least, desire that others should proclaim it; but Christ, though he was himself in no danger of being puffed up with it, knowing that we are, would thus set us an example of self-denial, as in other things, so especially in praise and applause. We should take pleasure in doing good, but not in its being known.

(2.) It was their zeal, that, though he charged them to say nothing of it, yet they published it, before Christ would have had it published. But they meant honestly, and therefore it is to be reckoned rather an act of indiscretion than an act of disobedience, Mark 7:36.  
MHBCC 965.33

**37** And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: He maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

Jesus did not take the shortest distance to return to Galilee from the region of Tyre and Sidon. It seems Jesus went north from the area of Tyre, up through the region of Sidon, then inland and down through the area northeast of the Sea of Galilee, finally arriving near the sea itself. It was a

circuitous route, likely with additional time for Him to teach His disciples.

The text does not indicate exactly who brought the man to Jesus, but his problem was plain enough—he could not hear and had difficulty speaking. Loss of hearing isolates people from their surroundings, and profound deafness can make it challenging to learn how to speak. This man's problem may have been longstanding.

Jesus understands the man's predicament and takes him aside privately. The Lord's manner of healing the man is curious, particularly for modern readers. He puts His fingers in the man's ears, spits, touches his tongue and sighs. Jesus touches the affected parts of the man that He will heal, but why the sigh? "He sighed at thought of the ears that would not be open to the truth, the tongues that refused to acknowledge the Redeemer."—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 404.

### Positive Use:

2Cor 5:2, 4- For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: For we that are in *this* tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

Ro 8:23- And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

Negative use:

James 5:9 [Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.](#)

Hebrews 13:17- Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

Jesus miraculously restored the man's hearing and enabled him to speak clearly. His sigh illustrates the limits that God has placed upon Himself in regard to the free choice of humanity. He will not force the will. All humans are free to choose whom they will have lead their life—the Prince of Life or the prince of darkness. Jesus could open deaf ears but would not force unbelieving hearts to acknowledge His messiahship.

This brief story also illustrates what God can do for those who willingly turn to Him. Perhaps you have experienced reticence at sharing your faith, feeling tongue-tied regarding

just what to say. This miracle offers encouragement that the Lord Jesus can open your ears to be sensitive to others' needs and share a ready word to lift them on their journey.

**What do you do with the gifts you have been given regarding hearing and speaking, for they are gifts? How are you using them?**