

Jesus and the Sick
 May 12th, 2011
 Home Bible Study at Kasukabe
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The Gospel according to Mark:

7:31 And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came to the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis.

7:32 And they bring to him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech. And they beseech him to put his hand upon him.

7:33 And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue;

7:34 And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and says to him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened.

7:35 And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke plain.

7:36 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;

7:37 And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He has done all things well. He makes both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

Let's look at the last verse, verse 37: "He has done all things well." Now, everybody in this room will agree with that. But also, someday in the future, when each one of us is taken up to Heaven and sees the glory of the Lord, we will have to say the same thing again and again.

It is not "He has done *most* of the things well," but "He has done *all* things well".

People who met Jesus 2000 years ago came to know this fact from their own experiences. The Gospel according to Mark was actually written for Romans, rather than Jews. For Romans of the time, the most important thing in their life was to have power-- authority.

This is the reason why it is repeated numerous times in Mark that nothing is impossible for Jesus--Jesus can do anything. I entitled today's sermon as "Lord Jesus and the Sick," or it could be "Importance of an Encounter with the Lord Jesus" which might be more accurate.

Jesus and the sick are complete polar opposites, just like democracy and despotism or love and hate. Jesus once said, "I am life. Life itself." Jesus was filled on the inside with joy, peace, and power. On the other hand, the sick man was full of pain, agony, weakness, desperation, anxiety, worry and unrest. In addition to

that, sick people were kept out of society, just like the deaf man we just read about in the Bible was. In that sense, Jesus and the sick man had nothing in common with each other.

What caused all the worries of this sick man? It was not just because he was physically ill, but rather because he became isolated. There is no difference in this sense between today and 2000 years ago. The most common epidemic is not cancer, but it is a disease called isolation.

Everybody is alone after all. Jesus was life itself while the sick had no hope or joy. But I suppose these two were destined to meet and demonstrate a new way that leads to salvation of men.

Jesus repeatedly said that he had come to save sick people. So, Jesus and the sick had to interact with each other. Jesus made it very clear that "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick."

Actually, it would be somewhat a pity to be whole and not to need Jesus at all. Jesus clearly stated that he had come to seek and find those that are lost. Sick people, people with worries, those who are depressed, and those who have lost all joy and hope are the ones who need Jesus.

And Jesus said that he had come to live for those that are sick and lost. The deaf man here in this part of the Bible outwardly looked whole with ears and tongue, but he could not communicate with other people.

It would be depressing and frustrating to have a tongue and ears, but be unable to talk or listen to others. This sick man might have accepted his handicap, but it does not mean that he did not suffer from it. He must have always felt lonely because he could not communicate with other people. He was isolated.

His pain was more than physical or what could be seen outwardly. He had deep agony and worries that lay in the depth of his heart. He had ears and a tongue, but, as I just said, these did not work at all and thus were useless and worthless parts of his body.

Inevitably, he was drawn away from the society and became totally isolated. His true suffering was more than physical, but emotional and mental--sorrow and agony.

Doctors tried to help this man, but they could do nothing at all. It is understandable that this sick man could have been in deep sorrow and pain for a very

long time. His agony was so deep that no amount of sympathy or comfort could heal him at all.

People who lived 2000 years ago might have tried to solve the situation in their own power, by their own efforts. But, when people have this kind of attitude, the Lord won't even look at them. After all, the only thing that is required of us is just to ask for His help.

Most people living today believe that their problems can be solved by their own efforts or hard work. They will never be blessed as long as they live that way.

This problem was not just in the deaf man's imagination. It was not just a dream. It was a formidable reality. Every morning as he woke up, he knew that his sickness was still with him.

In these verses that we just read from the Bible, Jesus healed his illness. Let's examine how He did it. First, Jesus "took him aside." Jesus wanted to be alone with this sick man.

For this sick man, his encounter with Jesus was a turning point which changed his whole life fundamentally. We too, have to make a time to be alone with Jesus, when we are in pain and agony.

No problem will be solved through the interaction of other people. It was why Jesus repeatedly said, "Come to me!" Still, it is not so pleasant a thing to be alone. It is dreadful. You feel like you are left powerless.

Most people living today are so afraid of being alone and they are always trying to find something to occupy their time alone like watching TV. No one wants to be alone. Nobody really wants to be totally isolated. Instead, people always try to find a way to escape from their isolation.

But is it not a most dreadful thing to be alone and separated from Jesus too? Surely, it is a most wonderful thing to be alone with Jesus!

It is very difficult to be alone while at the same time being surrounded by so many problems, pains, worries and anxieties. It is so dreadful. However, once Jesus comes in, a new change is brought forth into your life which fills you with joy, strength and peace.

Usually, when Jesus healed people--I would say 99% of the time--He did the miracle instantaneously by His Words only. But, in this particular case, Jesus approached the sick man, not by His Word, but by His action.

First, Jesus put His fingers into the ears of the sick man and then touched his tongue. The sick quickly realized what Jesus was trying to do. Jesus did not try to approach this deaf man with words, but made him understand by deeds what He was about to do for him.

Then--this is also important--Jesus looked up to Heaven. The sick man saw it, and I believe he also looked up to Heaven just like Jesus did. This made the sick man realize that real salvation always comes from Heaven.

Then, Jesus commanded the man, "Ephphatha," which means "be opened."

Needless to say, these words of Jesus, "be opened," were not just sound. If these words are said by ordinary people like ourselves, then they will only be sound that vanishes into the air. However, these words of Jesus did not simply vanish.

The words of Jesus are never just for comfort only. Nor are they spoken words of desire. The words of Jesus are in of themselves an action full of heavenly power. Because of this, the sick man was changed and he could then hear and talk.

The multitude was so astonished to see the deaf man cured.

[The Gospel according to Mark 7:37](#) And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He has done all things well. He makes both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

The deaf man's life was changed by his encounter with Jesus. It was totally re-created from the bottom up. Because of this, his depression and desperation disappeared from that very moment. Instead, he no doubt was filled with joy, gratitude and praise. A new life was born which was filled with joyous blessing.

In reality, this new life filled with joy and blessing is offered to everyone. It is a wonderful gift from Jesus. According to the Bible, man is born spiritually deaf and mute.

Just like this man was physically deaf, mute, and isolated, mankind, before they are re-born through Jesus, do not have any communication with the Lord God and are thus in a state of spiritual isolation.

There are so many people who cannot hear or talk although they have ears and tongues. It is said in the Bible a number of times, "He that hath an ear, let him hear." These words appear seven times in chapters two and three of Revelation.

"He that hath an ear, let him hear." This implies that some people cannot hear even though they have ears. Let's take a look at some portions of the bible that describes examples of this.

Isaiah

6:9 And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.

6:10 Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

Ezekiel

12:2 Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house, which have eyes to see, and see not; they have ears to hear, and hear not: for they are a rebellious house.

Other verses:

Zechariah

7:11 But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear.

7:12 Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the Lord of hosts has sent in his spirit by the former prophets. Therefore came a great wrath from the Lord of hosts.

It is also mentioned in the New Testament about the nature of the man,

First Epistle to the Corinthians

2:14 But the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God. for they are foolishness to him. neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

After reading these verses, every one of us cannot help but wonder, am I deaf to the Lord God? Do I really have an immovable foundation? Am I alone?

The fact is only those who are re-created by the Lord God can really hear the Words of God. Sinners, who are not willing to repent, cannot hear the Words of the Lord in the ears of their hearts. This is not just restricted to non-believers, but even some believers are not capable of hearing the Words of God when they are in a state of unconfessed sin. They can read, but they do not hear after all.

As long as we are surrounded by the wall of sin, we do not hear the Words of God. Let's look at Proverbs from the Old Testament, chapter 28, verse 13:

28:13 He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.

These words are stated not only for so-called heathen--non-believers--but also for believers. David not only understood these words, but he recognized the truth of them from his own experience. Here in the popular Psalm 32 we find a confession and testimony of David:

32:3 When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long.

32:4 For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah.

32:5 I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.

The same thing is said in the New Testament. It is in chapter 1, verse 9 of the First Epistle of John. As a matter of course, these words were also written for those who have already been saved--those who have received salvation.

1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

This is the Gospel itself. Confess to Jesus all your sins, agony, distress and troubles. It will give you a new life and new joy, as is written.

It is important to have ears to hear. "He that covereth shall not prosper."

Proverbs

20:12 The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the LORD hath made even both of them.

Without an act of the Lord, no one would have ears to hear or eyes to see.

Isaiah testified how he had received the blessing. It is in Isaiah chapter 50, verse 4:

50:4 The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.

It is written that the Lord wakes him up every morning and opens his ears. Psalm 40 is also a confession of David through which he found his joy.

40:1 I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.
 40:2 He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings
 40:3 And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.
 40:4 Blessed is that man that maketh the LORD his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.
 40:5 Many, O LORD my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.
 40:6 Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.

David could say, "my ears have you opened." What does this mean? This means that new life is being offered to you and it is free to take. It is exactly what David mentioned in verses 1-4 of Psalm 40 that we just read.

If you have the same feeling as David had, you are so blessed. To remain in silent isolation is not the right thing to do. Regarding the sick man we discussed earlier, he could not talk with other people because he was mute. After he was healed, he praised God in a loud voice, recognizing the great work of the Lord. He soon began to testify about it.

If you have met Jesus and experienced His salvation, if you try to stay away from a life of sin, then you too have the privilege to praise the Lord and testify of His greatness. It is a great blessing. The prophet Jeremiah once said:

Jeremiah
 20:9 Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.

Paul also testified with a similar attitude as written in 1 Corinthians, chapter 9, and verse 16.

9:16 For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!

Listening to the voice of the Lord and testifying of Jesus are generally done simultaneously. Those who have heard the Words of the Lord saying, "Yours sins are forgiven. I have redeemed you. You belong to me now," and have experienced salvation cannot help but testify.

And because few people have experienced real salvation--a real encounter with Jesus--there are not many who can be a testimony for the Lord.

This sick man was healed. Why? Why was this sick man healed? This deaf and mute man was brought to Jesus by some friends.

The Gospel according to Mark
 7:32 Some people brought him a deaf man who also had a speech impediment. They begged him to lay his hand on him.

Thus, for this sick man, these hands that supported him were absolutely necessary--which is to say, there were some people who helped this miserable and wrecked sick man. They brought this hopeless man to Jesus.

They also prayed for this sick man, asking Jesus, "Lord, please lay your hands on him." They knew that Jesus would touch this sick man, and they were convinced that all his sickness would be gone at the moment he was touched.

As I mentioned earlier, Jesus is life itself. Jesus, who is life, touched this sick man. And naturally, the sickness disappeared. The sickness of the man was healed and the sick became healthy. Every time I read this part of the Bible, I can't help but ask myself, are we acting like the people who brought the sick man to Jesus?

Are we helping sick people to get to Jesus so that Jesus can touch them? Too often, we are so caught up in our own life, we do not have time to bring people in trouble to meet Jesus. Aren't we?

Are our eyes open to see people in trouble? Or are our eyes shut? We have to keep our mind's eyes open, and we have to bring as many sick people and sinners as possible to Jesus.

Why do we need to do this? We all know the answer. Because there is nothing impossible for Jesus. Lord, please lay your hands on my parents, my husband, my children as well as my friends. We have to ask the

Lord in this way, praying from the bottom of our hearts.
We have to keep praying.

It is not acceptable for us to be indifferent to or uncaring about sinners or those who do not know the Lord. After all, what is more important than for us is to be vessels through which Jesus reveals His great works to sick people or to be a path through which it makes it easier for Jesus to get close to them?

How can Jesus make better use of us? Jesus is our example. Let's remember what is written in the verses we read today. It is said, "Jesus looked up to Heaven."

This means that Jesus did not rely on His own ability but left everything in the hands of God, His father. "Let your will be done." When you totally rely on our Lord, even in the most troubling of times, your eyes will be opened to the Lord and a new way will be opened in front of you.

However, if you fail to rely on the Lord, your eyes will be kept closed to the worries and sufferings of other people. It is not until you bring suffering people to Jesus and they come to know Jesus and talk to Him that you experience real salvation and become richly blessed.

It is only done by the Words of the Lord. Can our words heal people in sickness, people suffering or in trouble, especially the mute man in the Bible? Or do we remain silent to them just like we are mute ourselves?

Fortunately, Jesus never changes. He has been the same yesterday, today, and forever and ever. All powers are manipulated by Jesus' will. Worries and troubles surround us and are growing every day. We will be happy only if we can be of service to Him as vessels of our Lord, but not as an obstacle in the way of the Lord.