

Hearing God

Opening text: Mark 7:31-37

This is the story of the healing of a man who was deaf and had a speech impediment. **V. 35** says that when his ears were opened, his tongue was loosed, and he spoke plainly! Notice the sequence: 1st his ears were opened, 2nd his tongue was loosed, thirdly, he spoke plainly. A speech problem was firstly a 'hearing' problem!

Sometimes the central problem of our lives is that we are not hearing what God is saying.

Hearing what God is saying is crucial!

- a) Faith comes by hearing (Romans 10:17)
- b) Peace also comes by hearing

Psalms 85:8a - *I will hear what God the Lord will speak, for He will speak peace to His people and to His saints.*

- c) Hearing ushers the presence of Jesus:

Revelation 3:20 - *Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.*

You need to hear His voice. When you do, the presence of Jesus comes in. Dining with Jesus is a banquet of blessing.

Verse 22 also adds "*He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.* This is repeated 7 times in the book of Revelation.

One word from God

Jesus said one word that set everything else in motion: *ephphatha* – be open! **The central need of our lives is to find what God is saying.** One key-word from Him is what we need - that one word with the power to unlock everything.

Psalms 107:20 – *"He sent His word and healed them and delivered them from their destructions".*

One word can unlock all the healing and deliverance you need.

Luke 7:7b – *"say the word, and my servant will be healed.*

Again, the central need of our lives is to find what God is saying!

Luke 4:4 - ... *'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.'*

What is God saying? Jesus said, *'My words are spirit and they are life'* (**John 6:63**). Proverbs 4:20-22 says that God's words are *'life to those who it and health to all their flesh'*

Isaiah said, *"hear and your soul shall live"* (Isaiah 55:3). To hear what God is saying is that vital! – it means life.

Four words from God

David, in the midst of great turmoil and attempts against his life, wrote in **Psalm 35**: *"say to my soul: **I am your salvation**"* (Verse 3).

In the midst of his problems, he acknowledged the power of hearing from God, personally. He said, *'speak to my soul: **I am your salvation**!' – 4 words that he believed were enough to change everything about his situation.*

Verses 9-10 - *And my soul shall be joyful in the Lord; It shall rejoice in His salvation. ¹⁰ All my bones shall say, "Lord, who is like You, delivering the poor from him who is too strong for him, yes, the poor and the needy from him who plunders him?"*

David knew the power of hearing what God is saying. He knew that even just 4 words could change his whole situation. After all, God spoke the solar system with 4 words: *"**Let there be light**"*.

Until 1925, astronomers thought that the lights in the Milky Way, its stars, were the sum total of the cosmos. However, in 1925, Edwin Hubble gave a presentation to the American Astronomical Society to the contrary. His theory was that there were other starts even beyond what they could see, and that the universe was still expanding. 100 years later, the Hubble telescope identified an estimated 200 billion galaxies.

The four words spoken by God in the beginning are still creating galaxies at the outer edges of the universe – at the speed of light (300 000km per second).

If God can do that with four words what are you worried about?

The cosmos is God's way of saying, 'look what I can do with four words'!

There is nothing that God's voice cannot say and cannot do!

Let there be light ... and there was light!

Light travels at 300 000 km a second. The Earth is 40 000km in diameter. That means that when God said those 4 words, in one second, light covered the earth almost 10 times.

All that God has spoken in His word carries the same power. We need to hear His word, look to God's promises and believe that they are powered to come to pass.

2 ways of finding what God is saying

Mark 7:32-35 - ³² 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. ³³ And He took him aside from the multitude, and put His fingers in his ears, and He spat and touched his tongue. ³⁴ Then, looking up to heaven, He sighed, and said to him, “Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.” ³⁵ Immediately his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke plainly.

1. The voice of God is found in intimacy

^{v.33} - *And He took him aside from the multitude*

The word that opened his ears, the word for His situation was found privately, one-on-one with Jesus. There were many voices and suggestions from the multitude (*they begged to put His hand on Him*). However, Jesus did nothing like what they said. Ultimately, He spoke one word to an eardrum that couldn't hear, and it started hearing.

2. The voice of God sometimes comes as inexpressible as a sigh or as quiet as a whisper.

^{v.34} *Then, looking up to heaven, He sighed, and said to him, “Ephphatha, that is, “Be opened.*

God is able to speak in powerful, earth-shattering ways (Psalms 29:3-9, 46:12), however, He chose to speak to Elijah in a ‘*still small voice*’ (1 Kings 19:12). The ESV says ‘*a whisper*’.

Why did God choose to speak in this way? When someone speaks in a whisper, you have to be very close. That's what God is after more than anything – closeness, intimacy.

A sperm whale can make enough sound under the water to be heard almost 10 000 miles away. They can project 200 decibels of raw sound (a jet engine is about 150 dB). However, a whisper only measures 15dB. When someone speaks in a whisper you have to really pay attention and be very close to hear.

Proverbs 4:20 - *My son, give attention to my words; incline your ear to my sayings.*

Conclusion

We will be continuing this topic next week as there is a lot to cover. However, here are a few important points to remember from today's message:

- **Sometimes the central problem of our lives is that we are not hearing what God is saying.**
- **We can access that one word from God that unlocks everything else**
- **Remember what God can do with four words. Remember what Jesus did with one.**
- **His word is often found away from the multitude and alone with Him.**