

MR. TALKATIVE... whose words were somewhat jumbled
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(MARK 7: 31-37)

One of the characters introduced by John Bunyan was Mr. Talkative, who joined Christian and Faithful on the road to the celestial city. He was an engaging personality, whose knowledge extended to all matters under the sun. He could quote Scripture or give tips for gamblers; he could chant hymns or utter blasphemies; he was a great talker, at home in any company. John Bunyan described how for a while Faithful was pleasantly surprised by the new companion, but finally Christian said, "This man is for any company and for any talk. As he talketh now with you, so will he talk when he is on the ale-bench, and the more drink he hath in his crown the more of these things he hath in his mouth. Faith hath no place in his heart, or house, or speech; all he hath lieth in his tongue. and his religion is to make a noise therewith." Maybe, Bunyan first found Talkative in Mark's Gospel!

The Strange Man

"And they bring unto Jesus one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him" (ark 7:32). This was one of the most remarkable cases ever brought to the Saviour. The man was deaf-it was not possible to speak directly to his soul. He was able to talk-but no one was able to understand what he said, for there was something wrong with his speech. And these disabilities were inextricably connected. The words of the great Teacher were unheard, and even the greatest of sermons left the man unmoved. Truth never reached his soul, for his ears were closed. He would never have come to Christ unless other people had brought him. His mumblings lacked intelligence. We must excuse John Mark for forgetting to add the man's name. He was Mr. Talkative, whose descendants are still with us. Are there not many people who can as readily converse about spiritual things as about worldly things? Can they not quote Scripture in support of their own unholy practices? Yet they immediately protest when their own personal need is suggested. They never hear the Master's word-they are deaf; they talk-but have an impediment in their speech.

The Special Methods

"And Jesus took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears . . ." Slowly, firmly, the Saviour held the man's arm and resolutely led him away from the crowd. The people were still able to see from the distance, but the Saviour's action was sufficient to make Mr. Talkative realize that Jesus was interested in him personally. Then, as they turned to face each other, Christ placed His fingers into the deaf ears of the strange man, and a remarkable change came over the scene. Mr. Talkative ceased his incoherent mumblings, and became delightfully submissive. Opened ears cleared the way to his soul; he heard the message of Christ and responded. A willingness to co-operate came over his once difficult mind, and when Christ asked him to open his mouth, he obeyed the command, and was healed of the impediment which had confused all his utterances. Then, side by side, they returned to the crowd, who "were beyond measure

MR. TALKATIVE... whose words were somewhat jumbled astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak" (v. 37).

The Suggestive Miracle

This is one of the outstanding miracles of the Lord. It is for that reason this man may be likened to John Bunyan's Mr. Talkative. It is a most difficult task to persuade certain people that they need the saving power of Christ. They are truly sincere when they recognize the need of other people, yet strangely blind in regard to their own predicament. It would appear that the salvation of such people depends upon the faithful intercession of their spiritual friends. "And they bring unto him one that was deaf and had an impediment in his speech." The power of Christ knows no limitations when He is assisted by the loyal co-operation of His disciples. If Mr. Talkative belongs to my own family I should find comfort in the fact that prayer can perform the impossible.

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