

A man who was both deaf and dumb was brought to Jesus, and his treatment was peculiar; the Lord took him apart privately, perhaps to impress upon him the lesson. The man could not hear, and hence the Lord imparted the lesson through signs, touching his tongue and touching his ears, and then with a sigh he glanced heavenward, as indicating that the sympathy of heaven was moved for the man's assistance, and immediately the blessing came and he was healed. This may have been the first miracle in that region, and possibly the multitude coming, as Matthew records, were attracted by it. Our Lord's injunction that it should be kept quiet seems to have been understood, not as a command, but rather as a suggestion that he was not seeking publicity. Nevertheless, when the faith was manifested and the poor afflicted ones were before him the Lord never refused to give the blessing. Thus we are taught that when the due time shall come for the blessing of all the families of the earth, the Lord will not withhold a blessing from any; all who desire to be blessed may then have his favour.

As New Creatures who have already in a figurative sense risen with Christ to walk in newness of life, to walk in his footsteps, we have our eyes opened and our ears unstopped and our tongues loosed, so that we may not only see and enjoy the grace of God ourselves, but we may speak of his goodness and love to others. In many respects those to whom the Lord grants the special knowledge of the Truth in this present time have a suggestion that it is not for everybody, that we are to be discriminating in



Painting: Christ Healing the Blind by El Greco C. 1567



Painting: Parels voor de zwijnen werpen
by
Pieter Breughel the Younger, after 1600

our endeavours to dispense the Truth, and that some of these great blessings of the Lord which are to us like pearls are not meant for all; that we should not cast our pearls before swine, or before those who manifest no disposition to know of or receive the Lord's favours. But with us, as with the healed one in this lesson, the message is too good to keep; we love to tell the story, it did so much for us; we desire that all who are blind and deaf may come to the great Physician and be healed; we desire that all who are stammering in their endeavours to tell the good tidings may have their lips touched by the Master and henceforth speak plainly the glorious things of the Gospel of Christ. And as the Master would not reprove this one in the lesson, neither does he reprove us if in our zeal we go sometimes to the extreme of trying to tell the good tidings to those who have no ear to hear, or endeavour to make disciples of those who are swinish and not at all inclined to spiritual things, or of following the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

The heart of this lesson is that we who are risen with Christ in the spirit of our minds should walk in newness of life while still in this mortal body and still amongst men; that we should look forward to the glorious change of the First Resurrection, when we shall be actually in the Lord's likeness and see him as he is, sharing his glory and participating with him in dispensing all these blessings of life and healing to whosoever will accept these favours in the glorious Kingdom time which we rejoice to know is near at hand.