

Faculty Work Comprehensive List

6-27-2016

Opening Eyes for the Deaf and Ears for the Blind

Ethan Brue

Dordt College, ethan.brue@dordt.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/faculty_work



Part of the [Christianity Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Brue, E. (2016). Opening Eyes for the Deaf and Ears for the Blind. Retrieved from https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/faculty_work/523

This Blog Post is brought to you for free and open access by Dordt Digital Collections. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Work Comprehensive List by an authorized administrator of Dordt Digital Collections. For more information, please contact ingrid.mulder@dordt.edu.

Opening Eyes for the Deaf and Ears for the Blind

Abstract

"Jesus doesn't do magic. He doesn't need to. The spit, the sighing, the gestures...they aren't for an audience. They are for the one longing to be whole."

Posting about one of Jesus' miracles from *In All Things* - an online hub committed to the claim that the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ has implications for the entire world.

<http://inallthings.org/opening-eyes-for-the-deaf-and-ears-for-the-blind/>

Keywords

In All Things, Jesus, miracles, deaf, blind

Disciplines

Christianity

Comments

In All Things is a publication of the [Andreas Center for Reformed Scholarship and Service at Dordt College](#).

Opening Eyes for the Deaf and Ears for the Blind

 [all in allthings.org/opening-eyes-for-the-deaf-and-ears-for-the-blind/](https://allinallthings.org/opening-eyes-for-the-deaf-and-ears-for-the-blind/)

Ethan Brue

Mark 7

“Then Jesus left the vicinity of Tyre and went through Sidon, down to the Sea of Galilee and into the region of the Decapolis. There some people brought to him a man who was deaf and could hardly talk, and they begged him to place his hand on the man.

After he took him aside, away from the crowd, Jesus put his fingers into the man’s ears. Then he spit and touched the man’s tongue. He looked up to heaven and with a deep sigh said to him, “Ephphatha!” (which means, “Be opened!”). At this, the man’s ears were opened, his tongue was loosened and he began to speak plainly. Jesus commanded them not to tell anyone. But the more he did so, the more they kept talking about it. People were overwhelmed with amazement. “He has done everything well,” they said. “He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak.” –Mark 7:31-37

To see this “miracle” clearly, we need to read it in the context of the “miracle” that follows. This subsequent lunch on the lawn for 4000+ is similar to the majority of Jesus’ “miracles.” Very few notice. They just get fed. It reads like another ordinary day at the office for the Lord of the universe. That’s the point.

In contrast, this healing reads different. The spit, the ritual, the command...on the surface it looks suspiciously like magic. Has Jesus succumbed to doing miracles more like the surrounding ticket holders expect them to be done? If our eyes and ears don’t get in the way, let’s listen again and look closer.

Jesus takes the man aside away from the crowd. This is important. Clearly Jesus’ intention is not to perform a Vegas-like vaudeville act. Jesus doesn’t do magic. He doesn’t need to. The spit, the sighing, the gestures...they aren’t for an audience. They are for the one longing to be whole. Jesus touches ears, touches tongue, and with a sigh deep enough for eyes, he speaks loud enough to be heard without words. In the speech of touch he says “I understand what it is to be deaf and mute. I know what it is to be cast as one who is foolish, dumb, and cursed by God. But I know your whole pain because I am Lord of creation. Things aren’t supposed to be this way...he sighs. Know this... contrary to what most people think, you ARE loved by God.”

Jesus doesn’t make this healing look ordinary. But he could. The proteins and atoms and cells gathered in the ears, eyes, and throat are waiting for their next command from the Lord of the Universe. Proteins always obey. They have no choice. Jesus could have just made it right with the snap of his fingers. No spit. No sigh. No ritual. No touch. But Jesus must have known that this image bearer is more than molecules and would not be fully healed via genetic re-engineering. Jesus wastes time and touch with his human miracles because renewed relationships don’t just happen. They slowly grow unseen like the deepest of roots.

Water to wine, bread to more bread, storm to stillness. We call them miracles. Jesus doesn’t. The cosmic lordship of Jesus Christ is and will always be an everyday ordinary occurrence. Despite Jesus’ best efforts to get the disciples and onlookers to see otherwise, they continue to be amazed and ask “who is this man”? The real miracle never occurs until eyes and ears are opened and we begin to know Jesus. Like post-resurrection Peter, we stop asking to walk on water and simply cry “It is the Lord!” while jumping in with our whole being...clothes and all.

This is easier said than done. For while atoms, proteins, water, and bread all must follow, humans only follow when their eyes are opened so that they can see how much they are loved. When we finally get it...that’s the miracle.