

“Jesus Cannot be Concealed”
Mark 7:24; 31-37
(Preached at Trinity, May 18, 2011)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. As usual, Mark’s Gospel moves quickly. No sooner than Mark concludes the account of the Syrophenician woman we find Jesus once again on the move.
Mark 7:31 – “And again He went out from the region of Tyre, and came through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, within the region of Decapolis.”
 - A. How long Jesus remained in the region of Tyre we are not told.
 - B. Even the exact place Jesus now entered we are not told. Only that he journeyed through the region of Sidon to the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee to the region of ten cities known as the Decapolis.
 - C. These were Gentile cities, the same region where Jesus met the Gerasene demoniac.
2. Jesus is once again surrounded by a crowd. Matthew’s Gospel describes that Jesus did many miracles while among these people, yet Mark singles out this one to direct our attention – a man who was deaf and suffered from a speech impediment.
 - A. It’s quite possible that the speech impediment was due to the man never having heard with his ears the proper pronunciation of words. This is common with people who are deaf.
 - B. It was a double miracle, however, since Jesus not only restored his hearing, but also enabled him to speak perfectly.
3. Notice, Jesus never allowed Himself to be robbed of His sovereignty.
 - A. The multitudes had probably witnessed Jesus’ healing in the past. The sick and lame were brought to Him and He laid His hands upon them and healed them. But God always does things His way.
 - B. They came expecting Jesus to heal by laying on His hands, but He did not. Instead He put His fingers into the deaf man’s ears and placed His saliva upon the deaf man’s tongue. And then He looked up and uttered in His native Aramaic tongue, “Be opened.”
Jesus does things His way.
 - C. This is true of the Gospel – We must never deviate from God’s appointed way
This is true of worship – We must never deviate from God’s appointed way
This is true of obedience – We must never deviate from God’s Law
This is also true of God’s sovereign will in our lives – we pray but God’s will must be our desire.

4. After the healing Jesus charged them not to tell anyone of the miracle. It is impossible to know why Jesus gave this order. This is in Gentile territory. Jesus was far removed from the dangers from His Jewish enemies. It seems strange since Jesus had given a different charge to a man in the same region:
Mark 5:19-20 – “Go home to your people and report to them what great things the Lord has done for you, and *how* He had mercy on you.” ²⁰ And he went away and began to proclaim in Decapolis what great things Jesus had done for him; and everyone marveled.”
5. It would seem, however, that the more Jesus charged them not to tell, the more they published the news of Christ.
Mark 7:36 – “but the more He ordered them, the more widely they continued to proclaim it.”
6. There are two ways we can look at this.
 - A. On one hand it shows the perversity of human nature. The more you command a man not to do something, the more he does it.
 It is true that the Law actually provokes a man to sin.
Romans 7:7-9 – “What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? May it never be! On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, “You shall not covet.” ⁸ But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the Law sin *is* dead. ⁹ And I was once alive apart from the Law; but when the commandment came, sin became alive, and I died;”
 1. When God says, “Thou shalt” or “Thou shalt not” we naturally want to rebel
 2. We can see it in our children. Tell a child not to touch the knickknack on the coffee table and that immediately becomes the great object of desire.
 - B. On the other hand it reveals an important truth to us. Christ cannot be concealed! We cannot dismiss their disobedience, but it demonstrates to us that those who meet Christ cannot keep it to themselves.
7. Tonight I want to set this matter before you – Jesus cannot be concealed.
- I. Once Jesus comes into a man’s heart He will soon be expressed in words and actions
 - A. When a man meets Christ he cannot keep it to himself
 1. If this was true of the lost multitudes, how much more so for those who meet Christ in salvation—those captivated by His grace and mercy—those who are transformed from haters of God to those who have fallen in love with Christ.
 Look at all of the Biblical examples:
 2. Upon conversion Matthew held a supper in honor of Christ. Matthew wanted all of his friends and acquaintances to meet Jesus. He wanted them to meet the Savior
 3. When the Gerasene demoniac was delivered he wanted all to know
Mark 5:20 – “And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all *men* did marvel.”
 4. The woman at the well couldn’t wait to tell all about Jesus
John 4:29 – “Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?”

5. Philip couldn't contain himself
John 1:43-46 – “The next day He purposed to go forth into Galilee, and He found Philip. And Jesus said to him, “Follow Me.”⁴⁴ Now Philip was from Bethsaida, of the city of Andrew and Peter.⁴⁵ Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and *a/so* the Prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”⁴⁶ And Nathanael said to him, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.”
 6. Even those whom Jesus commanded not to tell published far and wide the glories of Christ
 - a. The Leper in Mark 1 –
Mark 1:44-45 – “and He said to him, “See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.”⁴⁵ But he went out and began to proclaim it freely and to spread the news about, to such an extent that Jesus could no longer publicly enter a city, but stayed out in unpopulated areas; and they were coming to Him from everywhere.”
 - b. The two blind men in **Matt. 9** -
Matthew 9:30-31 – “And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, saying, “See *here*, let no one know *about this!*”³¹ But they went out, and spread the news about Him in all that land.”
- B. The great evangelistic enterprise is etched upon the hearts of God's people
1. We can't contain it. Paul said:
1 Corinthians 9:16 – “For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for I am under compulsion; for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel.”
 2. Christianity is a matter of the heart
Jesus will made this clear earlier in the chapter. Out of the heart proceeds all that defiles—but it is also true that out of the heart proceeds holiness and a passion for Christ. Christianity changes our heart.
We find Jesus irresistible and we find proclaiming Him irresistible
 3. How can we contain sharing His wondrous works? He has saved my soul. He has reconciled me to the Father. He has united us with Himself.
Listen to the people proclaim His wondrous works:
Mark 7:37 – “He has done all things well; He makes even the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.”
 4. Every way we look at Christ He is glorious. He does all things gloriously. A part of our new nature is the desire to publish the glories of Christ.
- II. Every attempt to conceal Christ will ultimately fail
- A. Jesus often made attempts to conceal Himself
1. We've seen the many examples of Jesus commanding men not to proclaim His wondrous works
 2. There were many times when He tried to go unnoticed – yet as sovereign God He has purposed that He will not go unnoticed.

Mark 7:24 – “And from there He arose and went away to the region of Tyre. And when He had entered a house, He wanted no one to know *of it*; yet He could not escape notice.”

Mark 6:31-33 And He said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a lonely place and rest a while." (For there were many *people* coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.) ³² And they went away in the boat to a lonely place by themselves. ³³ And *the people* saw them going, and many recognized *them*, and they ran there together on foot from all the cities, and got there ahead of them.

3. Jesus *will not* be concealed
- B. Many have tried hard to cover Christ
1. Our secular culture is trying to conceal Christ. Hollywood mocks him. Educational institutions try to make Him irrelevant. Religious institutions try to cover up the true Christ Some churches try to cover up the true Christ But Jesus will not be concealed
 2. The Jews thought they could get rid of Jesus by killing Him
John 19:15 – “They therefore cried out, "Away with *Him*, away with *Him*, crucify Him!"
 3. They thought they could conceal the resurrection through deceit
Matthew 28:11-15 – “Now while they were on their way, behold, some of the guard came into the city and reported to the chief priests all that had happened. ¹² And when they had assembled with the elders and counseled together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, ¹³ and said, "You are to say, 'His disciples came by night and stole Him away while we were asleep.' ¹⁴ "And if this should come to the governor's ears, we will win him over and keep you out of trouble." ¹⁵ And they took the money and did as they had been instructed; and this story was widely spread among the Jews, *and is to this day.*”
 4. They tried to force the disciples to conceal Jesus by threat
Acts 5:28-31 – “We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.” ²⁹ But Peter and the apostles answered and said, "We must obey God rather than men. ³⁰ "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross. ³¹ "He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.”
- C. There are many professing Christians today who try to cover Christ
1. They never speak His name. They've never even passed out a tract.
 2. Jesus speaks a strong warning
Matthew 10:33 – “But whoever shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven.”
- III. Jesus, in His mercy, allows Himself to be found
- A. Remember, Jesus had intended to spend some time in solitude.
Mark 7:24 – “And from thence he arose, and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into an house, and would have no man know *it*: but he could not be hid.”

1. Jesus allowed Himself to be found. He received the multitude and showed them mercy
Mark 6:34 – “And when He went ashore, He saw a great multitude, and He felt compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and He began to teach them many things.”
 2. Often Jesus denied Himself sleep or food as He ministered to the multitudes seeing Him
 Jesus allows Himself to be found
- B. This has huge ramifications for those seeking salvation. He allows Himself to be found but He demands that He be sought
1. The doctrine of human responsibility must not be diminished
Matthew 7:7-8 “Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. ⁸ “For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it shall be opened.
 2. You must seek Him with your whole heart
NAS **Hebrews 11:6** – “And without faith it is impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.”
 - a. The word for “seek” implies careful seeking
 - b. KJV – “diligently seek Him.”
 - c. The same word is used in **Hebrews 12** regarding Esau.
It is a dangerous thing to sin against knowledge.
NAS **Hebrews 12:17** – “For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears.”
 - d. It is also the word used in **Romans 3**
NAS **Romans 3:11** – “There is none who understands, There is none who seeks for God;”
 There are none who give themselves to seeking God
 3. God says that He will be found by those who seek Him
Jeremiah 29:12-14 – “Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. ¹³ ‘And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. ¹⁴ ‘And I will be found by you,’ declares the LORD. . .”

Conclusion:

1. This stands as a great warning to humanity. God is a revealing God. He doesn’t hide Himself. He only remains hidden to the hardened heart.
2. He clearly reveals Himself in creation and providence.
3. He has clearly revealed Himself in His Son.
4. Jesus is clearly revealed in the Gospel. He cannot be concealed.
 The problem is not that Jesus is concealed. It’s that we are blind to His radiance. The problem is we won’t have Him.
John 1:4-5 – “In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.”

5. He commands all men to seek Him. And for those who seek Him, He allows Himself to be found.
Matthew 7:7-8 – “Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. ⁸ “For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it shall be opened.”