

# Speak, Lord, your servant is listening

**Week 7:** This week, Jesus heals a man who cannot listen or speak. This is a miracle, and it is a sign of what the Kingdom of God is like.

**They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, ‘Ephphatha’, that is, ‘Be opened.’ And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. They were astounded beyond measure, saying, ‘He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.’**

Mark 7:32-37

## Ephphatha!

If the man cannot listen, he must get frustrated. If he cannot talk, he must get frustrated, too. Jesus touches him right where he gets frustrated. He says, “Ephphatha!” The man can listen now! What is the first thing he hears? He can talk now, too! What will he say?

Ages 3-6

Choose the reflective questions that suit your family:

“*Aside*,” “*in private*,” “*away from*”—in 3 ways, St. Mark tells us that Jesus and the man are by themselves. It must be important. Why? Nothing distracts the man from Jesus. He may not be able to listen with his ears, but he can listen deep down inside. Can we have moments like this, too? How can we step *aside*, find a place *in private*, *away from* distractions and be together alone with Jesus?

Ages 6-9

It seems a little gross that Jesus sticks his fingers in the man’s ears and puts his spit on the man’s tongue. In truth, Jesus gets right down into the man’s problem with him. When we get right down into someone’s problem with them, we do the work of the Kingdom. We can ask ourselves, whose problems does God need me to share?

Ages 9-12

Not every deaf person considers this a problem. If the Kingdom of God means hearing, not everyone wants to be a part of it. What could the sign of the Kingdom really mean then? Perhaps this is not about hearing but about communication. When the Kingdom of God is complete, what will communication be like? What will change? How can we begin?

teenagers

Read the scripture.

Ask questions.

Listen to each other’s answers.

Then pray the prayer together on page 2.

# Listen Prayer

One person leads and everyone else responds (R.)

Lord, our God,

We praise you for the wisdom of your will that unfolds all around us. We desire to enter more profoundly into this mystery, to root ourselves firmly in your will, to listen ever more deeply to you.

**R. Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.**

Teach us to listen closely to your Word—to the words on the page and the meaning they invoke, to the human author and to the divine, to the spaces between the letters where your Spirit dwells.



**R. Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.**

Teach us to listen attentively to Creation—to the voice of the earth, to the whispering of wind and waves, to the silence of the rocks and soil and swarms of voiceless creatures.



**R. Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.**

Teach us to listen respectfully to the culture that surrounds us—to its wisdom and its folly, to the loud voices and the quiet, to that which can teach us and form us and expand our thinking.



**R. Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.**

And teach us, Lord, to listen deeply to one another—to what we speak aloud and to what we leave unsaid, to our needs and to our concerns, to the love and the longing and desires of our hearts.

**R. We come before you.  
We make ourselves still.  
We listen to understand.  
Amen.**

