

“He Sighed”

Introduction:

- I. **Read Mark 7:31-37.** Here we have one of the marvelous miracles of Jesus. The personal ministry of Christ was filled with miracles that were performed, as Jesus said, by the finger of God, i.e., by God’s divine power. Why did Jesus perform so many miracles? I counted thirty-six recorded miracles and John said that many of the miracles of Christ were not recorded (**Jn. 20:30-31**). Peter tells us why Jesus performed miracles (**Acts 2:22**). Without the miracles of Christ, people could not be sure that he was the Messiah. His miracles stamped His works and words with divine approval (**Jn. 2:11, 23; 3:1-2**).

- II. **Take a closer look at the text and discuss the differences between the miracles of Christ and the fake miracles of today.**
 - A. Today it takes people weeks, months or even years to be healed. The miracles of Christ were immediate (ver. 35).

 - B. Today inward things are healed. The miracles of Christ were plain and open (vers. 32, 35).

 - C. Today miracles are used as publicity stunts. Jesus didn’t try to put on a show (ver. 33).

 - D. Today miracles are doubted. The miracles of Christ were undeniable (Matt. 12:22-29; Acts 4:14-16).

- III. **Jesus Sighed (ver. 34).**

Now, I want you to notice something interesting in ver. 34. The record tells us that Jesus sighed. Picture in your mind Jesus sighing. Have you ever been so upset, so disappointed, or so distraught over something that all you could do is sigh? That’s were Jesus was in out text. Why He sighed we are not directly told. Perhaps He know that sin was the original cause of all of man’s infirmities. Maybe it was a case of His heart being overwhelmed with compassion. We can’t be completely sure, but whatever the case was, Jesus sighed. Yes Jesus is the son of the living God, in fact, Jesus is God manifested in the flesh. But man can act so out of accordance with God’s divine will that all God can do sometimes is sigh. As I think about this, I begin to wonder, “What would cause my Lord to sigh today?” Let me suggest to you a few things that no doubt make Jesus sigh.

Lesson:

I. Denominationalism Must Make Jesus Sigh.

There are many who just don't see the harm of denominationalism today. There are those, even in the body of Christ, who think that denominationalism is so harmless that preaching ought not to publicly expose the error of denominationalism. But let me say to you that there is little doubt that denominationalism and the idea of religious division is something that makes Jesus sigh. How do I know? Because I know that Jesus wants from those who profess to be His followers (**Jn. 17:20-22; 1 Cor. 1:10; Psa. 133:1**). It is clear, is it not, that God and His Son want all believers to be united in Christ. And please know, that religious division has done more harm to the cause of Christ than anything else. It causes people to stop seeking God.

Bill Humble, a noted historian, on Robert Owen, the greatest European atheist of the 19th century:

“At an early age the boy was enrolled in a day school where he evidenced a precocious mental development; for at seven he had mastered all the information which his instructor could impart and was himself teaching. The intellectual growth of the young man was so rapid that before attaining his tenth birthday, he had investigated a number of theological works and examined their contents so critically as to lead himself to doubt the fundamental nature of all religion.” (**Bill J. Humble, Alexander Campbell and Controversy, Old Paths Book Club, Rosemead, CA, 1952, p. 81**)

Charles Darwin's son on a statement about his father:

“We had an earnest conversation about going into Holy Orders; and I remember his asking me, with reference to the question put by the Bishop in the ordination service, ‘Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Spirit, etc.’ whether I could answer in the affirmative, and on my saying I could not, he said. Neither can I, and therefore I cannot take Orders.”

(Francis Darwin, Life and Letters of Charles Darwin, Vol. I, New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1898, p. 147.)

Charles Smith, first president of the American Association of the Advancement of Atheism:

“Let me tell you something of how I came to be an Atheist. I used to live in Maud, Oklahoma – was there before the town was built; and have lived in Shawnee. I was in this town some twenty years ago, working for the Farmer's Union. I joined the First Methodist church. A few years later, I went to a Methodist school, Epworth University, in Oklahoma City...The next session I went to the State University at Norman. I tried to continue to believe the Christian religion, but began to investigate its doctrines. One day when watching a football game with my pastor, I asked him if he

believed the virgin birth story, and the Adam and Eve story. He said, "Why, of course not." I demanded: "Why do you not tell your congregation that?" He replied: "That would do a great deal of harm, and no good." (**Charles Smith, Oliphant-Simtih Debate, Nashville, TN: Gospel Advocated Company, 1952, pp. 23-24**).

All of these prominent atheists became atheist, not because of something they learned from the Bible, but rather because of the false teaching of denominations and their creeds. Listen to me: denominationalism causes people to think that religion is nothing but a bunch of foolishness reserved for blind fools. What if I preached contradicting doctrines every time I preached, yet claimed that the Bible was my only guide? (e.g., **baptism needed\baptism not needed; Lord's supper observed weekly\observed twice a year; Jesus is divine\Jesus was only human, etc.**) People would think that I'm foolish. That's what people think of religion in view of denominationalism and all their conflicting doctrines. Do you not know that denominations all speak different and opposing doctrines that simply confuse the honest seeker of truth. This just must make Jesus sigh.

But more than that is the fact that there is no salvation in denominations. Listen: salvation is found in only one place, i.e., in Christ (**2 Tim. 2:10**). To be in Christ is to be in his body the church and the fact is denominationalism, with all their man-made doctrines and man-made churches, are keeping people out of the church of Christ. Certainly this must make Jesus sigh.

II. Lack of Growth In The Church Must Make Jesus Sigh.

The church belongs to Christ and He is intimately connected with it. He is the Head of the church, and again, the church is His body. Surely Jesus wants to see the church grow. When the church grows, the rule of Christ expands and His cause is furthered. This is what Jesus wants. Oh how He must sigh when His body stops growing. And I'll tell you something—this ought to make us sigh too. We should all want the church to grow. The good news is that we can grow (**Acts 2:47; Acts 4:1-4; Acts 6:1, 7; Acts 8:5; Acts 17:1-4; Acts 18:1-8**). Do you believe that the church can grow? If not, why not? What did the church have in the first century that we do not have? They had people who needed the gospel. So do we! They had people who wanted the gospel. So do we! They had a powerful gospel, able to convert the souls of men. Listen to me: so do we! The gospel hasn't lost one morsel of its power. The first century church didn't have anything necessary to grow that we don't have. Well, maybe they had one thing—they had a commitment to evangelism. They were committed to telling friends and strangers alike about the wonderful story of Jesus Christ and Him crucified (**1 Thess. 1:5-9**). If we are ever going to grow in this place, we must be committed to personal evangelism (**Col. 4:1-4**). It seems to me that procrastination is one of Satan's greatest allies. He may not be able to

influence us to steal or commit adultery or to commit some overt acts of sin, but he is always has been able to influence people to procrastinate and waste time. And when he succeeds in that area, souls are lost and the church is slow in growing and all Jesus can do is sit back on His throne on high and sigh. Let's change this. Let's preach the gospel (**2 Tim. 4:1**).

III. Unfaithfulness Must Make Jesus Sigh.

After all that Jesus has done for us, still there are those who just can't seem to be faithful. There are far too many in the body of Christ who are unreliable because they haven't given themselves to the Lord (**2 Cor. 8:1-5**). This is what Jesus wants and expects from His disciples (**Matt. 6:33**). Anything less than a 100% makes Jesus sigh. Why? Because He gave a 100% to us. Make no mistake about it, faithful is what Jesus requires of us (**Rev. 2:10**).

Conclusion:

Don't be guilty of making Jesus sigh. Do everything you can to put a smile on the face of the Lord and not a frown. Listen: if you make Jesus smile now, He'll make you smile, not only now, but throughout all eternity. But if you make Jesus sigh, you'll be the one who sighs last.