**“Help is in Jesus”**

Psalm 116:1-9

# Isaiah 50:4-10

James 3:1-12

Mark 9:14-29

 Pentecost 16, Sept. 11/12, 2021

“When Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, ‘You mute and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him and never enter him again.’ And after crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse, so that most of them said ‘He is dead.’ But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose.”

Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

**Bridge**

While Peter, James, and John were up on the Mountain of Jesus’ Transfiguration (seeing what they saw and hearing what they heard from the Heavenly Father: “This is My Son who I love; listen to Him”, so **saying: “It is good, Lord, that we are here”**), the **other disciples (the remaining 9)** were **arguing (arguing both with each other and the crowd that had gathered around them)**. The first thing Jesus gets to see of them (having come down from His Transfiguration), was **His chosen ones “spouting off” at each other, with those standing around them argumentative and grumbling, swearing probably (in whatever way people did two thousand years ago)**.And it wouldn’t be too far down the road that even **Peter would be** **cursing people**, **vehemently denying** even being one of Jesus’ disciples Who he just saw Transfigured before him. **Grumbling**, **complaining**, **arguing, and, probably,** **a** **fair amount of swearing** kept the **chosen** **nation** from getting the land designed for them, wandering to die off, replaced by children who, maybe, might be of a better attitude.

Two Commandments (the 2nd and 8th) demand that Christians **stand above** **sins of the tongue**. **Swearing** **by God’s name (profaning it) and speaking poorly of others (bearing false witness)** are **horrendous contradictions to a part of our body dedicated to praise, prayer and giving thanks**.

James, again, (and, even, Mark) commends us to **Godly action**: to **be** **believing** **and** **“silver-tongued”**, **condemning us as we’re “dirty-tongued”**. **Condemned** are any who fail to **accomplish divine instructions that make all-the-sense-in-the-world (giving God glory and uplifting others)**. But no sinner can **stop saying stupid things** and **keep our speech in the arena of praising God and uplifting others**. And, often, it’s so **regular** that nobody bothers to apologize for stupid things we say … we might never **stop** having to apologize.

But Mark (along with condemning **that** by the recording of Jesus’ words) shows us the **Gospel of hope and help in Him**. Not in our **own efforts will this happen**, but **in Jesus it will**. **Our tongues can be appropriate, and even helpful,** **in Him**.

**Text**

**Arguing disciples** had trouble looking for anything more from Jesus than the help of **answers**. Those they got too. They were frustrated that **they** lacked tongues appropriate to effectively help and cast out a demon. They **complained** with their tongues about that (they **complained** and **argued** and, maybe, **cursed**): “Why could **we not** cast it out?” after watching **Jesus do it**. Well, “**bring** **things to Me”, Jesus said … then instructed: “not all demons, or problems, are the same”.**

This first issue was to **know** **where-help-is-available … and bring it**. Compassion has to defeat **complacency**. Yet too often meeting the need is **less** a factor than wondering, or just talking, about it. Disciples **wondered**, so talked (literally **argued**). It (the need) gave them something to **complain about** rather than **find a divine solution for**. I read an interesting quote once: that “if removed from men’s minds were **vain opinions**, **flattering hopes**, **wrong assumptions**, **imaginations**, and **the like**, what might be left of men is **poor shrunken things**”. In other words (and I’ve seen it be also presented this way): “the **sins of human tongues** are when we, mostly, waste time **blustering about** **nonsense**, plodding through our days **wagging our lips** in the formulation of **utterances** that make the air around us only hot”. For answers and solutions and help from God rather than the **results of, just, pompous human blustering**, **that’s** stuff **ABLE** to be **heard and voiced with clarity: Jesus helping and speaking clearly and teaching / instructing**.

While tongues wag often from **just the** **curiosity of things**, also they can also cry out from **desperation**. Disciples weren’t **at that point** obviously, but a dad **was**. “’Teacher, **I brought** **my son to you**, for he has a spirit that makes him mute. And whenever it seizes him, it throws him down, and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid, so I asked **your disciples** to cast it out, and **they were not able**.’ And Jesus answered him and the crowd gathered: ‘O **faithless generation**, how long **am I to be with you?** How long am I to **bear with you**? **Bring him to Me**.’ And they brought the boy to Him. And when the spirit saw Him, immediately it convulsed the boy, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth. And Jesus asked his father, ‘How long has this been happening to him?’ And he said, ‘From childhood. And it has often cast him into fire and into water, to destroy him. But if **You can** **do anything**, **have** **compassion on us** and **help us**.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘If **you** can! **All things are possible for** **one who believes**.’ Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, ‘I **believe**; **help my unbelief**!’”

The other Gospel writers bring out that this boy may have been **epileptic** so it’s interesting to note the evil that’s **behind** sickness and disease. There is always something **demonic** about **Satan** taking “what’s his” in the destruction of (at least) **human flesh**. And **sin** allows that; **not God**. Even those “in Christ” still pay the **ugly cost of sin in death and its run-up**. Our **tongue (sinning)** **kills us**, but that’s **never of God**. Making **Good from evil** for those in His Son (as is His promise), the Father **gifts** always a **light at the end of every bad tunnel, but available** **only by Jesus** and **most-certainly available with Jesus (as shown again here)**. “**Bring your son to Me**” Jesus tells this dad and crowd. And no **better decision** could ever **be or have been** made than this whether your child is **epileptic** or even **(for the moment) as healthy as earth can allow them to be**.

**Help** is available **in Jesus for trials or just the challenge of raising children … and growing ourselves**. “Bring him to **Me**” is an **ANSWER** to any question from any storm and tragedy or challenge or just day that this world faces us with: **RESULTS**; not just **band-aids** or **simple existance**, but **healing and strategy for today and tomorrow are available** **in Jesus**. By **His** perfection and sacrifice, life **has reason to** **make sense** and **children and parents and grand-parents can** **grow … and learn-to-rightly-grow**. And each of us (in Christ) **can move and progress** **peacefully and purposefully and beneficially for others because we’re in Christ**.

“I believe; help my **unbelief**”. Jesus put upon the **dad** and the **disciples** **what faith in Him (trust) would** **mean for their lives**. Showing **His faithfulness, trusting the Father all the way through the** **sacrifice of Himself** (**our SALVATION, LET ALONE EARTHLY HOPE AND HELP**), through to a **trust and faithfulness of our own because of Him**, Jesus criticized **unbelief** **that expresses itself in doubt, largely** **from the saying of our own words too much (badly wagging our tongues), and not TRUSTING ENOUGH IN THE WORDS OF GOD’S TONGUE**.

## Application

James reminds how **thorough** is the implications of our inappropriate **wagging of our tongues** and the too-**minimal** ways that we let God control our tongues, so ears and even the leanings of our whole bodies. **We** have “**slips of the tongue**” but they’re only the **voice** to how we, **also, fully limit God’s effect on us**.

May **our tongues confess (like the dad of the Gospel account)**, then express (from **Jesus’ yet being with us**) only **thankfulness and prayer and praise along with the encouragement of the Gospel for those who need to hear it**. And **bring your children and grand-children and friends and neighbors (all family members) and yourself, always, to Jesus (He is everywhere, but not everywhere the same)**. **DO THAT!** And **He** **can** **and** **will** **help and heal and guide** **(He can and will effect things** **for Good)**:He “**commanded a mute and deaf spirit to come out of a boy and to never enter him again**” … and that evil spirit did **“come out” (it DID)**, and the boy “**arose**”. May **we** **ALLOW Him (Jesus)** to **have such similar affects upon us and all who we know**. Lord, Jesus, “**we DO believe; but help our unbelief**!” In +Your name we pray. Amen.