

September 8, 2024 – Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost

“Our God is an Awesome God” by Pastor Julio Romero

Gospel: Mark 7:24-37

“He has done everything well; He even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.” These are words of complete “awe and admiration” from the people who witnessed the healing of the deaf man.

Imagine, if the miraculous healing of one person provoked such astounding reaction from those people, how much we all should be astounded knowing that everything that exists was created through Him, through this Jesus from Nazareth, to whom we owe so much, actually everything.

The writer of the Gospel of John captured the awesomeness, the magnificence of God in Jesus Christ. John begins his Gospel acknowledging the magnificence, awesomeness and omnipotence of our Lord Jesus Christ. In chapter one, this is what John says about our Lord Jesus:

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through Him, and without Him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴ in Him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

John was not the only one that attributed the origin of everything to our Lord Jesus. The Apostle Paul in his letter to the Colossians, chapter one, says:

¹⁶ For in Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through Him and for Him.

Not often do we get to reflect on the awesomeness and omnipotent qualities of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are more comfortable talking about the amazing creative power of God the Father than giving those same attributes to our Lord Jesus Christ.

When we think of our Lord Jesus, we think of Him and relate to Him as our Redeemer and Saviour, God in human form, who died on the cross to forgive our sins and who healed so many people like the man in today’s Gospel whose ears were opened for the very first time.

This is the Jesus we relate to, the one who restored the sight to the blind, who cleansed the lepers from their disease, made the lame walk, fed more than five thousand people with just two loaves of bread and two fish, who walked on water, who turned water into wine. Those who witnessed those events, and many others, were astounded by Jesus' amazing powers, and so are we as we read those stories, but it makes you wonder why He didn't do even more amazing and bigger things.

Some people who doubt the existence of God often ask if God is so magnificent and omnipotent, why didn't He put an end to all illnesses, to all injustices and all suffering, to hunger and wars and to all the things that work against life? Well, one thing we know about this awesome God is that His plans for us are bigger than our time in this world. We can barely imagine what He has prepared for us in eternity but still this awesome God takes the time to help us deal with our day-to-day difficulties and challenges. He is with us.

Remember the words from the Gospel of John, "*All things came into being through Him, and without Him not one thing came into being*". And remember the words from the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Colossians, "*For in Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, all things have been created through Him and for Him.*"

Things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, were created through Him and for Him. This vast universe, that we contemplate better at night by looking at the sky on a starry night, was created through Him, and here He is in our scripture reading opening the ears of a poor deaf man in a remote part of this world and healing the daughter of a despised and unwelcome Gentile woman. This omnipotent and awesome Jesus took the time not only to contemplate the sparrows in the sky and the lilies of the field that were created through Him and for Him but also took the time to bring healing and words of hope to people like you and me.

You have probably read the story of Gideon from the Book of Judges, chapter 6.

The angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon while he was busy threshing wheat in a wine press to hide it from the Midianites. The angel said to Gideon, "The Lord is with you O mighty man of Valour". The one who resides in you is bigger than your dilemma. The story tells us that Gideon did not realise his potential until the angel appeared to him and said, go, the Lord is with you mighty man of great courage.

My message today is about faith in the Lord, that even though He is an almighty, all powerful, awesome and omnipotent God, He is with us. He pays attention to our dilemmas and challenges; He searches and knows our souls and our hearts. The

Gentile woman in this story is one example of that. Her faith in the Lord, her self-confidence, courage and trust in Jesus' compassion and love for all, helped her to save her daughter.

When we have faith in this awesome, amazing Jesus, we become strong and courageous. Through our faith in the great mystery of His almighty power, we should walk with confidence because He is with us everywhere we go. Our background, our colour of skin, our own story and uniqueness, like that of this woman in today's Gospel, does not determine the amount of grace and love Jesus has for us.

His greatness, might, and amazing power does not impede Him from being close to us, helping us in our time of need, hearing our prayers, and joining us as we journey in this world.

I like the implied words of the angel to Gideon, the one who resides in you is bigger than your dilemma.

Our Lord Jesus in his omnipotence and might is greater than any of our problems, challenges, and dilemmas. Let's have faith in Him and ask Him for courage, trust and faith in Him. *Amen.*