

He has done all things well

Mark 7: 31-37

January 25, 2026

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³¹ Then he returned from the region of Tyre and went through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. ³² And they brought to him a man who was deaf and had a speech impediment, and they begged him to lay his hand on him. ³³ And taking him aside from the crowd privately, he put his fingers into his ears, and after spitting touched his tongue. ³⁴ And looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, “Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.” ³⁵ And his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. ³⁶ And Jesus charged them to tell no one. But the more he charged them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. ³⁷ And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, “He has done all things well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak.”

Have you wondered how many words you *hear* in a day?

About 20,000 to 30,000 words.

What you hear, what you process with what you hear is going to form your worldview and is significant to your faith.

So many people hear but never comprehend. Having the ability to hear does not automatically translate to comprehending the Gospel. You can hear all your life and never love the Lord.

The most important prayer in the Old Testament is the called the great *Shema*. *Shema* is translated “Hear”. The prayer is “Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one”. The religious leaders of the temple in Jesus’ day knew this prayer, recited this prayer, and did not have a synagogue service without this prayer. And yet when the Lord Jesus Christ came to them with the Gospel, did they love the Lord, worship him and adore him? No, they hated him, plotted to kill him and crucified him. The Pharisees were like that. Hearing but never comprehending.

So, hearing and comprehending the Gospel is a supernatural work of God.

- When Paul came to Philippi, Lydia was converted after “*The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul*” Acts 16:14
- When Jesus taught the parable of the soils in Mark 4, he began and ended his parable with the phrase, “*He who has ears to hear, let him hear*”. (Mark 4:9).
 - Those with the three bad soils - they *heard* the Gospel but none of them had any fruit. Why? They did not keep what they heard. Only one good soil produced fruit. How? “*But those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word*”

and accept it and bear fruit, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold” Mark 4:20

- Jesus said “*Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!*” Luke 11:28
- Jesus said in John 10 that “*My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me*” John 10:27.
- “*Faith comes by hearing and hearing the word of Christ*” Romans 10:17

That is why we do an exposition of the passage than a topical message. The Biblical Author’s meaning, intent and implications are far more important than my opinion or anyone’s opinion. We reject the notion that God is giving someone a new revelation because God has already revealed what we need to hear in his Word.

Today in our passage, we see a man cannot hear and speak. This man is brought to Jesus in the region of the Decapolis. If you recall, this is the region where Jesus had been once before. We saw this in Mark chapter 5. There was a man living in the Tombs. This man was possessed with by so many demons called the Legion - at least 2000 demons. When this man met Jesus, Jesus healed him, set him free and gave him a right mind. The man was so radically transformed, that he begged Jesus to take him. But Jesus gave him a mission and said, “go to your own, and tell them how much the Lord had done for you so”. And he did. Evidently, the people in the region of the Decapolis knew who Jesus was. How? Because this demoniac turned evangelist told everyone about Jesus. Now Jesus is back in this region and they bring a man to Jesus who needs healing.

³¹ *Then Jesus left the vicinity of Tyre and went through Sidon, down to the Sea of Galilee and into the region of the Decapolis.*³² *There some people brought to him a man who was deaf and could hardly talk, and they begged Jesus to place his hand on him.*

Jesus travels through Sidon and into the Decapolis – all Gentile regions. Not very friendly for Jews. There the word about him spreads. Word that the healer is back in town. Whether the crowds understood who Jesus really was is another subject but they knew Jesus had incredible and supernatural healing power. So, they bring this man to Jesus.

For what? For Jesus to lay his hand on this man and so that he may be healed of his deafness and speech impediment.

Laying on hands was understood as conveying a blessing or affirming someone.

It was believed and understood that if Jesus touched, they would be healed of their sickness, disease or a disability.

- Peter’s mother-in-law was with a fever and Jesus took her by the hand and the fever left her. (Mark 1:31).

- A leper once came to Jesus. And Jesus touched him and the leprosy left him (Mark 1:42).
- Jesus went to Jairus' little daughter who had died and took her by her hand and she came to life (Mark 5:41).
- When Jesus was in Nazareth, his hometown, he was disappointed by their lack of faith and yet he "laid his hands on a few sick people" (Mark 6:5). And the result? They were all healed!

Jesus did not need to heal by laying his hands on him. Jesus could heal with a word. The demoniac was delivered by Jesus speaking and commanding the demons to leave. So, what does Jesus do with this man.

Jesus does more than just lay his hands on him.

³³ *After he took him aside, away from the crowd, Jesus put his fingers into the man's ears. Then he spit and touched the man's tongue.*

Jesus does three things -

1. #1. Jesus takes him aside. Jesus knows that this man needs deliverance but he does not want a spectacle. The crowds were usually obsessed with the next best sensation in town. Jesus knew that. Jesus needed no one to tell him what was in the heart of man. When Jesus was in the Decapolis on a previous trip, there was no crowd. Only one man – the demoniac. The crowd came later to see how this was delivered. Jesus wants to deal with this deaf man privately and intimately, one-on-one.
2. #2. Notice Jesus puts his fingers into the man's ears. What is Jesus doing? He is blocking out all other noises, every other disturbance, every false way and showing him that He alone is the source of healing. There are many distractions in this life. But Jesus, wants to show this man that He alone must be the source and singular voice he must hear.
Imagine the man gazing into the eyes of Jesus as he put his fingers in the ears of this man. What a great privilege for this Gentile man.
This is what Jesus did when he saved you. He took you aside. He set his gaze upon you and called you to himself as the Savior and Lord of your life!
3. #3. Jesus spits and touches the man's tongue. This is very *unusual*, at least for our day and age. But not that unusual for the first century. Saliva was considered symbolic of healing or even having medicinal powers in ancient times. Perhaps Jesus was condescending to their expectations? We don't know. It is best to see this as a symbolic action of a heavenly touch. We are going to see this sort of thing again chapter 8.

So, Jesus takes the man aside, closes his ears and uses his saliva to touch his tongue.

Jesus does *three* more things while he is with the man.

³⁴ *He looked up to heaven and with a deep sigh said to him, “Ephphatha!” (which means “Be opened!”).*

1. Jesus looks up to heaven to his Father. We have seen this before. When Jesus fed the five thousand, he took the five loaves and two fish and “*he looked up into heaven and said a blessing*” (Mark 6:41).
 - a. Even our Lord Jesus was dependent on his Father. He was God in the flesh. He could all things independently. “*He who comes from above is above all. He who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks in an earthly way. He who comes from heaven is above all.* John 3:31
 - b. And yet he looked to do his Father’s will and to give glory to his Father. “*For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me*”. John 6:38
 How much more should we be looking up to God than to others? When you have a need, is your first impulse to look up to God or to others first? Jesus said in John 11, he looked up and prayed so that others would believe in Him. We should do the same. We look up and display a faith so that others can believe in Christ.
2. Jesus looks up and then sighs or groans. This is his compassion in action. Jesus groans for the sick, the poor and the needy.
3. Lastly, Jesus commands the ears of this man to be opened. Jesus says, “*Ephphatha* “. This is in Aramaic. Be opened.

What happens as a result? Verse 35.

³⁵ And (immediately) his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly.

The man was instantly healed!

I found this verse quite fascinating. Here is a word-to-word translation.

“And immediately, his hearing was opened, and the bondage or the imprisonment of his tongue was released and he was speaking properly.”

Remember, the demoniac in Mark chapter 5.? The man was possessed with so many demons that they tried to bind him chains or bonds, but he broke all of them apart. Same word for chains is used here about his speech impediment.

What a wonderful healing from our Lord!

His deafness gone. His speech impediment gone.

Sin is like that. You want to get out from the bonds of sin. But you can't be free on your own. It feels like you are bound in shackles and prison. Only Jesus can get you out from the bondage of sin.

Now Jesus has a command for the crowd.

³⁶ And Jesus charged them to tell no one. But the more he charged them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. ³⁷ And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, "He has done all things well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak."

Why did Jesus command the people not to tell anyone? His compassion to heal was to point to his compassion to forgive sin. And yet the crowd proclaims all the more.

The parallel passage in Matthew's Gospel in chapter 15 tells us that "*great crowds came to him, bringing with them the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute, and many others, and they put them at his feet, and he healed them, ³¹ so that the crowd wondered, when they saw the mute speaking, the crippled healthy, the lame walking, and the blind seeing. And they glorified the God of Israel.*"

This is really the end goal of Jesus' ministry. To glorify His Father. And for people to glorify him and God the Father.

In conclusion, God made everything good after five days of creation. And on the sixth day, when he made man and woman, he called it very good. However, man rebelled, disobeyed and sinned against God. Man has been separated from God since. So, God sent his only son Jesus Christ to reverse the curse of sin. By healing this man, Jesus is reversing the curse. He is making things new - physically and spiritually.

Jesus has done all things well. One day, he will restore all things.

----- Discipleship Questions-----

MESSAGE SUMMARY: He has done all things well. Mark 7:31-37

HEAD: These questions help you examine the truth of God's Word.

1. Why is hearing God's Word crucial to your life as a Christian? What does Jesus do in response to being asked to heal the deaf and mute man? What do you observe in his actions?

HEART: These questions help you wrestle with what you believe.

2. Do you believe you should use our senses (hearing, speaking etc) to make much of the Gospel and Christ? How?
3. What is God convicting you of and to believe in light of this message?

HANDS/HABITS: These questions help you bring the truth into your everyday life and develop behaviors that change your habits.

4. For personal reflection: Are there distractions causing you to not hear God's Word? What will you do about it?