

He Does All things Well

Mark 7:31-37

Jesus is still in Gentile territory. He takes a big route, heading north first to Sidon from Tyre and then down to Decapolis, east of the Sea of Galilee (cf. 5:20). He may have spent eight months, approaching a quarter of his ministry, in Gentile territory. This isn't a random account from his time there, but intentionally included by Mark who relates Peter's eyewitness testimony. This healing is very unique in detail, and the details are purposeful and powerful. What should we know about how Jesus felt and what he did for Gentiles, and how should it impact us? Mark doesn't just tell us what Jesus did for this individual Gentile, but it's enormous significance for the world since the one who does all things well has come.

Seven Actions

1. Jesus takes him aside.
2. Jesus puts his fingers into his ears.
3. Jesus touches his tongue.
4. Jesus looks up into heaven.
5. Jesus groans.
6. Jesus commands him to "Open up!"
7. Jesus instructs them not to tell anyone.

An Equal and Opposite Reaction

Even Jesus Christ seems to encounter Murphy's Law! The more he charges them to be quiet, the more they spread it around (v36). Perhaps Jesus touched the man's ears first because he ought to hear first, then speak (Jms. 1:19). If only he wasn't a teacher, people wouldn't misunderstand and disobey him.

A Bigger Story

In verse 35 the word for blindness (*mogilalos*) occurs only one other time in the Bible, in Isaiah 35:

4 Say to those who have an anxious heart, "Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you." 5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; 6 then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert. (vv4-6)

This is a prophecy about Israel coming out of exile. God will work all these blessings but only after he arrives in vengeance and recompense. Jesus has been taking vengeance in Israel or Decapolis, but he has been sighing and preparing to sigh his last on the cross. God is concerned with getting Israel out of Exile, but his means is to conquer our slavery to sin first, and let us lead the world to freedom and justice. He opens our stopped ears to hear his Word. He takes our tongues full of poison, and loosens them to sing for joy, speak edifying words. When he does this for us, even our disobedience can't keep us from proclaiming, "He does all things well!"

NOTES FOR LITTLE SAINTS

Today's Passage: Mark 7:31-37 *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."*

1. After leaving Tyre and Sidon, where did Jesus go (verse 31)? Do you think he knew a lot of people there?
2. Jesus met many people who were different from his race, who didn't have faith in God like he did, who didn't live where he had. What was different about this man and how did Jesus interact with him (verses 31-33)?
3. What did Jesus tell the people to do, and how did they respond to Jesus' instruction (verse 36)?
4. Draw a picture of the healed man singing and jumping in the air for joy.

Memory Verse to Recite Next Week:

And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, "He has done all things well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak."—Mark 7:31-37