

September 9, 2018  
Sermon for the Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost  
St Peter Lutheran Church  
Bowie, TX  
Larry Knobloch, Pastor  
Mark 7:31-37

*J.J.- Jesu Juva—Help me, Jesus*

Mark 7:31–37 (ESV)

### **Jesus Heals a Deaf Man**

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

Grace, mercy and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior,  
Jesus Christ!

Amen.

Twitter seems to be a huge thing. It has been around for many years, but I really don't know much about it. I have an account but I have probably been on it twice. If you watch the news or just about any other thing they talk about who tweeted what and then often try to figure out what the actual meaning behind the tweet is. It's all beyond me and I really couldn't care that I really don't understand it.

Apparently, Jesus Christ has a Twitter account. Sadly, he has only 600,000 followers. That's just a drop in the bucket compared to the more than 100 million for Katy Perry and just a shade under 100 million for Justin Bieber. Former President Barack Obama comes in with a respectable 90 million, while current President Donald Trump lags behind with only 35 million followers.

When you follow someone such as Taylor Swift or Kim Kardashian on Twitter, you're able to keep up with their daily activities and their views on a host of topics of varied importance. Social media has given people unprecedented access to the lives and thoughts of leaders from the world of politics and popular culture. For many of these individuals, social media gives a beloved platform through which they let their voices be heard. So they seek as much attention as they can get in an effort to get more followers.

Based on our Gospel for today, it's safe to assume Jesus would have had no interest in Twitter in His day.

Rather than seeking the attention and the praises of the crowds, we find Jesus doing quite the opposite. He takes the deaf and mute man off to the side, away from the crowd, before restoring him. Then after the miracle, Jesus tells the witnesses not to tell anyone. To us, it seems like a truly bizarre behavior.

Why would He perform the miracle in private and tell them not to tell anyone about it? But you see, Jesus isn't concerned about the crowds. He *is* concerned about the one—the one dear, mute man and the one demon-possessed girl.

Jesus is so different from the famous people of our day. They all have Twitter accounts, from our current president to every pop star under the sun. They want to be heard and followed, but they also don't want to be bothered, and they clamor for their boundaries, even though they were the ones to throw open the doors in the first place. But it is our Lord who sought to go away to a quiet place with His disciples, only to find that the people had gone ahead of them and beaten them there. Rather than turning the crowds away, Jesus has compassion on them. He shows that same compassion to the deaf and mute man. Jesus is always concerned for the one hurting and needy person.

The Lord Jesus is not concerned with drawing great crowds, and quite often Mark notes Him trying to escape from them. He also is the same Jesus in private as He is in public. There are not two different personas for this Messianic figure.

What you see is what you get with Jesus. He is just as concerned for the woman with the discharge of blood as He is for the daughter of the synagogue ruler.

He's the same Jesus when He's alone with Peter, James, and John as when He's with the thousands who ate the loaves and fish. He's the same Jesus when the soldiers strike Him and when the criminals insult Him. He's the same Jesus always and forever.

Jesus' concern for the deaf and mute is also a deep-seated love and concern for you. The one who touched the unclean and associated with tax collectors, prostitutes, and even Gentiles is concerned for you and the hurts and pains you bear.

The one who looked the deaf and mute man in the eyes and touched His fingers to the man's tongue comes to you with His mercy and love to forgive and restore you. He still comes to open ears and release tongues, and He sets us free through the baptismal waters and the commanding Word.

He's concerned for the one who's held in bondage to addiction and the one who's been broken by guilt. Through the forgiving word of Absolution, He still frees those who are held captive by their past. What a comfort this is for those who feel forgotten and alone. There are certainly crowds who are amazed by Jesus during His earthly ministry, but this reading from Mark reminds us that His larger concern is for each and every person, including each and every one of you.

That's just the sort of Lord Jesus is. He does all things well.

From obeying His parents to submitting to the law of the land, Jesus is always the obedient servant. As teacher, He teaches His hearers what is good, right, and true.

As King, He shows mercy to the least and the lowest. As Savior, He comes to rescue those who are lost and forgotten.

Jesus can only do good because He is God, and God is good. Therefore, wherever He goes, He does what is good and pleasing to His heavenly Father. He always submits to the Father's will, which we confess is a good and gracious will.

At the end of His creating, God the Father looked back over all He'd made and noted that it was good. It was good because God can only do that which is good.

After Jesus restored the Syrophenician woman's daughter and the deaf and mute man, the people made the obvious observation: "*He does all things well.*" Of course He does all things well, because He is God.

And He doesn't stop doing things well. He did it right up unto the end as He cried out from the cross, "*It is finished.*" He had completed the work of His re-creation, and looking back over what He'd done, He declared that His work was complete and that it is good. He still keeps on doing good as He strengthens the weak and comforts the sorrowful and shows mercy to the forsaken and forgiveness to the contrite.

We need to be regularly reminded that Christ Jesus does all things well.

When we suffer all sorts of hardships and difficulties, our Lord is still doing all things well. When the treatments do not bring the healing for which we hoped, our Lord continues to do all things well as He grants us the grace to endure the suffering.

When we look around the world and see violence and terror, hunger and disease, we are comforted in knowing that our Lord is continuing to do all things well.

He continues to accomplish His good and gracious will as His Word is proclaimed, as the saints of God serve in their daily callings, as the sick receive healing through doctors serving as God's instruments,

and as the hungry are fed by the service of countless hands. Seeing evil in the world does not mean Christ Jesus is not doing all things well anymore.

On the contrary, in this evil world, He continues to break and hinder the plans of the devil and the world as He carries out good through His holy ones wherever and however they serve, usually without notice or fanfare. But Jesus also does things well when He shows you your own sins and your own rebellion. He does all things well as you are called to repentance and as He forgives you all your sins for the sake of his death on the cross.

Our Lord Jesus Christ did all things well during His earthly ministry, and He continues to do all things well as His Word is proclaimed and as the Church, His Body, serves as His hands and feet of service in the world. As our Lord does all things well, He still shows care and concern for each person in need.

May this loving-kindness and concern bring comfort and peace to you as you endure suffering in this world and as you look forward to Jesus' final good work of bringing us to the Father in the resurrection on the Last Day.

Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus!

Amen.

*S. D. G - Soli Deo Gloria*

To God alone be glory

He Does All Things Well

Mark 7:31–37

1. People of today seek attention for themselves.
2. Jesus is concerned for each person.
3. Jesus does all things well.