

Doing All Things Well

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Jesus must have performed thousands of miracles. The Gospel authors describe crowds and crowds of people traveling far distances to see Jesus for healing. As a reader of the Gospels, I often wonder why the authors chose the miracle accounts they cited in their writings. The miracles evidenced Jesus' divinity, His power to forgive sins, and His ability to bring a new creation. The Gospel of Mark records a curious miracle involving Jesus and a deaf man.

Then he returned from the region of Tyre and went through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. 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. And taking him aside from the crowd privately, he put his fingers into his ears, and after spitting touched his tongue. And looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened." And his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. And Jesus charged them to tell no one. But the more he charged them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. 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).

About the Miracle

The deaf man must have been beloved by the people who brought him to Jesus. Mark says they begged Jesus to lay his hand on him. In response, Jesus gave special attention to this man. Jesus was careful to maintain the deaf man's dignity by taking him away from the crowds to heal him.

Jesus touched the man's ears and tongue perhaps as a method of communicating to the man about what He was going to do. Then, Jesus spoke. Translators viewed Jesus' words with such sacredness that they left the word in its original language: "Ephphatha." Instantly, the man's ears were opened and he was able to speak clearly.

Afterward, Jesus instructed the man not to tell anyone about how he was healed. Mark says that the more Jesus told the man not to tell anyone the more determined he became to proclaim what had happened to him. Think about it! A deaf-mute received healing from Jesus and now could hear and speak. I doubt this man ever stopped talking!

Lastly, Mark notes the reaction of the people who brought the deaf man to Jesus. They said that Jesus had done all things well. For some reason, it seems they thought healing a deaf man was a particularly difficult case for Jesus. Yet, Jesus healed this man without any lingering side effects. His healing was perfect. The deaf man began a new life of perception of his surroundings and in proclaiming the power of Jesus.

The Miracle Teaches...

1). Jesus is tried and true. Approaching Jesus with skepticism is understandable. Sometimes we are unsure that Jesus can heal us. We make such messes of our lives when we sin that we may doubt the prospect of restoration and renewal. On this occasion, Jesus proved His ability to do *all* things well.

Giving sight to the blind; enabling the lame to walk; calming the sea; and raising the dead. The miracles demonstrated Jesus' power to heal, restore, and renew. Jesus can forgive our sins. He can remake us into useful servants in His kingdom. He can save us from eternal death. There is nothing beyond His power to save.

2). Jesus does all things well. Jesus came to undo the consequences of sin. He came to reverse the decay of sin and defeat death. He once described Himself as an apprentice to His Father. Together, they were working on the project of a new creation (John 5). The miracles are flashes of this purpose and power. They were all building to the moment when His Father would raise Him from the dead to solidify His victory over sin and death.

On this occasion, the people were not expecting the result Jesus effected. Yet, they were amazed by what He did with such little effort. Amazement was a common reaction to the miracles of Jesus. When Jesus calmed the sea, the apostles asked, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" (Mark 4:41).

The work of Jesus is of the highest quality. Jesus can open our eyes and give us something worth saying. Jesus can fix us and empower us to help reclaim His Father's world. Therefore, we must have faith in Jesus' power. In receiving His healing, we must seek to do all things well.

3). The power of what Jesus produces. There are a couple of instances when Jesus healed someone and then asked them not to tell anyone about Him. When John documents this, he says Jesus did this because "His hour had not come." However, no one could be quiet about their life changing encounter with Jesus.

The healing received by the former deaf man gave him zeal. Mark says the more Jesus told him not to tell anyone, the more zealously he proclaimed it. Mark shows the of power Jesus to change our lives. How many times did this man tell the story of the day Jesus changed his life? Did this man ever stop proclaiming Jesus? This man's new life was now about proclaiming the One who healed him.

But, what about our zeal? Have we received new life from Jesus? If we have, who have we told? Have we told our children? Have we told our friends? Or have we become mute?

Conclusion

Mark's account of this miracle is masterful. He emphasizes Jesus' power and the result of His miracle. As readers, we learn about Jesus' purpose and how He can save us. The healing of Jesus is life changing. He can give us a new life and fill our hearts with zeal. Zeal is our heart's fuel for empowering us to share the Gospel.