

## JESUS DOES EVERYTHING WELL

Mark 7:31-37 | Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost | Sep 6/9, 2018

*People were overwhelmed with amazement. "He has done everything well," they said. "He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak."*

### Jesus

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Dustin Johnson is a pretty good golfer. Eric Clapton is a fair guitar player. Bobby Flay is a decent cook. Tom Hanks isn't a bad actor. Those are all examples of understatement. Dustin Johnson isn't just a pretty good golfer. He's currently ranked #1 in the world. Eric Clapton is more than a fair guitar player. He's world-renowned for his virtuosity. Bobby Flay is more than just a decent cook. He's a celebrity chef with his own Food Network shows, restaurants and product lines. Tom Hanks is more than just a good actor. He's a two-time Oscar winner whose movies bring in hundreds of millions of dollars at the box office.

Understatement can be used as a clever way of bringing out someone's or something's greatness. Let's use Thomas Edison as our example. We might say something like this: "Thomas Edison patented over 1,000 inventions. He invented the first practical incandescent light bulb, the phonograph and produced the first talking motion pictures. Not bad." Obviously, we don't mean that Edison as an inventor just wasn't bad. We mean he was fantastic, amazing, one of the best ever. The understatement helps us draw attention to this fact.

Our text contains an example of Biblical understatement. After watching Jesus miraculously heal a man who was both deaf and mute, the people responded, **"He has done everything well."**

Understatement. Obviously, Jesus does everything more than just well. He does all things perfectly. Let's borrow their understatement for our sermon theme: **JESUS DOES EVERYTHING WELL!** He is perfect in showing compassion. He is flawless in carrying out salvation.

### **I. Jesus is Perfect in Showing Compassion**

Jesus was in the region known as the Decapolis, an area of ten cities established by the followers of Alexander the Great, and later rebuilt by the Romans. This was a decidedly Gentile area. Obviously, the Savior who was sent first to the lost sheep of Israel, was also concerned with other lost sheep.

Jesus' reputation as a miracle-worker and healer preceded him. **Some people brought to him a man who was deaf and could hardly talk, and they begged Jesus to place his hand on him.** These people knew that all Jesus had to do was lay his hand on the man and he would be healed. This is the same Jesus who simply commanded demons to come out. He was able to heal with a word.

But Jesus did something different here. Rather than laying his hand on the man or announcing the healing Jesus took him aside. Jesus didn't need to do this. It wasn't for his benefit. It was for the deaf and mute man's benefit. Just put yourself in his sandals for a moment. You can't hear at all and you can hardly speak. Suddenly your friends are dragging you off to a man you don't know and talking to him in an excited fashion. You're in the middle of a large crowd. You don't know what's going on. It's all pretty overwhelming for you.

Jesus knew this. He knew exactly what this man needed. In compassion he took the man aside privately and dealt with him personally. He did some things that at first glance seem rather strange. **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.** <sup>34</sup> He looked up to heaven and with a deep sigh said to him, **"Ephphatha!"**(which means **"Be opened!"**). <sup>35</sup> **At this, the man's ears were opened, his tongue was loosened and he began to speak plainly.**

Again, this wasn't for Jesus' benefit. It's not as if he had to touch the man's tongue and ears to heal him. This was for the man's benefit. In a non-verbal way Jesus communicated with the man. His actions said, "It's OK. Be calm. I'm here to help. I'm going to repair your damaged ears so you can hear. I'm going to fix your tongue so you can speak." Then Jesus spoke. We are privileged today to hear the very syllables that came from our Lord's

lips. He said, **"Ephphatha!"** That's Aramaic for "be completely open." Jesus spoke and it happened. Immediately the man had no trouble hearing or speaking. He didn't need to go to a speech therapist. His healing was complete. At just the right time, in just the right way, with perfect compassion, Jesus gave the man exactly what he needed.

Will Jesus treat us differently? Does he show us any less compassion to you and me than he showed this man? The answer, of course is, no. He gives us all that we need. He causes all to work for our good. That's his promise. But sometimes we can begin to think he's forgotten about us.

We all struggle and hurt just like the deaf man. All of us have battles that we are waging, hidden hurts that carry in our bodies and hearts. Maybe your health is headed south. Maybe a relationship is falling apart. Maybe you're struggling to pay the bills and make ends meet. Perhaps you are dealing with anxiety or loneliness or depression. Every one of us carries burdens. Every one of us hurts.

Where do we take those hurts? How do we deal with the burdens? Do we just go it alone, put on our big boy pants, pull ourselves up by our own bootstraps? Do we turn to the bottle? "One more will numb the pain." Do we turn to pleasure, distract ourselves with entertainment, busy ourselves with work? Do we spend more time praying, "God, take the pain away," or "God, give me the strength to endure"? Or do we forget to pray at all.

Sometimes we get so tied up in turmoil, so focused on ourselves and our hurts, that we forget about our compassionate Savior, the One who can heal with a word, the One who promises never to leave us or forsake us. Our lack of trust, our turning to help that isn't really help instead of turning to our Savior, is just one symptom of the sin and unbelief that infects us by nature. We sinners deserve to be helpless and hopeless for eternity.

## II. Jesus is Flawless in Accomplishing Salvation

My friends, we're not going to get what we deserve. Jesus has made sure of that. The Savior who is perfect in showing compassion is also flawless in accomplishing salvation. In fact, Jesus would let nothing get in the way of rescuing us from the eternal pain we deserve.

Listen again to our text: **Jesus commanded them not to tell anyone. But the more he did so, the more they kept talking about it.** Now that just sounds strange, doesn't it? This is the same Savior who said, **"Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation"** (Mark 16:15). This is the same Jesus who gave the Great Commission to his Church: **"Go and make disciples of all nations"** (Matthew 28:19). How can he say something so different here? Don't tell anybody? His words seem so contradictory.

Well, it's all a matter of timing. You see, after he rose, Jesus told his disciples of all time to preach and teach his saving gospel

to all people. But our text takes place much earlier in his ministry, before his suffering and death, before his resurrection and ascension. It's not that Jesus didn't want people to hear the good news. He himself was going from town to town preaching it. No, he just didn't want a worldly kind of popularity. The people had a false idea of the Messiah's mission. They thought Jesus had come to keep their bellies full and their bodies disease free. He was their ticket to Easy Street. That kind of thinking could have gotten in the way of Jesus' determined march to the cross. He wouldn't stand for it. And so he said, "Let's keep this quiet." The people didn't listen.

Nevertheless, Jesus didn't let their loose lips sink the ship of salvation. His mission, his purpose for coming into this world, his top job and number one priority was saving a world full of sinners. This he did well. With flawless obedience he kept God's commands. He was perfect in our place. The writer to the Hebrews describes Jesus as **holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners** (7:26). He lived such a life for us, a life that counts for us.

And then, willingly and according to God's plan made already in eternity, he allowed his enemies to hand him over for crucifixion so that he could offer the perfect payment for our guilt. His precious life, his holy blood is that payment. As Peter tells us: **It was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of**

## **Christ** (1 Peter 1:18-19).

On the third day, in perfect accord with Holy Scripture, he rose in victory over all our enemies. He lived sinlessly in our place, shed his blood, suffered our hell, and rose again in order to give us forgiveness, life and salvation. Did it all work? Did Jesus accomplish our salvation? On at least two occasions his Father proclaimed loudly and clearly, **“This is my son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased”** (Matthew 3:17; 17:5). Even the Father says, “Jesus has done everything well.”

His incredible love, his flawless work on our behalf, his perfect execution of his mission is what moves us to do all things well for him.

- His perfect love is what moves Christian parents to bring up their children to know him as Savior.
- His perfect love is what moves Christian children to obey their parents as if they were obeying the Lord himself.
- His perfect love is what moves Christian wives to submit to their husbands’ headship and Christian husbands to love their wives with a selfless, Christ-like love.
- His perfect love is what moves Christian employers to run their businesses with honesty and integrity and Christian employees to work hard for their pay.
- His perfect love is what moves all of us, his forgiven, thankful people, to do all things well in love for him and

in love for our neighbor.

Jesus did all things well for us. What an understatement! In perfect compassion he gives us everything we need just when we need it. With flawless love he lived and died and rose again for us. In pure grace he gives us full forgiveness, new life and eternal salvation. And all this not because we have earned or deserved it, but purely because of his divine grace and mercy. Yes, my friends, Jesus has done everything well. I guess you could say: *Jesus is a pretty good Savior. Amen.*

**S.D.G.**