

SERIES: **The Jesus Journey**

TEXT: **Mark 7:31-37**

TITLE: **When God's Ways Don't Make Sense**

CONTEXT- Jesus traveled outside the boundaries of Israel & helped a woman, but in an unusual way

Mark 7:31 Again, leaving the region of Tyre, he went by way of Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, through the region of the Decapolis.

Instead of going directly south, Jesus horseshoes, first north then southeast, through the non-Jewish, gentile region of the 'ten-cities'

This would make it a much longer journey than it needed to be; scholars believe it may have taken months

We see a pattern play out in the life of the Messiah-

Jesus goes where others won't, to reach who others don't

He goes out of His way to reach those out of the way and show them The Way

There's a principle for us who live in an age of instant everything (freeways, microwaves, and cell phones)-

We can't expect every sinner to find Christ in church

If we are to reach the lost, we need to find them where they are

take the long road every now and then (*plug street fair*)

Mark 7:32 They brought to him a deaf man who had difficulty speaking and begged Jesus to lay his hand on him.

Who's 'they'?we're not told. Must be some who care enough about this man to seek help on his behalf

Nowhere in this text are we told anything about this man's faith! But we see the faith of those around him.

Who are you surrounding yourself with?

We all need these kinds of people in our lives-

people who will look out for us when we aren't hearing right and speaking right;

who know us well enough to know somethings off

Maybe this man was skeptical; maybe it isn't the first time others have tried to help.

But he had people around him who relentlessly wanted him to be made whole-

We need people who have hope for us, even and especially when we don't

Meli this past week was that for me after what seemed like bad news after bad news

Mark 7:33-34 So he took him away from the crowd in private. After putting his fingers in the man's ears and spitting, he touched his tongue. Looking up to heaven, he sighed deeply and said to him, "Ephphatha!" (that is, "Be opened!").

'Sigh'- same Greek word used in

Romans 8:22-23 For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together with labor pains until now. ²³Not only that, but we ourselves who have the Spirit as the firstfruits—we also **groan** within ourselves, eagerly waiting for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

Jesus doesn't just see a problem, He sees a person, & sympathizes with His suffering

To our modern understanding- what Jesus does is strange and unusual.

Why would Jesus do this, when He can heal this man with a simple thought?

I believe Jesus wanted this man to personally know what He was about to do for him, and who was doing it,
And I think this man understood, even if to everyone else, it seemed strange and unusual

Ferguson- “The man could not hear Jesus and he was also incapable of verbal communication. So Jesus spoke to him in the language he could understand, sign-language. The fingers placed in his ears and then removed meant, ‘I am going to remove the blockage in your hearing’. The spitting and the touching of the men's tongue meant, ‘I am going to remove the blockage in your mouth’. The glance up to heaven meant, ‘it is God alone who is able to do this for you’. Jesus wanted the man to understand that it was not magic but God's grace that healed him.”

We would do well to remember, **God speaks to each of us in a way we can understand**

The Shurg's (missionaries to Panama)- Hilda was not convinced to move there because she didn't know anything about Panama and no one who lived there.

She prayed, *‘Lord, confirm to me in a way I know it's you and not just my husband's desire’*

That day she was preparing a bible study she was leading through Hebrews, when she read:

Hebrews 11:8 By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed and set out for a place that he was going to receive as an inheritance. **He went out, even though he did not know where he was going.**

It was only later that she realized that she had been studying the wrong chapter!

I speak to each of my children differently, & because I'm their dad, I know how each of them needs me to speak to them- God knows how to get His message across- if He wants you to know something, you'll know

Mark 7:35-37 Immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was loosened, (lit. the shackles of his tongue was broken) and he began to speak clearly. He ordered them to tell no one, but the more he ordered them, the more they proclaimed it. They were extremely astonished and said, “He has done everything well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak.”

I'm sure that as Jesus was putting his fingers in the mans ears, and touching his tongue, they didn't think Jesus did everything well; they probably thought, *“we only asked you to lay your hand on him”*

But wait long enough and you'll see, everything God does is good

He travels an unusual path; He works in unusual ways- but He brings about good

Main Takeaway- What feels strange now will prove good later

Even when God's ways are strange, they are ultimately good.

When things don't make sense at first, hang on, you will see, as things unfold, He knew what He was doing

Romans 8:28 We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.

The bible is peppered with case study after case study of this:

Joseph sold as a slave, David persecuted by Saul, Daniel in the den; Shadrack, Meshack & Abednego in the furnace, and ultimately, Jesus on the cross

You see this strange and unusual journey, and this strange and unusual miracle, was an unfolding of a prophecy told long before. This whole text stands against the backdrop of Isaiah 35.

Isaiah 34 is an undoing of creation of sorts- the desert wilderness taking over;
But then in Isaiah 35 we find a redoing of creation

Why did Jesus chose to travel the route He did through Tyre & Sidon?

Isaiah 35:1-2 The wilderness and the dry land will be glad; the desert will rejoice and blossom like a wildflower. 2 It will blossom abundantly and will also rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of **Lebanon** will be given to it, the splendor of Carmel and Sharon. They will see the glory of the Lord, the splendor of our God.

This is the region of none other than Tyre and Sidon- Jesus is the glory of the Lord now come!

Why did Jesus go all this way for the healing of one deaf and mute man?

Isaiah 35:5-6 Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped.
6 Then the lame will leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute will sing for joy, for water will gush in the wilderness, and streams in the desert;

Jesus is the Living Water bringing life to the desert wilderness!

Why couldn't the people keep quiet like Jesus asked them to?

Isaiah 35:10 and the ransomed of the Lord will return and come to Zion with singing, crowned with unending joy. Joy and gladness will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee.

As in creation God didn't just speak mankind into existence but formed them with His own hand,
So now Jesus, God in the flesh, heals this man's misery with His own hand.

And as at creation it was proclaimed that all God did was good,
So now, it is proclaimed, that though Jesus' works may seem strange, everything He does, He does well

CALL UP WORSHIP TEAM

The strangest work God ever did was our salvation.

1 Corinthians 1:23 but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to the Gentiles.

If we can trust Him with the most important thing- our eternal souls,
we can trust Him with the things of this world

Helen Howarth Lemmel was a gifted musician. But just as her career was taking off, she was struck with an illness that caused her to go blind. Her husband couldn't cope with this and he abandoned her. Yet in the midst of her suffering, when life was making little sense, she wrote the words of this now famous hymn:

*O soul, are you weary and troubled? No light in the darkness you see?
There's light for a look at the Savior, And life more abundant and free!
Turn your eyes upon Jesus, Look full in His wonderful face,
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim, In the light of His glory and grace.*

God's ways will not always make sense to you and me, but one day we will look back,
whether in this life or the next, and we will understand that indeed, *He does all things well*

Bullpen-

When you read the bible, you have to keep in mind that all 66 books are divinely intertwined and are telling one connected message

This whole section is sending us back to Isaiah 35

IOW this healing is meant to be taken in light of the Isaiah 35 prophecy

Here is a man burdened by a broken creation, and Jesus restores Him, as a glimpse/ downpayment of the promise of the recreation of all things

Jesus wept...and Jesus sighed

Before He brings healing, he identifies with the pain- He sympathizes

Sigh- same Greek word used in

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2 Corinthians 5:1-4 For we know that if our earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal dwelling in the heavens, not made with hands. ²Indeed, we groan in this tent, desiring to put on our heavenly dwelling, ³since, when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. ⁴Indeed, we groan while we are in this tent, burdened as we are, because we do not want to be unclothed but clothed, so that mortality may be swallowed up by life.

V36 why does Jesus always request this- they don't yet fully understand who He is

They will spread the incomplete gospel- Jesus Healer- yet fall short of – Jesus Messiah

This still happens today

V32 who needs you, is depending on you, to guide them to Jesus

Mark 7:33 -----**Genesis 2:7** Then the Lord God formed the man out of the dust from the ground and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils, and the man became a living being.

God is hands-on in the creative and redeeming work

Mark 7:37 -----**Genesis 1:31** God saw all that he had made, and it was very good indeed...

Everything-----all things

Good-----well