

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Mark: Jesus The Perfect Servant Of God

Part II: The Perfect Service Of Jesus, The Perfect Servant Of God, Mark 1:1-10:52

AA. Christ's Work To Communicate To A Deaf Mute That He Might Believe

(Mark 7:31-37)

I. Introduction

- A. We learned in our first lesson in this series that Mark's Gospel presents the perfect service of God's Perfect Servant, Jesus, with Mark's focus of having rebounded unto upright service from personal failure.
- B. In Mark 7:31-37, Jesus exemplified the need to communicate clearly to a communication-handicapped man that he might exhibit faith in Him to be healed in accord with the plan of God, a lesson we need to heed today:

II. Christ's Work To Communicate To A Deaf Mute That He Might Believe, Mark 7:31-37.

- A. In Isaiah 35:6, Isaiah predicted that God's coming rule on the earth would be marked by the ears of the deaf being unstopped, the word appearing in the Greek Septuagint translation of Isaiah 35:6 for "deaf and could hardly talk" being *mogilalon* that is used elsewhere only in Mark 7:32; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 136.
- B. Since Jesus alluded to His fulfillment of Isaiah 35:6 when the disciples of John asked Him about His identity in Matthew 11:2-6, His miracle of healing this deaf mute importantly serves to validate His Messianic identity.
- C. Jesus encountered this man as He was trying to avoid Galilee where He was well-known by going far north and then turning southeast to arrive in Decapolis on the eastern shore of Galilee, Mark 7:31; *Ibid.* Yet, people there recognized Him and came to beg Him to put His hand on a deaf mute to heal him, Mark 7:32.
- D. Christ could have instantly healed the man, but that would have kept him from the opportunity to trust Jesus as God willed, so Christ communicated truth to him by use of sign and body language that he might exercise faith in Jesus resulting in his being healed by God, *Ibid.*, Mark 7:33-34:
 - 1. Jesus first took the man aside so the actions of others would not distract the man from what Jesus wanted to communicate to him by way of sign and body language, Mark 7:33a; *Ibid.*
 - 2. Then, using comprehensible sign and body language, Jesus put His fingers into the man's ears so he would understand that Jesus wanted to address his deaf problem, Mark 7:33b.
 - 3. Jesus then spit, a sign to the man of the removal of what was undesirable, for what was spit out of the mouth was treated as ceremonially unclean according to the Mosaic Law, cf. Lev. 15:8; Mark 7:33c. Thus, Jesus was signaling His intent to remove the man's hearing problem.
 - 4. Christ then touched His tongue, communicating to the handicapped man that He wanted to heal the man's speech impediment by removing it from him as was also signaled in Jesus' act of spitting, Mark 7:33d.
 - 5. Then, Jesus looked up to heaven, the place the handicapped man would understand as the abode of God, communicating to the deaf mute that the healing procedure would be a miraculous act of God, Mark 7:34a.
 - 6. Christ then sighed, a visible sign to the deaf mute of Jesus' compassion for him in his plight, Mark 7:34b.
 - 7. Finally, with the man understanding Jesus intended to heal his deafness and speech impediment by God's power and compassion, and with the man thus trusting in Him, Jesus spoke in Aramaic, the language the man could lip-read, to say, "Ephphatha," that *literally* means, "Be completely opened," Mark 7:34c; *Ibid.*
- E. Consequently, the man's hearing and speech were fully restored to normal, and he spoke plainly, Mark 7:35.
- F. Jesus charged the people to tell no one about this miracle, but the more He did, the more they published it, saying Jesus had done all things well in making both the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak, Mark 7:36-37. The words "deaf" and "dumb" are "plural in Greek, viewing them as two classes of people," so "Mark probably intended an allusion to Isaiah 35:3-6 in the crowd's confession," *Ibid.*

Lesson: *In healing a man who had both a hearing and a speech impediment, Jesus worked to COMMUNICATE CLEARLY to him what He was going to do complete with the necessary theological truth involved that the man might believe in Christ so as to be healed in accord with the will of God.*

Application: *In serving the Lord to disciple others, may we seek to COMMUNICATE CLEARLY God's truth that we might be properly understood for the discipling process to occur. (1) This process may involve discerning what the one being disciplined understands as did Jesus in communicating to the deaf mute via use of sign and body language. (2) It may involve removing those disciplined from distractions that block their giving the proper attention to what we communicate. (3) It may also involve understanding the language, vocabulary or even culture involved like Jesus did in speaking native Aramaic to the deaf mute that he might understand that Jesus was healing him!*