

Good morning, church family.

All right, if you would take your Bibles with me and turn to Mark chapter 7. We're gonna finish up Mark chapter 7 this morning, verses 31 through 37. So the last section of chapter 7. The title of the message today

is The Deaf Will Hear. Very special passage in Mark.

Mark chapter seven, verses 31 through 37. Once you've found that, if you would rise with me in honor of the one who gave us this word, as we read our text together this morning. Mark chapter seven, verse 31

reads, and again, he went out from the region of Tyre and came through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee within the region of the Decapolis.

And they brought to him one who was deaf and spoke with difficulty. And they pleaded with him to

lay his hands on him. And Jesus took him aside from the crowd by himself and put his fingers into his ears, and after spitting, he touched his tongue. And looking up to heaven with a sigh, he said to him, Ephaphtha, that is, be opened. And his ears were opened, and

the impediment of his tongue was removed, and he began speaking plainly. And he gave them orders not to

tell anyone, but the more he was ordering them, the more widely they continued to proclaim it. And they were utterly astonished, saying, He has done all things well. He makes even the deaf to hear and the mute to speak. This is the word of the Lord.

Let's pray. Dear Heavenly Father, thank you so very much for your grace. We are all here because of you,

because you chose to condescend to your creation to reveal your glory in yourself. And we're so thankful for your

salvation and redemption that has gathered us here to sing your praises this morning. I pray that we would all in unison

hear the word. as it is given this morning,

that your spirit would impact those in this room exactly as

you've intended it to. And I pray, Lord, that you would

remove any distractions from me, any hindrances, any knots

in the tongue or anything that would distract from the message

that you have ordained to be delivered today. We glorify you

and thank you for all that you are, for the grace that you've

given, and I pray that we will glorify you in all that we do.

In your holy name I pray, amen. Okay, you can be seated. So as

we come to wrap up chapter seven, we're tackling today a passage,

a small narrative that is only found in the Gospel of Mark.

This story, this healing is not found anywhere else in the Gospels.

In fact, there's three stories in Mark that are not found in

any of the other Gospels. This is one of those three. And

as we think through where he's at geographically, we know he

traveled up into the Gentile region. We went into quite a

bit of detail last week about why that could be, so I won't

rehash a lot of information. But now what he's done is he

went up to the Mediterranean Sea, And he stopped at Tyre last week and now he's 20 miles north of there in Sidon. And then he does basically, he just does a big horseshoe and cuts back down to the southeast to go back to the Sea of Galilee. So if you think he left Gennesaret on the west side of the Sea of Galilee, went up, did a big horseshoe, and came back down on the northwest corner of the Sea of Galilee in the Decapolis. So there's basically this huge, if you look on a map, it's just a big horseshoe. Now, there's a lot of debate as to why he traveled in such a fashion. The majority of everyone falls on the fact that this 120-mile journey, it was a minimum of 120 miles, was to keep from going back into Galilee where all the opposition of the Pharisees were, all the opposition of Herod was, because he thought he was John the Baptist, reborn or brought back to life. So the general consensus is that he went up and around and made this big loop to get back to the Sea of Galilee to keep from going back through Galilee itself. the region of Galilee where the majority of the Jews were because of the crowds and the opposition and those kinds of things. So he's made this long trek. 120 miles is no easy feat, especially in the geography that's there. We're talking mountainous regions, dry, arid. They didn't have climbing gear or hiking boots like we have today. So just think of the journey that he would have went on with his disciples. And now he's come back to the Sea of Galilee in the Decapolis area. This is going to be the same mountainous region in the northwest corner of Galilee where the man that was possessed by Legion would have been cast out. So it's the exact same area, exact same region. So he's back there again. And as Mark prepares to transition to chapter eight, now, of course, there weren't chapter headings when Mark wrote it, but it's easy for us to understand. As Mark transitions to a different part of the letter that we find in chapter eight, he's going to give us a very important wording in this small narrative that's not found anywhere else. Mark has it here for a very specific reason. And my prayer this morning is that we'll be able to see that and glorify God together in who he is. So the first point this morning is the man, verses 31 and 32. So the first point is the man. We're gonna look at this man that's being brought to Jesus first. To reread verse 31 and 32 to make sure we're all together here, it reads, and again, he went out from the region of Tyre and came through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee within the region of the Decapolis. And they brought to him one who was deaf and spoke with difficulty and they pleaded with him to lay his hands Now, as I mentioned before, this is not found anywhere else in the Gospels. There is a portion of

Matthew, Matthew chapter 15, verse 29 through 31, where Matthew basically summarizes this as in that lump sum of information that Matthew gives as far as all the healings in the area. So, Matthew records some of the stories that we've already read in Matthew chapter 7, and then Matthew essentially summarizes his ministry to the Gentiles, this story included, because Matthew specifically talks about him, the mute being able to speak, the deaf being able to hear, the blind seeing, so Matthew gives a very general summary of this ministry. Now as he's in this Gentile region, we have to understand, based on Matthew, that this isn't the only miracle that he did in this area. He did a lot of ministry here, but Mark is drawing our attention to this specific healing. And so as we tackle this, we have to understand who this man is, why he was brought to Jesus, and Jesus' response to him. So while he's in this Gentile region, this man is brought to him in this crowd of Gentiles. Again, remembering that in the Decapolis, the man who was delivered from legion has been preaching. Christ commanded him to go and preach, to go share to his countrymen what had happened to him. And so they knew who Jesus was, they were fully aware of this man that healed people, and so they brought this man who had no hearing, and that he was, speech was impeded. He was not completely mute, but his speech was impeded. And it's important to understand that because he was able to speak some in those days, there wasn't communication, very hard to communicate with those who could not hear. It's firmly believed that he was able to hear for a portion of his life, learn to speak, learn the language, and then at some point during his life became deaf. It's hard to know exactly for what reason, but the fact that he could speak some tells us that he was at least able to hear at some point in his life. The wording here in verse 31 and 32 is written in the present tense in the original language. So this is an eyewitness retelling. Very likely Peter is telling an eyewitness recount of this very specific healing that Mark is recording for us. And this man with an infirmity was brought and they were pleading with him, pleading with him to heal him. Now, when we think about the pleading that we have, this group of people have brought someone pleading with Him to lay His hands on Him, but Jesus does something different as we're going to get ready to transition to point number two. When we think about the liberation that this man is seeking, there's a lot of words throughout this text that have a liberation language to them. So remember that key word, liberation. The original language talks about liberating his ears, liberating his tongue, liberating this man from his infirmities. And so as we continue to go through here, I want you to keep the idea of liberation. Liberation is a theme taught throughout scripture from the very beginning. What did God

do for the nation of Israel at their founding? He liberated them from Egypt. What did God do for this nation throughout their history? Over and over again, we see him liberating them from different people. When we come to the New Testament, this Messiah is prophesied in Isaiah as one who liberates his people from their sin and death. So liberation is a very important theme here in this story today. And the application, although small in this first point, is to remember that only Christ liberates and gives us freedom. Only Christ draws us out from sin and death. Only Christ can break the chains that have been passed down to us from the sin of Adam. Now how does he do that? How does Christ liberate? How do we get all this idea of liberation from this passage? So let's look at the miracle that's going to unpack and make us understand here why Mark included it. So point number two, the miracle, verses 33 through 35, the miracle. So completely different than what he's done so far with miracles up to this point, Jesus pulls this man aside and he's going to make the most physical contact with anyone that he has so far. Let's review it. Verses 33 through 35. And Jesus took him aside from the crowd by himself and put his fingers into his ears. And after spitting, he touched his tongue. And looking up to heaven with a sigh, he said to him, Ephaphtha, that is, be opened. And his ears were opened and the impediment of his tongue was removed and he began speaking plainly. So Jesus took him aside and this is a beautiful picture of Christ's compassion. So Jesus pulls this man aside. This is no longer a face in the crowd. This is no longer someone that's just here with this crowd. This is someone that Christ is giving his undivided attention to. So he pulls him aside. gives him this undivided attention, you see the compassion, you see this hurting individual gripping the focus of Christ, and then he makes physical contact with him, but in a way that has not been done in any of his healing so far in Mark. So what are we supposed to make of this? He sticks his fingers into his ears, and after spitting, and the original language is spitting onto his hand, he would have spit on his hand and touched his tongue, he then proceeds to heal him. Now, what in the world? Why did he stick his... Anybody ever struggled with this before? Why did he stick his fingers in his ear and spit on his... What? Nobody's spitting on their fingers and sticking on my tongue, right? I mean, in our Western mind, we're like, that's the most egregious thing I've ever heard. And yet, in that culture, believe it or not, it was customary for those who were thought to have healing powers to spit as a sign, almost a sacramental sign, that they thought if it was combined, their spit, because they were so empowered, so empowered with healing, especially in the Gentile region, that was very common, was to spit and apply that to the injured area. It was very

common for the healers
of those days to touch the infirmed areas while repeating an
incantation
or some sort of formula that supposedly was proved to heal
people. And understanding in the context that the two most
major issues that were absolutely insurmountable from a medical
perspective of the culture of those days was deaf, so loss
of hearing, and blindness. Those two things were just, they
couldn't overcome them. There was no way to do that.
Anyone that was healed from that was considered to be a miracle.
And so it's important to understand in that culture, the only one
that was considered to be able to heal the blind and to heal
the deaf was God himself. especially from a Jewish culture.
And so what Jesus does is he takes this ritualistic man-made
command of the Gentiles, this ritualistic sacramental idea
of healing, while juxtaposed to the Jewish view. Now, let
me ask you, from a Jewish perspective, as much time as we looked at
what the Jews thought, and they just got onto Jesus for, right,
what the Pharisees do before he left the desert. You remember,
they came and said, you can't even eat unwashed food. excuse
me, food with unwashed hands, and he begins to essentially
call them out for putting man-made laws. You guys remember that?
And so now from a Jewish perspective, he's touching a Gentile. Not
only is he touching a Gentile, he's really, I mean, he's touching
his mouth and his ears and all those places that would be considered
especially unclean. In Jewish culture, spittle was
considered just as bad as blood or excrement or anything else
that came from a human. So he's using this idea, this
sacramental view of how to heal someone from a Gentile perspective,
remembering he is in a Gentile region. But what's beautiful
about this is he's using it as a way to teach the Gentiles about
who he is. Now, if you think about it, if
there's something that no one can heal, an infirmity that no
one can heal, If you were deaf in that culture, you were deaf.
There's no one that can heal you. If you were blind, you couldn't
receive your sight. But if Jesus uses common means
with an uncommon outcome, from a logical perspective, there's
only one difference. There's only one difference,
and that is the man himself. So from a Gentile perspective,
he is using their means of healing, their means of incantation, their
means of how someone should be able to be healed in an infirmity
that cannot be healed to show that he can heal it using common
means with an uncommon outcome. So he is establishing himself
as a miracle worker, someone who must be seen, someone who
must be dealt with, someone that they have to go, okay, this is
different. Yes, he used our common means, but by that outcome, the
only difference is him. That can be the only difference.
He said the words, he said special words, he sighed, he looked up
to heaven, he did all the things that our healers would normally
do, yet he healed something that they cannot. And so he establishes

here his authority to heal in the Gentile region using common means. But you also see in this motif this idea of a foreshadowing of his blood. Let's think about whenever Christ implements the Lord's Supper, He calls the cup, the covenant of his blood. And he says, this represents the blood that I shed for you. So we have also here a foreshadowing of what will occur with his death, that men will be healed, that men will be different. From common means comes an uncommon outcome. What was one of the most common ways of dying in the Roman world? Crucifixion. They were known for it. They invented it. That was their punishment. And from a common means of death, an uncommon outcome came forth. So we see this foreshadowing that Christ is setting himself up here as well. So with this quasi-sacramental significance, Jesus has produced the healing. So when we think about the only one that can affect that change, he is showing that it is himself. And the wording he used here, ephaphtha, anybody ever get tongue-tied on that word, ephaphtha? It's an Aramaic word translated into the Greek because Christ primarily spoke Aramaic while he was on earth. And so he pronounces an Aramaic word translated into Greek that simply means be opened. If you wanted to be really technical on a translation, Mark translates it, be open for us. You could also really think about it, be able to hear and now you can hear because most people don't think about deaf people having a clogged ear. It's more of a, you cannot hear. So, but the idea here is a fact that Christ is commanding this healing to come forth. And the beauty of this is that the healing is immediate and complete in every way. And the Greek wording, therefore, his ears were opened and the impediment of his tongue was removed. The literal translation, if you go word for word from the original languages, the chain of his tongue was broken. The chain of his tongue was broken. So we have this idea of liberating this man from his infirmities, liberating this Gentile man from his infirmities in similar fashion to the way God liberated Israel from Egypt. In similar fashion as the Messiah was prophesied, it would be liberating his people, setting his captives, rescuing his sheep, bringing his bride out from where they were. So now we're seeing all of these beautiful pictures of who Jesus is coming out of the way this miracle was performed. But there's one that's even bigger from an overall biblical context, from a biblical theology point of view, there's one that's even more beautiful than that. Turn with me, if you will, to Isaiah 35. So again, as you're turning there, we've seen the beauty of the wording, the beauty of him expressing his healing of common means and an uncommon outcome. He's establishing his authority

and healing something that no one was able to heal in those days. But Mark uses a very specific word. The word that Mark uses to describe his inability to speak. So I went through it from the Gentile perspective. Now I wanna look at this from a Jewish perspective. So if we back, back up to the beginning of verse 33, and Jesus took him aside from the crowd by himself and put his fingers into his ears. So we go through the miracle again, but in Mark's description of the inability to speak, he uses a very specific word. Magillolos, M-O-G-I-L-L-O-S. L-A-L-O-S, Megillolos. This word is found only two times in the entire Bible. Once here, and once in Isaiah chapter 35, verses five through six, in the Septuagint, which is the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament. So this is the word that's used to describe his inability to speak. And so what Mark is doing is drawing the attention of the Jews who would also read his letter, because remember, Mark primarily wrote his letter to the Romans. So you see why he included the information about the Gentiles' way of healing having an uncommon outcome. But he's also not leaving the Jewish readers of his letter, who he knows will also get their hands on it, from understanding who Christ is from their context. Do you see how beautiful it is that on the inspiration of the Spirit that Mark is writing so that all those who read his letter can read and understand in their context? How beautiful is that? And so Isaiah 35 verses five through six, it reads, then the eyes of the blind will be opened and the ears of the deaf will be unstopped. Then the lame will leap like a deer and the tongue of the mute will shout for joy. And that's right where that word would be. For waters will break forth in the wilderness and streams in the Araba. Then you may go, okay, that's, I can already hear the question in your mind. That's really cool, Josh. I'm glad the word was used twice, but what does that have to do with literally anything? Well, the beautiful thing about Isaiah 35 is it ends the first part of Isaiah. Isaiah is split into several different sections. This is section one, essentially coming to a close. And in the vast majority of the first 34 chapters, you see pronouncements of God, of the judgment of God, on places like Edom, Egypt, Tyre, Israel, Jerusalem. Any of those places sound familiar? So God pronounces this judgment on the nations through all 34 chapters, and then 35 shifts gears into an eschatological promise of God's redemption through His prophet, through the Messiah ultimately, who's what we would know as the Messiah, coming from Mount Zion to deliver the people with the establishment of His kingdom. Now, what was Christ doing when He was here? He was establishing the kingdom of God, the already not yet. He was ushering in the day of the Lord, which is referenced all throughout Isaiah, which tells us about the time that Jesus would come to usher in

God's final judgment, where he will rescue his people that are his and judge those who are not. And so through 35 chapters, we've seen God issuing his command of judgment that the Messiah would bring about. And in verse 35, God goes, but, but the Messiah will also heal. The Messiah will also heal the blind. He will also free the tongue of those who cannot speak. He will loose the ears of those who cannot hear. And not only does he promise these things, but if you look up briefly in chapter 35 and verse two, look at where he promises to turn into a beautiful orchard where these things will specifically take place. It will flourish profusely and rejoice with rejoicing and shout of joy. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it. The majesty of Carmel and Sharon, they will see the glory of Yahweh, the majesty of our God. So Lebanon is going to see the glory and majesty of the Jewish God, Yahweh. Now, who can guess where Lebanon is? Lebanon is exactly where Tyre, Sidon, and the Decapolis is. Still to this day, Lebanon is there. So God specifically prophesies that the Messiah will come to this region to reveal his glory to the Gentiles by healing the deaf, by freeing the tongue of the mute, by ministering to the Gentiles in the same way that he ministers to the Jewish people. God is equating in Isaiah the Jewish and Gentile people groups. That's exactly what he's doing in Isaiah 35. He is foreshadowing, he is prophesying, he is saying that the Messiah will come and my healing will pour out on both of them. How beautiful is that? And then when we're talking about the passage in Mark chapter seven, this is literally the first fruits of the fulfillment of that promise of the joy and redemption of the land of Lebanon, who have been the enemies of the Jewish people for centuries. And so this man is not just a man, this is a fulfillment of prophecy. This man who became deaf, likely some point in his life, became deaf by the ordained sovereign decree of God for this very moment, where Jesus could reveal himself to the Gentiles by healing by uncommon means, or excuse me, common means by an uncommon outcome, but also so the Jews could see what the same word that Mark uses under inspiration of the Holy Spirit to point them back to Isaiah 35, so they can go, oh, this is the revelation. This is who we've been waiting for. This is him. This is mind blowing. When I studied this passage this week, this got me fired up. Because this isn't just another healing. This isn't just another miracle. Yes, we do get to see the authority of Jesus established here. Yes, we do get to see someone healed. Praise God that someone was healed. But when we understand what Mark is saying here, there's a reason why he included this passage and no other gospel writer did. Because by God's grace, we get to see the revelation, the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah coming true here. I encourage you to go read all of Isaiah chapter 35 this afternoon. I would encourage

you because this Savior, this Redeemer that was to come from Zion, the specific call of Isaiah 35 is that the Redeemer would come from Zion. Who was the Messiah? Where was he supposed to come from? Zion. What was Zion ultimately from a biblical perspective? The mountain of God or Jerusalem is where we equate a physical place for that. Where does Christ give himself? Where does he sacrifice himself? In Jerusalem. The connections here are absolutely astounding. And it's interesting to note here, when was the last time we heard about the disciples in Mark chapter 7? It's been a while. If you look, it's been multiple verses, several weeks now since we've heard about the disciples. There are still those who don't understand, although they are called and understand Isaiah, the Jewish people are still hard hearted. But the indication of this passage for the last several sections, the last several narratives that we've seen in chapter seven are that the disciples are really just there along for the ride. They don't know what's going on. They don't know, they don't understand. So we have this view of God revealing himself to those who have ears to hear and those who have eyes to see. But there's another aspect here that I want us to look at as well. Jesus commands the people earlier to hear him. Mark chapter six, I believe it was. Lost my note on that, but earlier in Mark, you guys remember, Jesus says a command to hear him, right? He draws their attention. And I said how emphatic it was. Hear me. It was verse 14 in chapter seven. Just saw it, praise God. Verse 14, chapter seven. And he says, listen to me, all of you, and understand. So remember the imperative, how much of a command that was when we were in verse 14? He commands the people to listen to him. And what did he just do? He provided the way for the man to hear. He commanded, listen to me and understand. And then he goes and gives the way for the man who could not hear to hear him. And that is a visual representation of what God does to every single person that he commands to come to him. Jesus gives a command for all to repent. and believe on him. Jesus gives a command that only he should be worshiped. God gives a command that you shall worship no one else. He gives 10 commandments even that goes into the details of how to worship him and to love others. And this is a visual representation of what we know of the entirety of the Bible that God gives the ability to fulfill his commands. And it's only through God's ability that we can fulfill his commands. So as we think about applying what we've learned from this miracle that we've seen here, there's a couple points of application here. The first is based on

Christ's

fulfillment. So we think about Him fulfilling the Old Testament. I want us to remember, I want to reinforce the impact, the importance, how high we must hold the Old Testament. I think sometimes, especially as Western Christians, we get the idea that the New Testament tells us how the church was started, and they looked around and they went, yeah, the Old Testament looks pretty good, let's bring that along

with us, right? And we get so hyper-focused on the New Testament. No, the scriptures are a whole. The Old and New Testament is easier for us to reference, but the Bible is one. It's one book. It's one plan. It's God's decree

of redemption and how he worked it out through human history from Genesis to Revelation. There is no unhitching anything from the Old Testament. God gave us everything we needed.

The New Testament was just the outcome of what he said he was going to do in the beginning. The Old Covenant is simply telling us, this is the foreshadowing of what I'm going to do so that you can recognize when I fulfill it in the New Testament. It's one book. We should take it all together. Have confidence in the Old Testament. Because as we see today, Jesus fulfilled the prophecies found therein. And then when we think about the disciples missing all of this, because that's ultimately what happens is, right? They miss what's going on. They miss God moving in the world. They miss Him and what He's doing. They don't understand what's

going on. How often do we miss God working around us? Man, how often do we miss it? We're so caught up in the day-to-day.

Now we can look back, right? Hindsight's 20-20. So we can look back and go, yeah, no, I saw God moving that. I see where the outcome is. I can piece that together. I see God was moving. But how often do we forget in the moment that God is sovereign? How often do we forget in the moment that God is working? How often do we forget in the moment that no matter how bad things may get, He's in control? Because a lot of times we're

like the disciples. We see things going on and we're just kind of living our lives going, oh, this is great. This is, you know, I can just see the disciples going, yeah, he healed. Well, how awesome. They're high-fiving each other and he's healed. They don't get it. They didn't get it. And how often do we do that in our own lives? How was work today? It was fine.

How were the kids? Good. And we miss what God is doing and the fact that our child responded in the most mature manner that they ever have. or that God moved at work in a way that you weren't expecting. And it was very gracious, but you don't recognize it because we're so focused on ourselves instead of focused on God that we miss it. So I would challenge each one of us in this coming week to focus on what is going

on around you. Look for those ways that God is moving and working, remembering that he's in control in those bad times so that we can rest in him But remembering that he's in control in the good times so that we can glorify him in the even higher level. We must not get caught up in the things going around us and forgetting that God is moving. Point number three, the messengers. The messengers. So we've had the man, the man that was brought that needed healing, that they pleaded with Christ to heal. We saw him. Compassionately take him aside. We've seen the miracle and all the beauty of the fulfillment in his pronouncement of who he is and his actions. Remember Mark throughout his gospel tells us Jesus' teachings by his actions more than he does his words. And I think it's safe to say there's a lot being taught in the actions today, in today's text. And now we have the messengers verses 36 through 37. And he gave them orders not to tell anyone, but the more he was ordering them, the more widely they continued to proclaim it. And they were utterly astonished, saying, he has done all things well. He makes even the deaf to hear and the mute to speak. It's not uncommon for us to see in Mark, Jesus telling people not to spread the word about him. That's not uncommon. But what is uncommon is that this is the first time that he tells the Gentiles not to do that. In every healing of a Gentile before now, Christ has not commanded them not to share who he was. It's hard to say the motivation behind that, but the long story short is he tells them, do not tell anyone. but they would not stop proclaiming it. And the same word for proclaim here is the same word for proclaim when it says Jesus preached or proclaimed the message. So this is the idea of them legitimately preaching the gospel message, preaching about Christ, proclaiming who He is. And the wording here is in such a way that this was a constant, repeated thing. So we've kind of shifted gear and tense a little bit in these last two verses. Mark showed us what they were doing there, but he's giving this idea of a continued conversation between Jesus and the people that witnessed this deaf man being healed. You guys have got to stop. And they would go back out and do it and probably came back rejoicing. And he would tell them, no guys, you really have to stop. And they would go back out and do it again. And they would come back and he would have the conversation again. This is a repeated action. The tense here is over and over again, they had this conversation. But their proclamation of who he is, is the culmination of the mystery found in the God man, Jesus Christ. And you may say, well, Josh, that's a really big mouthful of words to describe them saying

he has done all things well. But I want you to think about where else have you heard the words, all things are good? Where does that ring a bell?

What did God pronounce whenever he created everything? He made everything and he said, it is good. All things are good. These Gentiles are pronouncing that the Savior, the Redeemer makes all things well. What did man mess up in the garden? All things, didn't he? All things. The curse of sin impacted creation.

It impacted every single human being that would be made. It impacted how we worked, how we procreated. It impacted all things. And yet these Gentiles recognize

in this Redeemer, this man who has revealed himself with uncommon outcomes from common means as the one who does all things well. And when you think about what

he's done, he's made things whole. So all the things that he's done are miracles where he is making things whole again. The Redeemer has come to make things good again. And then we have, in this small statement, this blow up to a full biblical theology, where in Revelation, Jesus Christ will make all things new in Himself.

That the new heavens and the new earth will be created and purged under Him, and He will give that back to the people that He has made well again.

Do you see the connection? These Gentiles are espousing so much more than what they even understand. And Mark included this here at the end of chapter 7, because in chapter 8 is the pivotal point. I've been pointing forward towards

it in all of Mark. Chapter 8, we see a pivot. There's a pivot coming. And that pivot is when Peter

himself proclaims, you are Christ, the Son of God. Mark has been building to this point over and over and over. And as another watershed moment in chapter seven, as he's preparing to turn this corner, he says, he records the Gentiles saying, he makes and does all things well. Their astonishment is palpable.

You can almost feel it in how they're saying it. But another aspect that we have

to understand from this, and their acknowledgement of this by simply seeing this miracle, is that if Jesus makes all things well, that means nothing is made well without him. That means we are in utter dependence

upon God. If Jesus is the one that was sent to make all things well, nothing is made well without him. And so we can reinforce our utter

dependence upon God by looking at this passage saying, well, if He makes all things well, that means I can't make things well without Him. If He makes all things well and

He's the Redeemer, the one that was coming to heal, the one that we know from Revelation that will usher in the kingdom of God for all eternity upon His second advent, we have to understand our utter dependence upon Him and His work in our lives and

the lives of those around us. and that brought a thought to my mind, all attempts to share the gospel fell without the work of the Spirit. Because they were going out and proclaiming, weren't they? They weren't supposed to, but they were going out and proclaiming. But we have no record of the outcome of that. We have no record of that. Now, were there people that God converted because of their message? Perhaps.

I can't say one way or the other. But the bottom line comes down to a lesson that we have to learn is the Spirit's work within us and within others is the sole factor as to whether or not someone is converted or not. The sole factor of whether something is done, is made well or made good again, is dependent on Christ and Christ alone. Only the touch of Jesus can enable true hearing. Only the touch of Jesus can enable true seeing. Only the touch of Jesus can enable true understanding. Only the touch of Jesus can enable a true witness. It is only through Christ that we find our hope. It is only through Christ that we find eternal life. It is only through Christ that we find reconciliation to a holy God. It is him and him alone that we depend on. And really this goes to show, just a side note, this goes to show the feebleness of man's attempt to draw people to God by other means. It is a feeble and futile act to draw people to God with anything else besides the gospel as revealed in scripture. It is an exercise in futility. It is the message of Christ and him crucified is revealed in scripture, that message and that message alone that will bring God's elect into himself. There's nothing else that we can do. So when we think about applying this last point here, I think most of you, hopefully your minds are already there, but number one, we are an utter dependence upon Christ. We can rest in His complete work. We can rest in that dependence and knowing that He's the one that carries us through to glorification, that He covenanted with us as

we heard in one of our songs today. He covenanted with us to take us to glory. I remember the exact wording, lyrics do not stick in my brain at all. But the message of the verse was that the covenant was proclaimed that He would love us for all eternity or make us His for all eternity. And that this utter dependence on Christ is not a bad thing. We as independent, red-blooded

Americans, we're not gonna depend on anyone, right? You guys remember your parents or grandparents? We don't take in handouts from anybody. Yeah, but we can't eat. We're not taking handouts, right? And we're gonna do this ourselves, and we're not gonna be dependent on anyone. And it greats who we are as humans, doesn't it, as Americans? I don't need anybody. I don't want anybody. I got this. And so sometimes

when we look at our independence, We look at our dependence upon God as a bad thing. So I'm here to challenge the red-blooded American within you. It is a good thing to be dependent upon the one who cannot fail. It is a good thing to be dependent on the one whose covenant will never be broken. It is a good thing to be dependent upon the one who does not change. It is an absolute beautiful thing to be dependent upon the one who does not get driven by his emotions. It is a good thing to be dependent upon the one whose promises we can trust. Another thing to see here, although they disobeyed in their command, the command of Christ to not share, They were in such awe at the healing and life altering miracle of this man, that it drove them to be unable to keep their mouths closed about Christ. And as beautiful as healing someone's inability to hear or inability to speak is, that's a beautiful thing, that is nothing in comparison to the miracle that is salvation. to bring a dead man to life, to give him a new heart, to give him new desires, to make him right, to atone for his sins, not only to expiate those sins, but to then impute the righteousness that makes you good enough to be accepted by the Father is such a miracle that it should blow our minds and cause our mouths to be unable to be kept closed about who He is. And make no mistake, salvation is a miracle. There's been debates in theological land over the last couple weeks, where there's a big name in the theological land that said, that could not bring himself to say that salvation is a miracle. Salvation is unequivocally a miracle of Almighty God in His creation. So let us rest in what Christ has done, who he has revealed himself as. He is the one who heals. He is the difference in the equation that makes common means have an uncommon outcome. He is the one who is fulfilling the prophecies of the Old Testament that we can see is the redeemer from Zion who's come to redeem and beautify his people and his bride. And he's the one who makes all things well, who takes what man messed up that God called good and makes it whole and good again by his redeeming work. And we've seen over the last several weeks in conclusion, those who are opposed to Jesus, we've seen those who are constantly in his presence, still not understand. We've seen a woman who would have been the last person one would have thought would be his and the Gentile woman's faith that we saw last week. And with this text today, we see a beautiful physical representation of what Jesus has been teaching and explaining by his actions all throughout Mark. Namely, he is the one that works within people to set them free. He is the one that liberates his own from their bondage. He is the one who is in complete control over healing, both physical and spiritual. Jesus is the

beginning

and the end. He is the alpha and the omega

and the only one who can reconcile a created human being to a holy and righteous God. That's a beautiful place to pivot

into what chapter eight is going to have for us. And I'm excited to look into that as we go forward over the coming weeks. Let's

pray. Dear Heavenly Father, we are

so humbled at your condescension, that you would step into human history and redeem us is unfathomable to us. And I pray that the truth that

we've seen here, that you do in fact step into human history,

that you do in fact impact and heal and liberate your people from their bondage would drive us to a never before seen level

of praise and worship of you. And that we would do all that

we do in this coming week for your glory. That our mouths would be so impacted by what you've done in our lives that they cannot

be kept closed. That our families would hear

about you. That our workplaces would hear about you. and that

all those we come in contact with would hear about you. We love you and praise you and

thank you so much for your grace, so much for your healing power,

for we are nothing without you. We love you and praise you in

your holy name, amen.