**Mark 7:31-37 31Jesus left the region of Tyre again and went through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, within the region of the Decapolis. 32They brought a man to him who was deaf and had a speech impediment. They pleaded with Jesus to place his hand on him. 33Jesus took him aside in private, away from the crowd. He put his fingers into the man’s ears. Then he spit and touched the man’s tongue. 34After he looked up to heaven, he sighed and said, *“Ephphatha!”* (which means “Be opened!”) 35Immediately the man’s ears were opened, his tongue was set free, and he began to speak plainly. 36Jesus gave the people strict orders to tell no one, but the more he did so, the more they kept proclaiming it. 37They were amazed beyond measure and said, “He has done everything well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak!”**

Overwhelmed with Amazement

When was the last time you saw something amazing because of what someone in your life did? I’m talking about those rendered speechless moments where you freeze in awe. There are no words to describe what you have seen. Maybe a tear came to your eye. Maybe your legs got weak. When was the last time you were overwhelmed with amazement? When was the last time you wanted to laugh and cry and run around and hug someone because someone did something great for you? This morning we see Jesus perform a miracle and the Bible tells us that all the people were overwhelmed with amazement. They were astonished beyond all measure. Let’s take a look at how Jesus treated the man who needed help. How Jesus helped and loved the man. And as we do, we’re going to see how Jesus treats us and helps us and loves us. May God fill us with an overwhelming amazement as we ponder his grace this morning.

Imagine having the problems this man had. The Bible says that he **was deaf and had a speech impediment.** Imagine spending your life in silence. You see people and how they continually move their mouths but all you hear is…nothing. You want to understand what’s going on around you. What makes people (mimic laughter without sound). When people want you to go somewhere or do something they have to take you by the hand basically drag you there. They don’t do that with other people. You can’t even hear the sounds that come from your mouth. Maybe that’s a good thing because all your tongue can do is make groans and incoherent noises. Your tongue is bound up so you can’t tell anyone what’s inside of you. No words come from your mouth. No one understands and everyone looks at you and they’re confused. Frustrating. You feel like you live in your own world.

Then, the people in your life take you to met a stranger. **They pleaded with Jesus to place his hand on him.**You don’t know who this is but you see a crowd. He must be someone important to draw such attention and now you’re at the center of it all. They’re looking at you and looking at this man and it’s uncomfortable because you don’t know why you have been pulled to this place. But the stranger takes you aside, away from the crowd, and that makes you more uncomfortable but no less confused. He starts to make motions with his hands as you just stand there not knowing what to do. You feel him put fingers into your ears. You see him spit and feel him touch your tongue. It seems like he’s saying that he’s going to fix you ears and fix your tongue. You see him look up to heaven and (make a big audible sigh). You understand what he’s saying. Whatever is going to happen is from God above.

*Ephphatha.* The powerful word of God comes out of Jesus’ mouth. The same mouth that calmed a storms and cast out demons and even created the universe out of nothing. Jesus speaks that powerful word to your deaf ears and your chained up tongue and suddenly you can hear and talk. Imagine being that man! All the things you have seen trying to take in, you now can hear. All the things you’ve been trying to communicate to other, you now can say. How would you feel?

The Bible says, **They were amazed beyond measure and said, “He has done everything well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak!”** What did it feel like to be that man? You had a lot in common with him. At some point in your life, someone brought you to Jesus, just like someone brought this man to Jesus. Jesus looked at you. No one needed to tell him what was wrong with you. He could see all your sins. You and I came into this world unable to hear our sin. We couldn’t understand anything about God even if we wanted to. We came into this world spiritual mute because of sin. We couldn’t utter one sound of praise to God even if we wanted to. There was so much sin. Jesus saw that.

Just as Jesus loved the man in the story, Jesus loved you. He spoke words that made your sin go away. At that moment, the powerful words of Jesus Christ healed your soul. Maybe Jesus spoke his Word to you in the waters of baptism. Maybe Jesus spoke his Word to you through a friend. There he healed you.

Also, Jesus knows that we need his personal touch and so today Jesus continues to speak to us in a way we can see and touch. Jesus does that in the Lord’s Supper. He gives us bread and wines and tells us that this is his body and blood, the very body and blood that paid for our sins on the cross. Jesus says, “If you have any doubts that I love you, if you’re having a hard time hearing me or praising me because of your sin, then take and eat, take and drink and remember what I have done for you. Know that you are forgiven and you are loved.”

Back then, Jesus commanded the people to not tell anyone about this miracle. He didn’t want them to be following him because of a miracle he did only to have them repeatedly need miracle after miracle to keep them interested. He didn’t want them running off to gather people to see him do miracles like some magical sideshow. Instead, Jesus knew the time would come when people would get to tell of the greatest of his miracles—his paying for the sin of the whole world. Once that miracle had happened, Jesus would tell everyone who heard about it to go and tell everyone.

Jesus **has done everything well.** That’s an amazing accomplishment for anyone to do. It’s stunning that someone would be able to complete that. You don’t need to have Jesus do anything more for you than he has already done for you to be completely astonished. Once the stunned shock of forgiveness releases it’s grasp on you, be open about what he has done for you. Let your mouth be one that speaks about Jesus’ love and healing of you. May God bless you with a heart that is always amazed at God’s amazing grace, always overwhelmed by God’s awe-inspiring love. Amen.

Points to consider as an individual or with a small group:

* What is remarkable about how Jesus helped the man?
1.
2.
3.
* Why might you be underwhelmed by what Jesus did for this man?
1.

1.

* Jesus doesn’t want our attention to be on him because he is able to do miracles but because he is…
* Explain the danger of needing Jesus to always do something amazing for us to want to follow and spend time with him.