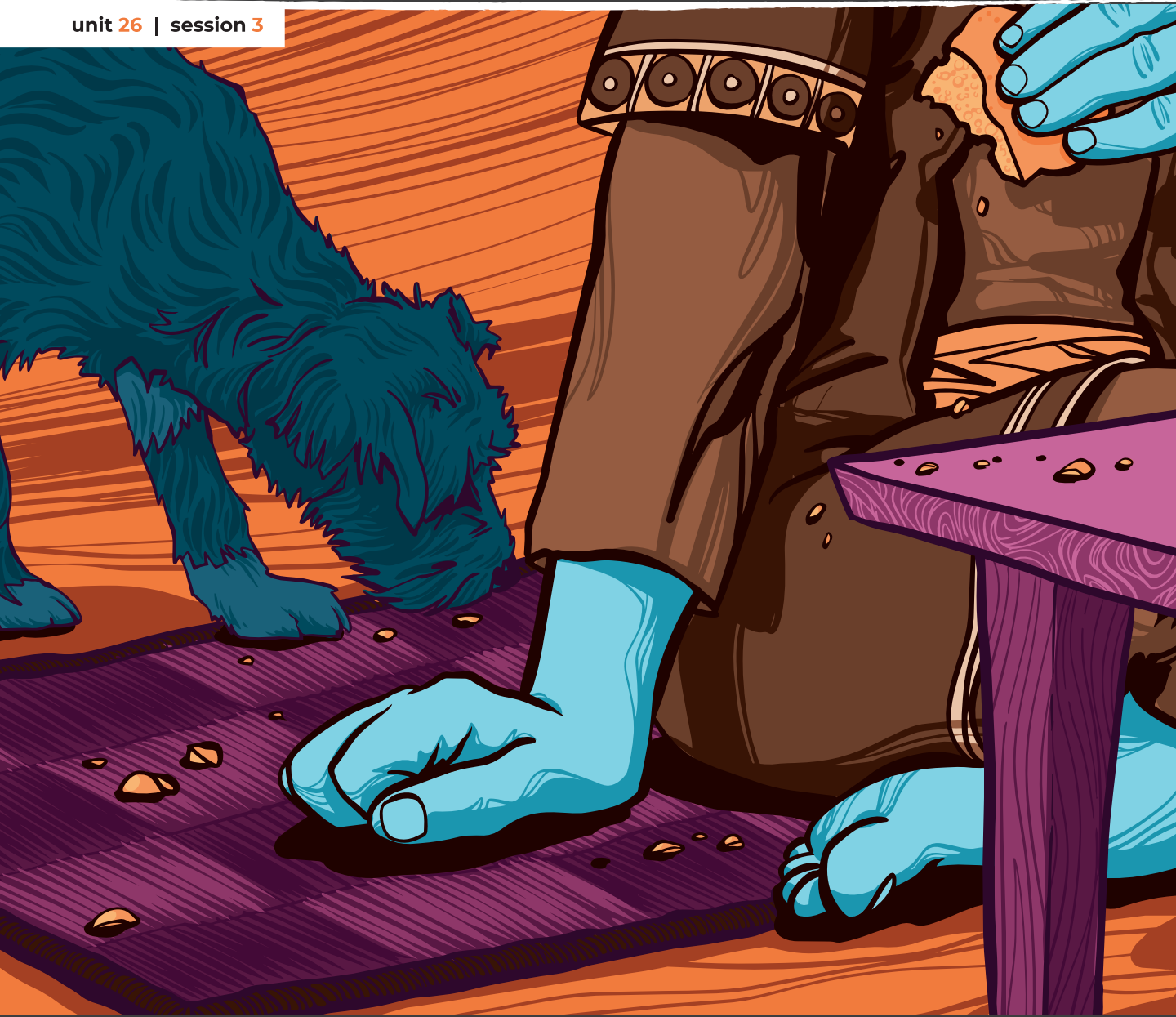


THE CHILDREN'S *CRUMBS*

unit 26 | session 3



CHRIST CONNECTION

Jesus showed His authority over the demonic spirit that tormented the Gentile girl, but this miracle only pointed to the truth that all evil will one day be defeated with Jesus's second coming at the end of the age. Believers can walk in hope, trusting by faith that this victory will come.

OUTSIDERS NO MORE

This week, we're covering the passages and main points below. But we encourage you to dig in and read all of the content on this timeline.

Mark 7

JESUS BRINGS US OUT OF DARKNESS

MARK 7:24-30

24 And from there he arose and went away to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And he entered a house and did not want anyone to know, yet he could not be hidden. 25 But immediately a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit heard of him and came and fell down at his feet. 26 Now the woman was a Gentile, a Syrophoenician by birth. And she begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. 27 And he said to her, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." 28 But she answered him, "Yes, Lord; yet even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." 29 And he said to her, "For this statement you may go your way; the demon has left your daughter." 30 And she went home and found the child lying in bed and the demon gone.

JESUS HEALS US

MARK 7:31-37

31 Then he returned from the region of Tyre and went through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. 32 And they brought to him a man who was deaf and had a speech impediment, and they begged him to lay his hand on him. 33 And taking him aside from the crowd privately, he put his fingers into his ears, and after spitting touched his tongue. 34 And looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened." 35 And his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. 36 And Jesus charged them to tell no one. But the more he charged them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. 37 And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, "He has done all things well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak."

MAIN POINT.

Because Jesus accepts and heals us, we can accept and love others.



THEOLOGY CONNECTION

NEW IDENTITY OF THE BELIEVER

When we place faith in Jesus, we go through a change of identity—from being enemies under God’s wrath (Eph. 2:1-3) to members of God’s family as beloved children (Eph. 2:19). Believers are declared righteous on account of Jesus’s perfect life and substitutionary death and resurrection. No longer are believers slaves to sin, defined by past failures or present struggles. Believers are delivered from the realm of darkness and belong to the kingdom of light (Col. 1:13). Anyone who is in Jesus is a “new creation”; the old, sinful self is passed away and the new, redeemed self is alive, becoming more and more like Him (2 Cor. 5:17).

DISCUSSION

JESUS BRINGS US OUT OF DARKNESS

MARK 7:24-30

- How do you think the woman felt as she approached Jesus? What stops us from going to Him like this?
- How do Jesus’s words make you feel (v. 27)? Why did He respond like this?
- Who are the outsiders in our culture? In your life? As believers, what is our role in helping them leave darkness?

JESUS HEALS US

MARK 7:31-37

- What stands out about how Jesus healed the deaf man? How should this shape our heart for others?
- How does this passage give us hope when so much brokenness surrounds us?
- What are ways you need Jesus’s healing today?



WHAT NEED OR STRUGGLE HAVE YOU BEEN AFRAID TO BRING TO JESUS? HOW CAN YOU TAKE STEPS TO SURRENDER IT?

CULTURAL CONNECTION

Labels are everywhere: labels that situate each of us into certain groups; labels that say we belong in some places but not others; labels of approval and disapproval. Most of us are just struggling to fit somewhere. We don’t want to stand out, but we don’t want to blend in either. At the heart of this struggle is a surprising truth: God created us with a desire to belong. The very fact that we are created beings means we belong to someone, right? We try so hard to find acceptance here. The issue though? We weren’t created to root our sense of belonging in anyone but God. Do you ever wonder, “Does Jesus actually see me, and if He does, am I actually welcome?” And the loudest, most incredible answer is “Yes!” Sure, God desires each of us to have community here with people to encourage us and walk with us. But the labels, the striving to belong, the disappointment when we don’t—we can let all of that go. The only label that will ever matter is that you’re God’s child, deeply loved and wholly accepted.



DAY ONE

1 PETER 2:9-10



If you had to choose to live in total darkness all of the time or total light all of the time, which would you choose? Most of us would choose the light. We need light to see, and though darkness is great when we're sleeping, we don't necessarily want to live in darkness.

The truth is that we were all born children in darkness because of the fall that took place in Eden. We are saved by grace through faith, and the moment that we believe and confess that Jesus is the Son of God and trust in His work on the cross for the forgiveness of our sins, something miraculous happens; our spiritual citizenship is transferred from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light. Peter explained that while we were formerly not people of God, "now [we] are God's people." We are not simply "made better," but we are given a completely new identity as children of God and citizens of heaven. This changes our lives in every single way. We no longer have to hope in the things of this world, but we can find our hope in the promises of God! The way we walk changes. No longer do we only walk in the confidence that comes from what we can do, but we can walk in confidence that comes from who our Father is and what Jesus has done. The way we talk changes. No longer are we only representing ourselves, but when we become children of light, we become representatives of God here on earth. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we can use our words to reflect Christ to the world. The way we think about the future changes. The way we see and love other people changes. When we walked in darkness, we had no choice but to look like the world. When we were called into light, everything changed, and we began transforming to be like Christ!

- **HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE "LIVING IN DARKNESS" COMPARED TO "LIVING IN THE LIGHT"?**
- **WE CAN STRUGGLE TO LIVE IN LIGHT—IN OUR NEW IDENTITY. WHAT CAN YOU DO WHEN YOU'RE TEMPTED TO CONFORM TO THE WORLD INSTEAD OF WALKING AS A CHILD OF GOD?**

PRAY

GOD, THANK YOU FOR LOVING ME SO MUCH THAT YOU DIDN'T LEAVE ME THE SAME. HELP ME TO REMEMBER DAILY THAT BECAUSE YOU CALLED ME OUT OF DARKNESS AND INTO LIGHT, I CAN WALK IN FREEDOM FROM THE THINGS OF THIS WORLD.



DAY TWO

ROMANS 10:11-13

In the lesson this week, we read about a non-Jewish woman who begged Jesus to heal her daughter. Prior to Jesus's ministry, non-Jewish people, or Gentiles, could enjoy some of God's covenant blessings if they lived by faith according to God's laws, but this was not the norm. Gentiles weren't part of God's chosen nation, Israel. Jesus came and fulfilled God's promise not only to offer salvation to the Jews but also to extend the invitation of salvation to the world! Paul wrote that "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Jesus's life, death, and resurrection made a way for all people to be called children of God, not just the nation of Israel. God wants all people to know Him. He actually desires that so much that He sent His only Son to the cross to make a way for everyone to be brought into His family. This is good news, not only for those who don't know Jesus but also for believers with family and friends who don't know the love of Christ. While we are called to love non-believers, this love can often come with great sadness and heartache. We want them to share in the hope we have in Christ. However, we can take comfort in knowing that God also wants our friends and family members to know Him, more than we could ever want that for them! This truth should change the way we interact with others. Every person is someone for whom Jesus died. Each person we interact with is either someone who has been saved or who God desires to save. This should motivate us to share God's love and the message of the gospel with people we encounter. Since Jesus died for all people, we must treat every person as someone worth sharing the gospel.

- **HOW DOES THE TRUTH THAT GOD DESIRES FOR ALL PEOPLE TO KNOW HIM ENCOURAGE YOU?**
- **JESUS DIED FOR ALL PEOPLE, WHICH MEANS THAT EVERY PERSON IS WORTH SHARING THE GOOD NEWS WITH. HOW DOES THIS CHALLENGE YOU?**

PRAY

JESUS, THANK YOU FOR MAKING A WAY FOR ALL PEOPLE TO KNOW YOU. HELP ME TO SHARE THE LIFE-CHANGING STORY OF YOUR LOVE WITH THOSE AROUND ME OUT OF GRATITUDE FOR WHAT YOU HAVE DONE.



DAY THREE

MATTHEW 15:21-28

In this passage, after the woman asked Jesus for help, He was silent. Let's imagine how the woman felt in this moment. She was desperate for her daughter's healing, and she asked the only person capable for that healing. As she waited for a response, we can imagine that she was filled with questions: "Does Jesus care? Will He help me? Is what I've heard about Him true? If He doesn't help, what will happen?"

The questions that may have filled her head in that moment are questions some of us have asked as well. In times when we don't understand what God is doing and we cannot physically see evidence of His work, we can feel like God is silent or distant. But just like the "silence" we may experience, Jesus's silence toward the woman was not unloving; His silence served a purpose. Jesus set up a teaching moment for those witnessing the event. The disciples filled the silence and suggested that Jesus send her away. Jesus's response created an opportunity for a dialogue between Him and the woman, in which she humbly acknowledged her status as a Gentile and begged for the leftover scraps of Jesus's blessings. In other words, this woman recognized Jesus's worth, and she recognized her own unworthiness in comparison. Jesus immediately healed the woman's daughter because of her great faith. Let's not miss the lesson that Jesus taught His disciples in this moment. Previously, God's blessing was only for the nation of Israel, but here we see that His blessings were extended to even non-Jews who declared faith in Him! In His silence and in repeating what His disciples were likely thinking, Jesus revealed their lack of compassion and corrected them, helping them learn that God's love is for all people.

- **DOES GOD'S SILENCE MEAN HE ISN'T WORKING IN A SITUATION? WHY OR WHY NOT?**
- **LOOK BACK AT A TIME WHEN YOU FELT GOD WAS SILENT. WHAT LESSON DID HE TEACH YOU?**

PRAY

LORD, THANK YOU FOR BEING A GOD WHO PROMISES TO NEVER LEAVE NOR FORSAKE HIS CHILDREN. HELP ME TO REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE ALWAYS WITH ME AND ALWAYS WORKING, EVEN WHEN I CAN'T SEE IT.



DAY FOUR

PSALM 13

Have you ever been in desperate need of an answer? Maybe you had no clue what the answer was to a question on a test. Or maybe you needed an answer with a difficult decision. In this psalm, David expressed longing for God to answer him. He felt as though God had hidden His face and left him to find help elsewhere. Notice that this prayer of David's is not light and optimistic at first. His words are raw, and his feelings are unfiltered. He is transparent and unafraid to bring his feelings and questions before God.

Oftentimes, we can feel like bringing our feelings before God in this way is unacceptable, but the Lord created us with intention, as complex beings with all types of feelings and the ability to ask questions. Our heavenly Father never intended for us to wait to come to Him when our thoughts are aligned with His, when our feelings can be tied up and packaged into a beautiful box, or when we have everything figured out. Our God is a loving God, and He desires for us to bring our doubts, emotions, and questions to Him at times when He feels near and at times when He feels distant. The end of this psalm reminds us that even when God feels silent, we have a reason to rejoice. Scripture teaches us that God's character remains the same even in times of trouble. God cannot forsake Himself. He is faithful and loving. He is a good and compassionate Father. Nothing can change those truths about God. When it feels like God isn't speaking, run to Him. Lay your worries before Him and trust that He is still faithful and good. In difficult moments, like David, let's remember who God is and the hope we have in Him.

- **DAVID HONESTLY BRINGS HIS FEELINGS BEFORE GOD INSTEAD OF HIDING THEM. WHAT EMOTIONS OR QUESTIONS DO YOU STRUGGLE TO BRING TO GOD? WHAT HOLDS YOU BACK FROM BEING TRANSPARENT WITH HIM?**
- **HOW CAN FOCUSING ON GOD'S UNCHANGING CHARACTER HELP YOU TRUST HIM, EVEN WHEN YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES REMAIN DIFFICULT AND YOU FEEL LIKE GOD IS SILENT?**

PRAY

HEAVENLY FATHER, THANK YOU FOR BEING A GOD WHO LISTENS. YOU NEVER CHANGE, AND YOU PROMISE TO NEVER ABANDON YOUR CHILDREN. HELP ME REMEMBER AND TRUST YOUR CHARACTER WHEN I WALK THROUGH THE VALLEYS OF LIFE.





DAY FIVE

ISAIAH 35:5-6

In the main passage this week, Jesus performed one of His many miraculous signs, in which He restored the ability to hear and speak to a man who was deaf and mute. At first glance, this may seem like another amazing act of compassion. While the healing that took place was life-changing for the man who received it, this event carried more significance than the healing alone. This miracle directly fulfilled prophecy recorded centuries earlier in the book of Isaiah, when God promised that the coming Messiah would unstop the ears of the deaf and make the mute's tongue shout for joy. With this miracle, Jesus not only healed the man's physical body but also revealed His true identity as the long-awaited Messiah according to the Scriptures. This truth should increase our faith! Our faith in God isn't blind; it's proven repeatedly by the consistent faithfulness of God and the countless examples in Scripture of God doing exactly what He said He would. In fact, during His thirty-three years on earth, Jesus fulfilled over 350 prophecies with His life, death, and resurrection, many of which were completely outside of human control. Because we can see that Jesus has faithfully fulfilled God's promises in the past, we can have hope for the future and confidently trust that He will bring all of God's promises to pass. Reading about all of the prophecies that have come to pass and have been recorded should remind us that God's faithfulness is unending, He is always at work, and His Word will never fail.

- **HOW DOES THIS STORY IN SCRIPTURE INCREASE YOUR FAITH IN JESUS AS THE ONE TRUE SAVIOR?**
- **HOW DOES FOCUSING ON PROMISES GOD HAS ALREADY FULFILLED SHAPE YOUR TRUST IN HIM AS YOU WAIT ON UNANSWERED PRAYERS AND HIS OTHER PROMISES?**

PRAY

LORD, THANK YOU FOR GIVING US YOUR WORD
TO SHOW US YOUR UNFAILING FAITHFULNESS.
WHEN I DOUBT, HELP ME TO LOOK AT WHAT
YOU'VE ALREADY DONE SO THAT I CAN WAIT WITH
CONFIDENCE ON YOUR OTHER PROMISES.

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

BEYOND THE BOUNDARIES | MARK 7:24–37



DAY ONE

MARK 7:24–26

BRING YOUR NEED TO JESUS

CONTEXT

Earlier in Mark 7, Jesus explained that what makes someone unclean comes from the heart. He now enters the region of Tyre, a predominantly Gentile area outside Galilee. A Gentile is someone who is not Jewish. This setting matters because the next encounter shows Jesus extending mercy beyond Israel.

A woman hears about Jesus and comes to Him because an unclean spirit is tormenting her daughter. Mark identifies her as a Gentile and a Syrophenician by birth. She comes from outside the Jewish community, yet she falls at Jesus' feet and asks for help.

DEVOTIONAL

This mother cannot solve her daughter's problem. Her desperation leads her to Jesus.

Sometimes we hesitate to pray because we think we should handle things ourselves. We might believe our problems are too small to matter or too messy to mention. This woman shows us a different response: bring the need to Jesus.

Coming to Jesus does not require impressive words. It requires admitting that we need Him. Prayer is an opportunity to stop pretending we have everything under control and speak honestly to the One who has power we do not.

APPLICATION

Name one situation you have been trying to handle without asking Jesus for help. It might involve your family, a friendship, temptation, or something you are afraid to face. Take a few minutes to tell Him exactly what is happening and what you need.

SMALL GROUP QUESTION

- WHAT SOMETIMES KEEPS US FROM BRINGING OUR REAL STRUGGLES TO JESUS?

PRAY

TELL JESUS WHERE YOU FEEL HELPLESS. ASK HIM TO HELP YOU
DEPEND ON HIM AND TRUST HIS WISDOM IN THAT SITUATION.

DAY TWO

MARK 7:27–28

TRUST HIS MERCY

CONTEXT

Jesus describes children being fed before dogs. In this illustration, the children represent Israel, and the dogs represent Gentiles. His language sounds uncomfortable to modern readers, and the distinction would have been humbling for the woman.

The word “**first**” matters. Jesus describes the priority of His ministry to Israel, rather than saying that Gentiles can never receive His mercy. The woman responds within His illustration: even the dogs beneath the table receive the children’s crumbs. She trusts that His provision is great enough to reach her daughter, too.

DEVOTIONAL

This woman does not approach Jesus as someone who has earned His help. She appeals to His generosity.

Her response reveals confidence in who Jesus is. She believes that even what she calls a crumb of His provision is enough for her daughter’s need. His power is not stretched thin by helping one more person.

We can approach God as though His kindness depends on our performance. A good week makes us confident in prayer. A bad week makes us want to hide. This passage invites us to place our confidence in His mercy.

Humility means recognizing our need and trusting His goodness. We do not need to convince Jesus that we are impressive. We need to come to Him honestly.

APPLICATION

Pay attention to how you approach prayer today. Are you trying to prove that you deserve God’s help? Thank Him that you can come because of His grace. Ask Him to replace pride and shame with humble trust.

SMALL GROUP QUESTION

- **HOW WOULD YOUR PRAYERS CHANGE IF YOUR CONFIDENCE RESTED IN JESUS’ MERCY INSTEAD OF YOUR PERFORMANCE?**

P R A Y

CONFESS ANY PRIDE OR SHAME THAT AFFECTS THE WAY YOU APPROACH GOD. THANK HIM FOR HIS MERCY AND ASK HIM TO STRENGTHEN YOUR TRUST.

DAY THREE

MARK 7:29–30

TRUST HIM BEYOND WHAT YOU CAN SEE

CONTEXT

Jesus tells the woman that the demon has left her daughter. He does not travel to her house or perform a visible action over the child. His authority reaches her daughter even from a distance.

The woman goes home and finds her child lying in bed, free from the demon. Jesus' word proves trustworthy. This account reveals His authority over evil and His mercy toward a Gentile family.

DEVOTIONAL

The woman leaves Jesus before she sees the result. She has His word, and she returns home.

We often want to see the outcome before we trust. We want proof that a friendship will recover, that obedience will be worth it, or that our circumstances will improve. Faith calls us to trust Jesus while we still have unanswered questions.

This miracle does not promise that every prayer will receive an immediate answer or the outcome we want. It does show that Jesus' authority is real and His word is reliable. We can trust what He has actually promised: He receives those who come to Him, remains with His people, and will ultimately make all things new.

Faith takes the next step of obedience even when the entire path is not visible.

APPLICATION

Identify one step of obedience you already know you need to take. Apologize, tell the truth, ask for help, or turn away from a temptation. Take that step without demanding that God show you every outcome first.

SMALL GROUP QUESTION

- **WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TRUSTING JESUS AND EXPECTING HIM TO DO EVERYTHING EXACTLY THE WAY WE WANT?**

PRAY

TELL JESUS ABOUT AN UNANSWERED PRAYER. ASK HIM TO HELP YOU TRUST HIS CHARACTER AND OBEY HIS WORD WHILE YOU WAIT.

DAY FOUR

MARK 7:31–35

JESUS SEES THE PERSON

CONTEXT

Jesus travels to the region of the Decapolis, a group of cities with a largely Gentile population. People bring Him a man who is deaf and has a speech impediment.

Jesus takes the man aside from the crowd. He touches the man's ears and tongue, looks toward heaven, and sighs. He then says **“Ephphatha,”** which Mark translates as **“Be opened.”** The man's hearing and speech are restored.

Mark does not explain every gesture. What we can see is that Jesus gives this man personal attention and heals him through His authority.

DEVOTIONAL

The crowd brings a man with a need. Jesus takes time with the person.

We can become so focused on someone's problem that we forget their humanity. A classmate becomes “the annoying kid.” A friend becomes “the person who always has drama.” Someone struggling becomes a label instead of a neighbor.

Jesus' actions challenge us to slow down and see people. This man receives personal care rather than becoming a public spectacle. Jesus' sigh also reminds us that He does not approach human suffering with indifference.

We do not have Jesus' authority to guarantee healing, but we can follow His example of attentive care. We can listen, pray, include someone, and help them find the support they need.

APPLICATION

Choose one person you usually overlook. Have a real conversation with them today. Ask a thoughtful question and listen without checking your phone or rushing to talk about yourself.

SMALL GROUP QUESTION

- **WHAT WOULD CHANGE AT SCHOOL, AT HOME, OR IN OUR GROUP IF WE TREATED PEOPLE WITH THE PERSONAL ATTENTION JESUS SHOWS HERE?**

PRAY

ASK JESUS TO HELP YOU NOTICE SOMEONE WHO FEELS OVERLOOKED. PRAY FOR THE PATIENCE AND COMPASSION TO CARE FOR THAT PERSON WELL.

MARK 7:36–37

LET AMAZEMENT BECOME FAITH

CONTEXT

Jesus tells the people not to spread the news, but they continue proclaiming it. They are astonished by what He has done.

The healing echoes Isaiah 35:5–6, where restored hearing and speech are signs of God’s saving work. Jesus’ miracle points beyond an impressive moment to His identity and the restoration He brings.

The crowd’s excitement is understandable, but they still disregard His instruction. Being amazed by Jesus and obeying Jesus are not always the same thing.

DEVOTIONAL

It is possible to enjoy hearing about Jesus without allowing His words to shape our lives.

We can love a worship song, feel moved by a sermon, or be impressed by a miracle. Those responses can be meaningful, but following Jesus also involves trusting Him and doing what He says.

This passage gives us reasons to marvel at Jesus. He has authority over evil. He restores hearing and speech. He extends mercy across cultural boundaries. The right response reaches beyond excitement into faith and obedience.

The One who restores broken bodies also went to the cross for sinners and rose again. Our deepest need is reconciliation with God. Jesus invites us to turn from sin and trust Him as Savior and Lord.

APPLICATION

Complete this sentence: “**Because I believe Jesus is Lord, this week I will...**”

Choose a specific response to His Word. If you have questions about following Jesus, talk with a trusted Christian leader who can help you understand the gospel.

SMALL GROUP QUESTION

- **WHAT IS ONE WAY WE CAN MOVE FROM BEING IMPRESSED BY JESUS TO ACTUALLY FOLLOWING HIM?**

PRAY

PRAISE JESUS FOR HIS POWER AND MERCY. CONFESS AN AREA WHERE YOU HAVE RESISTED HIS INSTRUCTION. ASK HIM TO HELP YOU RESPOND WITH FAITH AND OBEDIENCE.