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## A Life of Complete Silence

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He was humiliated when people mocked him. Some believed he was deaf and mute because of some sin. Most others did not understand that, because he was born deaf, he couldn't talk either. So many people just cast him aside. But, even with his disability, he worked well in the family business in the Decapolis region, east of Galilee.

Then, early one morning, his brothers grabbed him and almost carried him to a house where he met a Jewish rabbi. There, they begged Jesus to heal their brother. They explained to Jesus that they had heard of him from a man who claimed to have been possessed by many demons. Even as Gentiles, they believed Jesus was sent from God.

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## A Whole New World

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Jesus smiled and took the deaf man into a separate private room. He understood his shame. In fact, he seemed to understand everything about the deaf man. Rather than speaking to him, Jesus first pantomimed what he was going to do. First, he touched his ears. Then he touched his tongue tenderly.

Then he looked up and prayed something. Instantly, the deaf man heard sounds. He heard himself breathing. He heard voices in the other room echoing in his ears. Then, he grunted a noise and heard himself for the first time. Then, through his tears, he began to speak.

He ran into the outer room and hugged his brothers. Within minutes, he was talking nonstop in perfect Aramaic. They all jumped around, celebrating like madmen, as Jesus stood in the doorway and smiled. Instant healing. Instant amazement. Instant joy. Then the men turned to Jesus and fell to their knees in praise.

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## A Complete Healing

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Most of us read this brief account in Mark 7:31-37 and see it as just another healing by Jesus. But when we dig a little deeper, we find some important lessons.

**Compassion** - First, notice how Jesus healed this man – privately and tenderly. Knowing the man could not hear and may not have understood what was happening, Jesus acted out what he was going to do first. He showed him true compassion and a great “bedside” manner.

That should give us great peace to know that Jesus sees us as we truly are. We do not need to become “worthy” of approaching him. He doesn't lump us into a group. He accepts us in our uniqueness and brokenness. And as we give ourselves over to him, he transforms us into who he knows we can be.

**Completeness** - Next, note how quickly and completely he was healed. The text says, *“At this, the man’s ears were opened, his tongue was loosened, and he began to speak clearly.”* (Mark 7:35) Most of our ability to speak is based on our ability to hear ourselves and others speak, like my two-year-old great-grandson is learning to do.

However, people who are born deaf cannot speak clearly because they have never heard language. But our deaf friend spoke clearly and immediately in his native language. No language lessons or speech therapy were required. No wonder the people were astonished.

**Inclusion** - Finally, notice where this takes place – the Decapolis area. This is a Gentile region – a pagan territory avoided by the Jews. But when Jesus visited there, he healed many people and miraculously fed four thousand who came to hear him preach and teach.

The Jews believed these pagan Gentiles were unworthy. But by ministering in this way, Jesus broke down the cultural and racial walls that had stood for centuries. He let the Gentile world know that he was not only the promised Jewish Messiah but also the Son of God and Lord of all.

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## Lessons for Our Journey

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We don’t know what happened to this woman that Mark 5:25-34 tells us about. I like to think she went home, reconciled with her family, restarted her life, and told others about her amazing encounter with Jesus. Perhaps if we heard her tell her story, we would take these truths with us as we face our own

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## Our Healing

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Are you still trying to clean up your own act before approaching Jesus? News Flash!!! You will never be “good enough.” Just as the deaf man could never heal himself, we cannot heal ourselves without God’s healing power. But Jesus always takes us as we are right now and asks us to give our broken selves to him. Only when we turn ourselves over to him do the miracles and healing start to happen.

*Enjoy Your Journey,*

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