



MORRISON ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

www.mzluth.org

September 12, 2021

Pastor Randy Ott

16th Sunday after Pentecost

First Lesson: [Isaiah 35:4-7a](#)

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 146

Second Lesson: [Acts 3:1-10](#)

Gospel Lesson/Sermon Text: [Mark 7:31-37](#)

Jesus' Grace is ALL in ALL to Us... Grace Leads Us to Trust that God Does All Things Well

Welcome to worship today at Morrison Zion Lutheran Church. We exist to glorify God. We have set out to do this by gathering around the Gospel so that we may grow in the Gospel and go to others with this Gospel.

Grace, mercy and peace are yours through the empowering work of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

In Christ, dear fellow redeemed:

I guess you could say one of the goals of a pastor that is leading worship is that you want to bring joy to the people that are there in worship. This morning as we gather together on this Sunday and it's the first Sunday of the football year, I can bring you joy by reminding you this isn't your team. If you grew up a Lions fan and had been a Lions fan your whole life, it's kind of hard to trust when management makes a new hire or makes a trade that it's going to work out well. You guys have a good team and you don't even believe your management half the time the way it is anyhow. But I like Dan Campbell (the Lions new coach) a lot. I find him very entertaining. But do I have a lot of confidence that they are going to start winning? No. Past experience has said it's probably not going to happen. Yet the nature of a fan is that you still like the team and you just learn to deal with the times when your team loses (even though it was ahead) with zeros on the clock. It just happens.

When it comes to life, there are a lot of things that cause us to wonder if God is doing all things well. We go through a lot of things in life that are hard. We face challenges and in our sinful arrogance, we think we know better than God on how certain things should go. So the devil comes to us and gets us to think that the things God says are good aren't really good and that our sinful mind knows better.

Today we see God acting in grace and love in our Gospel for a man who was born deaf and could not speak very well. He couldn't speak plainly, probably because of the

hearing issues. Think of going through life like that and you have to wonder, did this guy ever think *why? Why me? Why not someone else?* It's a natural question that the devil comes into our lives with.

What we see today is a whole group of people trusting that God does all things well because they saw Jesus' grace in action. This man had been begging for food. He had been affected by this in the Decapolis for some time. Jesus now is up by the Sea of Galilee. He was going through the Decapolis, an area of ten cities (which is what that means), who had their own coinage, their own government and things like that. You see His concern even for those outside of the children of Israel. As He is going through the knowledge of Him and some of the miracles He had been doing becomes obvious because these people bring this man who had this affliction and they beg Jesus to lay His hands on him. They know that Jesus has the power to heal.

There are a couple of things in how Jesus heals him that I think are very instructive for you and I to keep in mind as we go through our life and as we struggle with questions about, why does God let this or that happen. For a person that couldn't hear who Jesus was and what He was going to do to him, it would have been scary I would think. So you see Jesus take him away from the crowd so he isn't the center of attention, which would make him uncomfortable. You see Jesus try to communicate to him what He is about to do when He touches his ears, spits and touches his tongue. He has him all alone and lets him know that He is going to do something. You see Jesus' concerning love in the small things for this guy. How He acts in that way shows the depth of His care and concern. It isn't about "I'm Jesus. I'm going to do a miracle. Everybody look at me." He puts this man's interest ahead of His own even in these small things, which is what our God does for us.

The other thing I think is incredibly instructive for us to remember... we might think *God, why would you create a world that has people that can't hear?* He didn't! And I wonder if that is why there is this deep sigh before He says "**Ephphatha!**" He looks up and sighs deeply because the weight of the fallen world, that He knows is not the world that He created, is creating for the people He loves pain and discomfort. Because Adam and Eve disobeyed the commands of God, this man, you, me, everyone that has ever walked the face of the earth does not know the perfect world God intended for us. Instead we have a world that is full of heartache, hardship, things that make us worry and stress. Look at the affect that has on God. A deep sigh and He says "**Ephphatha!**" And the man's ears are opened. All of a sudden now he can hear everything. I have to think that had to be a little scary in a sense too, this bombardment of his senses all of a sudden that he had never experienced? His tongue was able to speak plainly. His speech was plain now. The people see it and they are amazed. And Jesus (who knows He is not here just to take care of earthly needs. He's here to take care of our eternal needs, and that includes continuing on the way that leads to the cross to die for our sins) tells them "Don't tell anyone." But they can't stop talking about this incredible grace of Jesus that

healed this man and met him in his needs in a miraculous way that shows that He is the promised Messiah as Isaiah (in our Psalm) had talked about. The people's response when they saw this incredible, undeserved love (this man had done nothing to earn or deserve this) was, "**He has done everything well.**" They saw a miracle and their response was, "This Jesus fellow, He does everything well."

So the question becomes, what is your response in your life? Do you always trust that Jesus does everything well, or do you think sometimes God is like the management of the Lions? Because we are sinners, there are going to be times that we bounce back and forth. The part of us that is a sinner at times thinks we know better than God because we have such arrogance in our hearts and we think *God, you wouldn't want this. You wouldn't allow this. Since it's happening, I don't care if you told me not to do this. I'm going to do it anyhow because I know better than you.* This is what we are. We are sinful human beings.

When you think about it, you and I have a lot more reasons to trust in God's grace. Those people were reacting to this grace in this one miracle. We've seen the miracle of Jesus living perfectly in our place because you and I are filthy, rotten sinners. We have seen Him take our sins on His back and allow Himself (the One who said "**Let there be light, and there was light** ([Genesis 1:3](#))) to be nailed to a cross because He loves YOU. We have seen this. We have tasted that the Lord is good, as we often sing. Yet the sinful nature in us is still so strong that at times we don't always trust that God does all things well. I understand it. I do it. So do you. It's because our sinful nature focuses on what is seen. But the new self in us focuses on God, His love, His promises.

Stop and think about it. God knows how we are going to get distracted like that, so just like He took that guy aside to make it easier for him and more comfortable for him and prepared him for what He was about to do, God has done the same thing for you and me. He has inspired the Holy Scriptures so that you and I are not surprised when suffering and difficulty comes. Look at how often He tells us that it is through much suffering we'll enter the kingdom of heaven and that we live in a fallen world and if they hated Him, they're going to hate us. And we're going to have to take up our cross and follow Him. He has said these things to us over and over and over to prepare our new self to hang on tight to that grace and that Gospel message of God's love for us in Christ when Satan is coming and telling us that God doesn't love us.

So one of the questions becomes, are you going to set aside time so that God can touch your ears and your tongue and make you ready for all the challenges that come in life? They are either already here, or they're on their way. That's the nature of living on this side of heaven. Are you going to make time for Jesus to prepare you and point you to His grace by making time for His Word and His Sacrament?

Think about what He does to you today. You walk up front and He says, "Here is my body and blood. I know you haven't always thought I do all things well, but I still love you and I want you to know the forgiveness and the peace that I won, that now exists between you and me, you who have faith in my Son."

The Lord does all things well. Whether you and I think so or not, that's a truth. You and I just need to keep pointing each other back to His grace so that the Spirit can strengthen our hearts to believe it when it becomes hard to believe because that's what God has called us to do as His people. Amen.

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. ([Philippians 4:7](#).) Amen.