

# 'He Hath Done All Things well.'- Mar 7:37

by G. Campbell Morgan

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*Jesus' public ministry is characterized by His adaptability to human need, demonstrating His power and ability to meet people where they are.*

**Scripture:** Isaiah 53:3, Matthew 9:36, Matthew 15:21-28, Mark 7:24 - 8:26, Luke 19:10, John 6:35, Romans 15:1, Galatians 3:28, Hebrews 4:15

**Topics:** "Compassion Of Christ", "Faith and Healing"

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## Description

G. Campbell Morgan explores the ministry of Jesus as He interacts with various individuals, emphasizing His compassion and adaptability to human needs. He highlights the story of the Syrophenician woman, illustrating a mother's desperate faith, and the healing of a deaf and mute man, showcasing the importance of community support. Morgan contrasts these with the spiritual blindness of the Pharisees and Sadducees, who demand signs despite witnessing miracles. He concludes that Jesus has done all things well, demonstrating His understanding, sympathy, and unwavering commitment to His mission. The sermon ultimately calls for a recognition of Jesus' ability to meet diverse human needs with grace and power.

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## Transcript

Mar 7:24-37 - Mar 8:1-26.

IN this paragraph we have the story of the last things in the public ministry of Jesus, prior to the confession of Peter at Caesarea Philippi, and the new teaching and method which followed that confession.

The story contained in this paragraph may be divided into two parts. The first gives the account of a Gentile ministry of Jesus which was new, and must have been startling to His disciples, and to others. He travelled north, away from the earlier scene of His labour, so far as Tyre, and there He healed the daughter of the Syrophenician woman. Then, proceeding still further north, and bearing to the northeast, He came to Sidon, travelling in a southerly direction through Decapolis, the country of the Ten Cities, all the while in Gentile territory, exercising a ministry among these Gentiles similar to that which He had been exercising among the Hebrew people. All this is contained in chapter seven, from verse twenty-four to the end of the ninth verse of chapter eight.

The second part of the paragraph, commencing at the tenth verse of chapter eight, and ending at the twenty-sixth verse, takes us back again into a hostile atmosphere. As He returned across the sea to

Dalmanutha, He was immediately met by Pharisees and Sadducees demanding a sign. Then, once more crossing the sea in company of His disciples, He warned them, and dealt with their blindness. The brief story ends with the account of their arrival on the other side-on the northeastern shore of the lake-again in Gentile territory, and the opening of the eyes of the blind man.

The text, "He hath done all things well," is resolutely borrowed from the context. The words were spoken by the Gentiles, and had special reference to the healing ministry which Jesus had been exercising in Decapolis, of which Mark gives no account, but which Matthew records quite clearly, and to this wonderful miracle, the opening of the ears of the deaf man, and the straightening out of his twisted tongue. It was in the presence of these evidences of His power that these Gentiles said, "He hath done all things well."

If, however, I admit that I resolutely borrow the text from its context, let me hasten to add it is not ruthlessly so taken; for accepting the conclusion of these Gentiles, I propose simply to make a wider application of it; to let this declaration cover the whole of these events, and so form a fitting conclusion to that survey of the public ministry of our Lord which at this point ceases. By its use in this way, I desire to fasten attention upon Him.

In these events we see Him in His relation to humanity in its varied needs. We will take that outlook, ignoring the racial division which we have already recognized as between the Gentile and the Jew; simply looking at Him as He stands confronting these varied phases and illustrations of human need. Such a meditation will constrain us at the conclusion to return to the text and say, "He hath done all things well."

We know these stories, and are indeed very familiar with them. We glance at them once again, desiring, as we move in front of the pictures they present in imagination, specially to observe the need represented.

The first picture is that of the Syrophcenician woman. Out of the mass of detail that we have here in Mark and in Matthew, let us attempt to gather the central value. The revelation of need supremely represented here is that of the sorrow of a mother. Any careful reading of the story must bring something of pathos into the voice, as the account is read of how the woman besought Him that He would cast the demon out of her little daughter. Leave the Lord out of view for the moment, and all the difficulties which gather about the story, and see that one woman in agony about her child. Admit the disabilities under which she laboured, which these evangelists are both careful to point out, Mark speaking of her as a Greek, which simply means a Gentile, and not a Greek only, but a Syrophcenician. Matthew does not speak of her as a Gentile, neither adds the fact that she was Syrophcenician; but, taking the more general term, he at once says a Canaanitish woman. Humanity is revealed as we look at the woman, and the elemental superiority to racial disadvantage is seen in the agony of the mother heart. Oh yes, she was a Greek, and not a Hebrew, but she was a mother! She was a Syrophcenician, a Canaanitish woman, one of the accursed race, but she had a heart, and it was a mother's heart! There, flashing out on the canvas, is this revelation of a touch of humanity that is independent of advantage, and superior to disadvantage, mightier than racial differences; and in the wail of the woman we have the cry of the heart of a mother.

The next picture that Mark gives, is that of a man deaf, and having an impediment in his speech. This is a picture of personal disability. The whole point of the picture, however, as it occurs here in the Gospel, is not that of the man's personal disability. It is rather that of the fact that this man in this Gentile region was brought to Jesus by his friends. It is never safe to base too much upon the argument of silence, but at least it is an interesting fact to note that the man made no appeal to Christ. He did not come to Christ on his own initiative. His friends brought him, and besought Jesus that He would touch him. So while the man

stands central in the picture, in some senses, I look again, and in the sympathy of these men for their friend, men outside the company of Israel, outside that racial relationship which was religious in its function, I see something human. I am again impressed by the elemental superiority over racial disadvantage. Oh, yes, these men were Gentiles, but they were men. Oh! yes, these people also probably were of the Canaanitish race, but they had sympathy in their heart; witness their effort to bring their friend to Jesus.

The next picture is one full of life, colour, and movement. It is that of a great multitude, at least four thousand people, gathered together; and it is a picture of these people hungry. Do not spiritualize the word too soon. There are spiritual values undoubtedly in these miracles of feeding, but let us begin on the true level—a literal hunger, a physical hunger, a need for food. The hunger of these people was the outcome of their attraction to Jesus, and their determination to stay by Him. Mark the words of Christ, "because they continue with Me now three days, and have nothing to eat." Here was a situation of real need, arising within the material and the physical. These people were hungry, and it was the hunger of health, and thus ought to be met and satisfied, lest journeying back, they faint. This was an experience of physical weakness!

The next is a very different picture. It is that of a deputation, an official deputation, almost certainly, of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Mark says "Pharisees" only, but comparing the account with Matthew's Gospel, which is necessary for the understanding of some subsequent things, we find the Sadducees came with them, demanding a sign from Him. Who were these men who came to Jesus? The religious leaders of the hour, the men who were religious teachers in Jerusalem, the spiritual rulers of the people, men whose office it was to interpret to the people the law of God, to reveal to the people the way and the will of God,

They were in conflict; with each other, these Sadducees and Pharisees. The Pharisees stood for the spiritual ideal of religion. While they trammelled that ideal by tradition, and hindered its working, nevertheless they stood for spiritual things; or if we may borrow, for the sake of illustration, a somewhat questionable word, they stood for the supernatural in religion. On the other hand, the Sadducees were the rationalists, who denied angels, spirits, and resurrection, everything in the nature of the supernatural. The Sadducees were men who believed in a religion that was entirely ethical, and who never admitted the relation of the ethical to the spiritual. The representatives of these opposing parties came together to Christ to prefer the same request. The thing they asked was a sign from heaven.

What is the supreme revelation of this picture? It is that of spiritual inferiority in spite of advantage. That statement is only forceful as it is immediately put back into contrast with what we saw concerning the Syrophenician woman. In the case of the woman we saw the elemental need of humanity superior to all social and racial disadvantages. In these men we see deterioration; and failure, and spiritual inferiority, in spite of religious advantages. Here were men asking for a sign, who had seen His signs; men who had listened to His words, and followed Him from Judaea and from Galilee; men who had watched the working of His power in the marvels that He had wrought, had seen Him healing disease, casting out demons, raising from the dead; and infinitely more wonderful than all, banishing the power of sin, forgiving it, and demonstrating His right and authority to forgive in the results that followed. They had seen Him dealing with every form of human malady, material, mental, moral. Yet these men said: "Show us a sign."

Once again I pass on, and the next picture is that of the disciples, alone with Jesus in the boat, for I think the warning and the conversation took place as they crossed over the sea to Bethsaida. This is a picture

of the misunderstanding of the loyal-hearted. It is a picture of men who loved the Lord, and were loyal to the Lord, and as He Himself with infinite grace did say upon, a later occasion, men who abode with Him in His temptations; but they had not understood Him. As they crossed over the sea, Jesus warned this little group of His disciples, His apostles, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees." They immediately connected His reference to leaven with material bread. They said, "We have no bread." Now what they really meant by that I cannot tell. It may be some one can tell me! I have been trying to find out how they connected the word of Jesus with bread. If I judge by the Lord's answer it is as if they thought He was rebuking them for carelessness; for in effect He said, Do you not yet see that I am able to provide for that physical need? Why should you trouble about that? Did I not feed five thousand and four thousand?

Yet I am still in some difficulty. What did they imagine He meant by the leaven of the Pharisees? Did they imagine that the Pharisees were going to take their meal and put leaven into it? Or was there in their mind some lurking suspicion that when He said, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees," He was giving them a new ceremonial addition to the law? I do not know. Speculation is unprofitable! I cannot see the connection between what He said and what they thought. The fact remains that, when Jesus uttered that which He evidently felt was a greatly-needed spiritual warning, His disciples, His loyal-hearted ones, those who loved Him, thought about bread.

There is one other picture. Arrived at Bethsaida again, they brought to Him a man suffering personal disability, a blind man. Once again the central value of the story is that it is a revelation of the sympathy of His friends, for they brought Him to Jesus,

Now let us look again at these stories. What did Jesus do with that woman in whom there was manifested the touch of true humanity, the agony of the mother's heart? In considering what He did for her, first look at the result. That may not be a proper line of consideration, yet I think it is. The result was what the mother found when she got back home. She found the child laid upon the bed, and the demon gone out. To know what He did, we must see that child as the mother left her, contorted, twisted, and then lying on the bed, quiet, restful. That is what He did for her. To look at the result first is to be better qualified to see the process. Is not that the solution of many of the things of this life? I think so. I think when at last we really see the result; we shall not be so perplexed about some of the processes.

From the standpoint of the result, let us observe His method, and observe it most carefully. It did look hard. It did seem severe. First, He was silent. He did not answer her. Then He said to her, "Let the children first be filled; for it is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to the dogs." But did He really say this? Listen to Him again, and notice that He said to her, "Let the children first be filled." That in itself was suggestion that others might be fed after the children were fed.

Then we have not a word conveying the exact equivalent in our language to a word in the Greek here. He did not say, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs." To put it into colloquial English, He said, "It is not good to take the children's bread and cast to the doggies." There is a difference here. There are dogs and dogs; and there certainly were dogs and dogs in Palestine. There were dogs fierce and wild, marauding beasts; but there were also the dogs of the household, the diminutive dogs, that had their place in the household, that had their place in the dwelling. This word the Master used was one of these diminutives; and there is so much in diminutives! No one can use them without there being tenderness in the voice. I claim that tenderness for Jesus here. He said, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to the doggies." There is at least something in that tenderness. Ah! to us it may seem harsh to refer to her even in that way; but mark what He did for the woman. Put the apparent

severity of His method by the side of what He did. He set her free from the trammels of a false view of privilege. When she first called to Him she called to Him as the Jewish Messiah. "O Lord, Thou Son of David, my daughter is grievously vexed with a demon." She was asking some pity from a Hebrew Messiah, she herself being, a Gentile, and He answered upon that ground. If she appeal to Him as Hebrew Messiah He will say Nay. So she was brought to cry to Him out of her elemental humanity. "Lord, help me . . . for even the doggies eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." Then He said, "For this saying go thy way; the demon is gone out of thy daughter." Thus, whereas He said the apparently severe thing, He admitted her immediately to the privilege of a child. There is a word of Paul in his Galatian letter, having a profounder application than I am now going to make of it, but in some ways the dealing of our Lord with this woman is a wonderful commentary on this word of Paul; "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith working through love." That is what happened in the case of the woman; faith working through love. Christ had told her that it was not good to give the children's bread to the little dogs; and faith wrought through love, and He treated her, not as a dog to whom the crumbs were to be given, but as a child admitted into all the privileges of the family.

Thus our Lord showed that in Him all racial barriers, were broken down, all racial privilege was as nothing; that where the soul in its elemental human agony approached Him in faith, He answered. It was a foreshadowing of the Acts of the Apostles; of what Peter and others had to learn afterwards.

But look at Him again. I will take the second and last pictures, and put them together, because they are so much alike in certain ways. He was dealing with two men, a dumb man and a blind man. Now it is noticeable and all students of these stories are arrested by it that our Lord was adopting new methods in His miracles, or seemed to be doing so. He took the dumb man apart from the crowd, put His fingers into his ears, and touched him with His own spittle, sighed, and said, Ephphatha, and the man's ears were opened. Even more remarkable was the case of the blind man, where His working of the wonder seemed to be gradual; first of all the anointing with a touch, then asking him, "Seest thou aught?" and after the answer of the man, "I see men, for I behold them as trees, walking," the touch of the hands, and full recovery. In these two cases we see a process of healing.

Do not let us imagine for a moment that in these methods of Jesus we have any revelation either of weakening power on His part-for that has been suggested or of the adoption of new methods and the banishment of the old, for this also has been suggested.

In these two stories we have wonderful illustrations of a perpetual fact in the method of Jesus with human need; the fact that He adapts His method to the peculiar circumstances of need of the one with whom He is dealing. I am quite convinced if we could perfectly know these men we should discover the reason for the method. In each case Christ adapted Himself to the need of the man. This was also finely illustrated in the case of the woman.

In all these stories Jesus approached human need full of resources. There was no necessity, as far as He was concerned, to heal by any kind of means; no necessity to keep that woman waiting for a moment for the healing of her child; but there was profound necessity for everything He did in the case of the people who came to Him. If at your leisure you will go through the Gospel stories, and the cases in which Jesus dealt with need-I am not now referring to the spiritual needs, but to the needs met by these very miracles-you will discover, perhaps to your amazement, and certainly to your profit, that He never did anything the same way twice. There was infinite variety in all His dealings with men. He never healed more than one blind man in the same way. He never cast out the demon from more than one man in the

same way. There was always a difference, and in the difference is a wonderful revelation of the variety of the experiences of human need, and consequently a wonderful revelation of our Lord's adaptability to that variety of experience.

All of which is at once a revelation of the Lord, and an indication of the true line of Christian service. If we are really going to deal with men in the name of Christ and humanity, we cannot deal with all men in the same way. Inasmuch as the material miracles of Jesus are all parables of spiritual value in Christian service, as I watch the Lord I understand that when I talk to one man of his spiritual need, and try to help him; and then to another man of his spiritual need, and try to help him; if I approach the two men in succession, having arranged everything as to my method of dealing with them, the probability is that I shall not help them at all. The Lord never did a thing twice in the same way, He was not changeable therefore, but changeless; absolutely true to the underlying principle that every human life is lonely, separate, peculiar, and must be separately dealt with. Christ never deals with men en masse. He deals with men one by one.

It is an old proverb, and a foolish one, that God made Oliver Cromwell, and broke the mould. I join issue with what is inferred when men say that God made Oliver Cromwell and broke the mould, or God made John Wesley and broke the mould. The inference is that He does not always break the mould when He makes a man; that the vast majority of people are run through the same mould. Nothing of the kind! There is neither man nor woman but stands separate, alone, in the dignity of individuality, and who can say with Jesus, "To this end have I been born, and to this end am I come into the world.

The Lord provided for the hungry multitude because they had been three days with Him. There is another important principle here. Jesus did not feed them in order to persuade them to listen to His teaching. When a tea-meeting is necessary, to get people to listen to the Gospel there will be failure. That is not the method of Christ. To build an Institute in connection with a Church, and provide all kinds of entertainment for the young people, in order that they may come to the Bible classes, is to be foredoomed to failure.

In the case of the Pharisees and Sadducees who demanded a sign, the Lord refused what they asked; first because their motive was wrong; and secondly because no sign would have convinced them. They had already had the signs, and were willfully blind.

His treatment of the disciples those-disciples to whom the Lord always spoke with sympathy was that He definitely and sternly rebuked them in a series of indignant questions. Yet observe also that He led them on until they did understand what He meant.

I gather up the impressions made upon my soul, as I have watched the Lord in these stories. The first is that of His perfect understanding of every case as it came before Him.

The second is that of His quick sympathy, the sensitiveness of His soul, that immediately responded, whatever the need by which He stood confronted.

Yet again I am impressed by His sustained loyalty to principle. He never deviated by a hair's-breadth from the pathway of His loyalty to the Kingdom of God.

I am impressed finally by the very sternness of His rebuke of the disciples who failed.

Ah! but there are two little phrases in the course of this passage that are very revealing, far more revealing than we know. When He was about to open the ears of; the man, "He sighed" In the presence of the

demand for a sign by the Pharisees and Sadducees, "He sighed deeply in His spirit." Thus twice I hear a sigh coming up from His soul. Behold, "a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief!" Behold a Man exercising a ministry full of healing power and elemental light; but never forget that this service was costly. The principle of the Cross ultimately to be revealed supremely on Calvary, ran through all,' making Him what He was to the men of His own age, making Him what He is to the men of today.

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