Pentecost 16 Mark 7:31-37
September 12, 2021 735*-235-415/414-327
*CW-S – "Speak, O Lord"

"He Has Done EVERYTHING Well!"
I. By faith we know this is a fact.
II. How will respond to this?

Dear Christian friends,

In my confirmation class with our **day school** students I always greet them with **"Guten Morgen!"** ("Good morning" in German.) They've been taught to answer back with a **"Guten Morgen!"** of their own. Then I ask them, **"Wie geht's?"** or **"Wie geht's heute Morgen?"** (How's it going today?) They've been taught to answer that question with, **"Ganz gut!"** That's "GANZ gut!" – not just good but VERY good – very well. I was once asked why the answer is ALWAYS "**Ganz** gut!" – "VERY good." After all SOME DAYS are just **not so good** – some days downright STINK!

But just stop and think about this. EVERY DAY God loves us. EVERY DAY God is with us – God forgives us – **takes care** of us – promises us eternal life in heaven. Doesn't that make every day "**Ganz** gut!" – even if it's NOT SO GOOD **as we see** it?

***"He has done everything well,"*** the crowds were saying here. Looking both at these **verses** AND our **own lives** we also say, ***"He has done EVERYTHING well."*** 1)By faith we know this **is a fact**. 2)How will we respond to this?

**I. By faith we know this is a fact.**

Today's **readings** are a good example of what it means to ***"walk by faith and not by sight."*** What we see with our eyes – what we feel – hear – go through OFTEN SEEMS to directly contradict what we believe **from God's Word**. Take this truth right here, ***"He has done EVERYTHING well." "Everything"*** means just that – everything! – not just SOME things or even MOST things. ***"Everything!"*** – including the **past year** and a half with the **Covid pandemic** that just won't go away. ***"He has done EVERYTHING well"*** is not a question but a STATEMENT OF FACT.

Would you say that about your life? Or can you point to some VERY PAINFUL – lonely – **depressing** – **discouraging** times? Times when instead of exclaiming, ***"He has done EVERYTHING well!"*** – you were wondering instead – **perhaps** with SOME BITTERNESS and **resentment** – "Where are You, Lord? How could You, Lord?"

You're not alone with those DOUBTS and **questions**. Take that man in the Acts reading. ***"Crippled from birth"*** and he was over 40 years old when he was FINALLY healed. For the first 39 years of his life was he thinking, ***"God has done everything well"***? Or take this man here – ***"deaf and with a speech impediment."*** We're NOT TOLD how long he had been this way. Was it from birth or from an accident – a **stroke**, etc.? HOW MANY people had seen him but instead of saying, ***"God has done EVERYTHING well"*** they said, "Look at that POOR MAN!"

Fortunately this man was blessed with some **loving, caring** friends who ***"brought him to Jesus and pleaded with Jesus to place His hand on (the man)."*** But would Jesus ANSWER their prayer? Would Jesus have time for him **in particular**? When you pray - do you **pray with** the joyful confidence that WHATEVER ANSWER the Lord gives you you will be saying, ***"He has done EVERYTHING well!"***? Or do you pray with your FINGERS CROSSED – hoping God **will answer** you – **hoping** God will do what YOU ask – **hoping** but NOT REALLY SURE – **hoping** but not getting your hopes **up too high**?

***"He has done EVERYTHING well!"*** is not the same as "He has done EVERYTHING I WANT." God loves us so much that He WON'T ALWAYS DO **what we want** but He will ALWAYS DO what He knows

is the **very best** for us. The disappointment comes **when I think** that I KNOW BETTER than God **what's best** for me.

Jesus answered their prayer with FAR MORE than they **had asked** for. Notice how Jesus ***"does everything well"*** here. He takes the man ***"aside in private – away from the crowd"*** and any distractions so he's focused only on Jesus. With SIGN LANGUAGE Jesus communicates with the man. Jesus touches his **ears** and **tongue** – He looks heavenward – He sighs. Jesus speaks ONE, SIMPLE word, ***"Ephphatha!"*** – ***"Be opened!"*** in Aramaic. Immediately they man can BOTH hear **clearly** and speak **plainly**. ***"Amazed beyond measure"*** the crowds respond, ***"He has done EVERYTHING well!"***

We can see that here – but do we also see it IN OUR OWN lives? **Today's readings** remind us to COUNT our blessings. **Since** we're not in heaven yet LIFE ISN'T PERFECT **by any means**. But God isn't waiting **until** we're in heaven to FINALLY **bless** us! Our health – **eyesight** – hearing – family – **food** – **friends** – homes, etc. Too often we **take God's blessings** FOR GRANTED until God takes them away from us. **For example**, we don't think of our hearts pounding away day after day – year after year – until we have a **heart attack**.

***"He has done EVERYTHING well!"*** is especially true in our SPIRITUAL life. We weren't just **spiritual** CRIPPLES. ***"Dead in sin,"*** Paul wrote. ***"There is no one who does good, not even one. The sinful mind is hostile to God. I know that nothing God lives in me, that is in my sinful nature."*** We heard Jesus last week, ***"From within, out of people's hearts"*** comes that flood of sin. We were BLIND to the truth about God's **holiness** – about our **sin** and guilt. We turned a DEAF EAR to God's pleas to **repent** and **return** to Him. We've often treated God's blessings AS IF we deserved them – **as if** GOD OWED us His blessings. We were spiritual BRATS!

Yet see how God ***"has done everything well!"*** God Himself did ***"everything"*** to reconcile us to Himself – to restore our **ruined relationship** with Him. Jesus – the very Son of God – ***"came into the world to save sinners."*** Jesus ***"didn't come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."*** Jesus is ***"Our Righteousness"*** – Jesus gives us all the credit for His ***"righteous"*** – perfect life. Jesus is ***"the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world."*** On the cross the **sinless** Jesus was punished for our sins – Jesus endured the hell we had coming. FOR JESUS' SAKE God has forgiven **all** our sins. BECAUSE Jesus ***"has done everything well"*** we can be absolutely sure of God's forgiveness. Trusting in Jesus we can be absolutely sure that we are going straight to heaven when we die. And IN THE MEANTIME we can be absolutely sure that God will ***"do EVERYTHING well"*** in our lives right now.

But what about ALL THOSE TIMES when things are not going **so well** for us? The doctor says you have cancer. You're losing your **eyesight**. You've lost your job. Your marriage is **falling apart**. We could easily GO ON and on. What's happening? We're seeing the PROBLEMS but we've lost sight of GOD! See your Jesus NOW SITTING at the Father's right hand firmly in control and working ***"all things"*** – ***"EVERYTHING!"*** – for your eternal good. See your ***"Good Shepherd"*** with His arms wrapped tightly around you and hear Him say, ***"No one can snatch you out of My hand."*** That Jesus ***"does everything well"*** does not mean life will always BE EASY or **have no problems**. But AS OUR GOD works all things out – including all those things we'd rather NOT DEAL with – we have to admit, ***"He does EVERYTHING well."*** We don't need to wait to THE END to see this is true. Take comfort in that FACT **right now**! Now…

**II. How will we respond to this?**

Our first response is **easy** to OVERLOOK. It's not even mentioned here but it must have been there. GRATITUDE – **thankfulness**. Seeing how God ***"works all things"*** for our good we SHOULD BE so grateful. That's **such** a NEAT PROMISE! It's not UP TO US to make sure **everything** turns out OK. We don't even always know **what's best** for us! But then God says, "CALM down! Let Me HANDLE it.

Let Me take care of that – **take care** of YOU!" As God does handle whatever He ***"does EVERYTHING well."***

The people were ***"amazed beyond measure."*** They were DUMBFOUNDED – at a loss for words. "WOW! Did you see that?!" When we see HOW GOD ***"does EVERYTHING well"*** ALSO FOR US we too should be ***"amazed beyond measure."*** Or because God is SO GOOD and SO GENEROUS with us have we lost that **awe** and **amazement**? Did you get up this morning **thinking**, "WOW! I get to go to church today! God has invited me to a **personal meeting** with Him!"? Does eager anticipation fill us as we think, "I get to come to Communion today. God is going to do a miracle this morning JUST TO ASSURE me of His **love**, His **forgiveness**, His **faithfulness**. Jesus is going to feed me with the VERY SAME body and blood that He gave into death on the cross FOR ME!" Shouldn't we be ***"amazed beyond measure"***? Shouldn't we leave His table shouting for ALL TO HEAR, ***"He has done EVERYTHING well!"***?

***"Jesus gave the people strict orders to tell no one."*** We're not told exactly why Jesus gave them that command but Jesus' will was CLEAR. They were to keep quiet about this. ***"But the more Jesus (commanded them), the more they kept proclaiming it."*** No doubt they had GOOD INTENTIONS but **good intentions** are no excuse for **disobeying** God. Respond to God ***"doing EVERYTHING well"*** BY YOUR DOING everything God wants. We now have the command to ***"preach the gospel to all creation."*** God wants us to GO OUT and TALK UP Jesus. People need to SEE – to hear **from us** – that God ***"does everything well."*** How can we KEEP QUIET about that?

One last response. BE CONFIDENT as you face the **future**. We don't know what the **future all holds** for us but we do know WHO HOLDS **our future** in His hands. We know Him PERSONALLY. **We know** what He's already all done for us. **We know** what He's promised us HERE **on earth** and IN **heaven**.

That's NO NEED for us to be anxious or worried – and **certainly** not to wallow in self-pity. We HAVE OUR GOD. **We have** His love – His forgiveness – His **promises**. We may not always see it RIGHT AWAY but it's true – it's a FACT – ***"He does EVERYTHING well!"***

So wie geht's? **How's** it going FOR YOU? GANZ gut! - IMMER ganz gut! ALWAYS VERY good! Amen.

NICENE CREED