

Small Group Discussion Guide

Mark 7:24-37

“Deaf Dogs”

Based on Sunday's
Sermon 2/22/2026

Background

Sometime after His confrontation with the religious authorities in Capernaum, Jesus journeyed to the region surrounding the Gentile city of Tyre. The territory was called Phoenicia, but it had been annexed to the Roman province of Syria for more than a century. By this time, Tyre was a Roman colony.¹ Because Mark wrote his gospel for a Gentile audience, he was careful to highlight the fact that the message of salvation was not limited to Israel but extended to the entire world (cf. Mark 13:10; 14:9; 16:15).² From the perspective of first-century Judaism, she had everything going against her. First, she was a woman, which even among the Jews meant she was viewed as inferior to a man. Second, she was a Gentile.³ As such, her faith became a beautiful prophecy of the gospel of Christ which would be proclaimed with such power to the Gentile world. Jesus held it up like a jewel in the light for all to see.⁴ How beautiful Christ is. He could have just spoken a word or simply willed it. But he chose to lay his hand on the poor man in front of the multitude. The onlookers and the disciples were shocked. Jesus was now ceremonially unclean! To their way of thinking, he might catch the disease.⁵ “Deaf Dogs” — a reminder that the people who *should* hear Jesus often don't, and the people who *shouldn't* hear Him at all somehow do.

Discussion Questions

Getting Started

1. Think of a time recently when it was *hard to hear* what God might be saying — not because He was silent, but because life was loud. What made it difficult to listen?

Observation

2. Read Mark 7:24-37. Compare and contrast the two healings that Jesus performed in this passage.

¹ Charles R. Swindoll, *Mark*, Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary (Tyndale House Publishers, 2018), 196.

² John MacArthur, *Mark 1-8*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2015), 361-362.

³ Ibid, 366.

⁴ R. Kent Hughes, *Mark: Jesus, Servant and Savior*, vol. 1, Preaching the Word (Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1989), 172.

⁵ Ibid, 181.

3. Compare the disciples and the crowd from last week in Mark 7:14-23 to the woman and the man who are healed in Mark 7:24-37. Who exhibited faith? Who did not?
4. How does the Syrophoenician woman approach Jesus, and what does her posture of humility reveal?
5. What actions does Jesus take in healing the deaf man, and what is unusual about the method?

Interpretation

6. What do you think Jesus means by the “children” and “dogs” metaphor, and how does the woman’s reply reshape the moment?
7. Read Isaiah 60:1-3. Explain this passage in your own words and how it applies to Mark 7:24-37.
8. Why do you think Jesus commands silence after the miracle, even though the crowd can’t contain themselves?

Application

9. If Jesus walked into your “territory” today—your workplace, home, or routine—what need would immediately rise to the surface?
10. Where do you work? Have you determined to do your job well? Believe it or not, doing your job with excellence can create a more effective impact for Christ than words alone. Undergird your spoken testimony of Christ’s gift of salvation with quality work.⁶

⁶ Charles R. Swindoll, *Mark*, Swindoll’s Living Insights New Testament Commentary (Tyndale House Publishers, 2018), 206.