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Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks Baptist Church

Grand Prairie, Texas



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Recognized by a Canaanite Woman

Matt 15:21-28

As Jesus approached Tyre and Sidon, a woman of Canaan whose daughter was possessed by demons came to meet Him. In great earnestness she pleaded with the Lord to have mercy on her daughter. He did not answer her, because **His mission was to the house of Israel, not to the Gentiles**. It was not appropriate for Him to bestow blessings on the Gentiles before He bestowed blessings on the Jews. This Gentile woman, however, must be given an A for effort. Instead of giving up after she was purposely ignored, she continued pressing the disciples to move the Lord to change His mind. The disciples became so weary of **her persistence** that they came to Jesus asking Him to send her away. Another way to understand the words of the disciples asking Him to send her away is to understand this as an implied request. In beseeching Jesus to send her away, they were asking Him to heal her daughter and then send her away. Jesus' reply does seem to be a response to such a request. Immediately after Jesus said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 15:24), the woman fell down before Him and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, help me" (vs. 25). Jesus said to her, "It is not good to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs" (vs. 26). She was evidently familiar with the Jews' custom of referring to themselves as children of God and to ..the Gentiles as dogs. We should note that **Jesus used a word for "dogs" that referred to the dogs that lived in people's homes as pets, not to the wild, vicious dogs that roamed the streets. The woman had no difficulty accepting that God had chosen the Jews as His people, which meant that the Gentiles were outside the circle of God's covenant blessings. Instead of feeling rejected, the woman saw in this imagery an opportunity to receive blessing.** She quickly pointed out that dogs do not go hungry; they eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table. Jesus could not resist the woman's persistent faith. She believed in the Lord and pleaded that He give her the "crumb" of delivering her daughter from the demon who was destroying her life. The Lord credited her with great faith and granted her request. What was so great about her faith? There are **three things that stand out. First, she had absolute confidence that Jesus could heal her daughter.** Had she had any doubts concerning the Lord's power, she probably would have given up when she met with the Lord's delay. **Second, her faith was great because she did not criticize the Lord for hesitating to answer her request.** The first words she uttered were "Truth, Lord" (Matt. 15:27). Great faith accepts that the Lord has a good reason for delaying His response. **Third, her faith was great because it revealed a great desire for the answer.** Often God delays in order to test how deeply we want what we are asking Him to do. Persistence is fueled by desire. Faith has been described in many ways. It has been explained through the use of synonyms such as "belief," "trust," and "reliance." It has also been expounded upon through the examples of such people as Abraham, Moses, and Paul. Faith is defined in the Bible as "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1). An anonymous individual defined faith as "daring the soul to go farther than it can see" (www. elbourne.org). In this week's lesson text, a Gentile woman exhibited this anonymous person's definition of faith. She acknowledged the messianic character of Jesus Christ, and her daughter was healed.

(From the Bible Expositor and Illuminator)

Clearly, the Canaanite woman was right to have the confidence that she had in Jesus. Despite her discouraging reception, she believed that Jesus had enough to give her the blessing she so desperately sought. **The love of God is stronger than any social boundary; the grace of God is greater than any sin.** Sometimes we may think or act as if Jesus died only for a particular kind of people—people of our own ethnic group, nationality, or social status. Or we may think that some people are simply too far lost ever to be saved. Today's text tells us otherwise. It also reminds us that to receive Christ's mercy we need to realize how desperately we need it.

(From the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

Jesus Christ the Fulfillment

A Study in Matthew

Date	Lesson	Text
12/04	Lineage of Jesus	1:1-17; Ruth 4:13-17
12/11	Emmanuel's Birth	1:18-25
12/18	Confirming His Birth	2:7-23
01/08	Special Lesson	Bro. Cisneros
01/15	Strength in Temptation	4:1-11
01/22	Acts of Healing	9:27-34; 11:2-6
01/29	Declared in Prayer Pt1	11:25-30
02/05	Declared in Prayer Pt2	11:25-30
02/12	Revealed in Rejection	13:54-58
02/19	Canaanite Woman	15:21-28
02/26	Declared by Peter	16:13-27
03/04	Witnessed by Disciples	17:1-12
03/11	Anointed in Bethany	26-6-13
03/18	Review and Summary	

Food for Thought

Bold Persistence

Persistence in prayer pleases God
 Something happens when we pray,
 Take our place and therein stay,
 Wrestle on till break of day;
 Ever let us pray.

*Then Jesus answered and said to her,
 "O woman, great is your faith!
 Let it be to you as you desire."
 And her daughter was healed
 from that very hour.*

(Matt 15:28 NJKV)

(From "Our Daily Bread", May 03,2007)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

THE NEED (MATT 15:21-22)

The need for mercy

- Because of being a sinner (Luke 18:13)
- Because mercy is part of God's plan (Rom 11:32)
- Because God's power is made perfect in our weakness (2 Cor 12:9)
- Because God provides mercy in our time of need (Heb 4:16)
- Because once we were not one of God's people (1 Pet 2:10)
- Because God is the only source of mercy (Ps 146:3-5)

The need of deliverance from attacks by Satan

- We need deliverance because Satan is looking for someone to devour (1 Pet 5:8)
- We need deliverance because Satan is an accuser (Zech 3:1-2)
- We need deliverance because Satan wants to sift us like wheat (Luke 22:31-32)
- We need deliverance because Satan knows his time is short (Rev 12:12)
- We need deliverance because Satan is our enemy and we must fight him every day (Eph 6:11-12)
- We need deliverance because the influences of Satan is always at war within us (Rom 7:23)

THE DENIAL OF HELP (MATT 15:23-24)

Denial through negative answers to petitions

- Negative answer because God knows what's best for us (2 Cor 12:8)
- Negative answer because sometimes it is the consequence of our sins (2 Sam 12:16)
- Negative answer because sometimes it takes more spiritual power (Mark 9:29)
- Negative answer because we don't know what to pray for (Rom 8:26)
- Negative answer because we have the wrong motives (James 4:2-3)

Denial through bad advice from others

- Bad advice from friends (1 King 12:8)
- Bad advice from sinners (Prov 1:10-16)
- Bad advice from those who gossip (Prov 20:19)
- Bad advice from those whose desire it is to cause division (Rom 16:17)
- Bad advice from bad company (1 Cor 15:33)
- Bad advice from those whose desire it is to deceive (Eph 5:6)

Denial through not finding applicability

- Wrong applicability of spiritual power (Acts 8:18-20)
- Wrong applicability of using human reasoning and not obeying God's word (1 King 13:15-24)
- Wrong applicability of the reason for difficulties (2 Cor 12:8-9)
- Wrong applicability of what to pray for (1 Jn 5:16)
- Wrong applicability based on our spiritual condition (Isa 1:15-16)
- Wrong applicability of allowing our lustful desires to rule our life (James 4:2-3)

THE PERSISTENCE (MATT 15:25-28)

Persist in knowing that Jesus is the only help

- Jesus is our only help because He is the only one who has the words of eternal life (John 6:67-68)
- Jesus is our only help because He is the only one who has the power and guidance we need (Ps 73:24-26)
- Jesus is our only help because He is the only one who can provide salvation (Acts 4:12)
- Jesus is our only help because He is the way, truth and life (John 14:6)
- Jesus is our only help because He is the only mediator between God and us (1 Tim 2:5)

Persist by acknowledging unworthiness

- We are unworthy because we sometimes put others before God (Matt 10:37)
- We are unworthy because Jesus is so much more holy and powerful than we are (Luke 3:16)
- We are unworthy because of our sin (Luke 15:21)
- We are unworthy because God loved us when we were His enemy (Rom 5:8)

Persist by realizing that even the crumbs from Jesus is worth more than possessions and wealth

- Because our life is worthless without Jesus (Acts 20:24)
- Because nothing can be compared to the glory that Jesus can provide (Rom 8:18)
- Because our faith is worth more than any worldly wealth (1 Pet 1:7)
- Because there is greatness in the knowledge of Jesus (Phil 3:8)