

JESUS AND THE CANAANITE WOMAN

WHO DO YOU SAY I AM? THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, PART 6 · MATTHEW 15:21-28 · OCTOBER 31, 2021 · PASTOR RUTH CARVER

Then Jesus said to her, "Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted." And her daughter was healed at that moment. (Matthew 15:28)

The Request

- A Canaanite woman asks Jesus to heal her daughter.
- Jesus is off duty, needing rest.
- Woman is a representative of Israel's enemy; she is "other."

The Delay

- Jesus is silent.
- Jesus educates His disciples.
- Jesus tests the woman.
- The woman demonstrates her faith and perception.

The Answer

- Jesus heals the woman's daughter.
- The woman gets a preview of God's offer of salvation to the Gentiles.
- The disciples become prepared for the Great Commission.

Have Great Faith like the Canaanite Woman!

- Great faith is bold.
- Great faith involves our emotions.
- Great faith is persistent.
- Great faith is humble.
- Great faith involves our minds.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Have there ever been any Bible passages that you have been tempted to explain away or even cancel? What are they?
2. The Canaanite woman "wrestled" with Jesus. The psalmists often wrestled with God. Jacob wrestled with the angel of the Lord (Gen 32:22-32). What other people in the Bible can you think of you wrestled with the God until He blessed them?
3. Read Isaiah 55:3-5 and Isaiah 60:1-5. How do these passages show God's plan for the Gentiles at some point in the future?
4. Read Acts 10, Acts 15, or Galatians 2-3. Explain how these passages show the Jewish Christians' struggles to give full acceptance to Gentile Christians.
5. The Canaanite woman went to great lengths to ask Jesus for a healing, not for herself but for someone else. What do her actions teach us about intercessory prayer, meaning praying for others?
6. Reformer John Calvin calls this story the "prelude" to the post-Easter commissioning. Read Matthew 28:19-20 and explain how this is true.
7. Can you think of hints in the OT that Gentiles would someday be part of God's people? But can you see how the Jews thought that Gentiles would have to become Jews in order to do so?
8. The Canaanite woman showed her emotions to Jesus. Can you think of men in Scripture who also showed their emotions to the Lord? For an example of David doing so, see Psalm 6:6.

DIG DEEPER:

Take one day to reflect on each of the five aspects of the Canaanite woman's "great faith" this next week. Let the Holy Spirit show you how your faith can grow in these areas.

Day 1: Great faith is bold. (Ephesians 3:12, Hebrews 4:16)

Day 2: Great faith involves our emotions. (Psalm 6:6, Luke 7:44-48)

Day 3: Great faith is persistent. (Luke 18:1-8, Hebrews 12:1-3)

Day 4: Great faith is humble. (Isaiah 66:1-2, James 4:10)

Day 5: Great faith involves our minds. (Romans 1:20, 1 Corinthians 14:15, 2 Corinthians 10:3-5)