

The Children's Bread to the Dogs?

Mark 7:24-30

I. Jesus Initiated A Gentile Ministry (24-26)

- Ex. 19:6 - you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation."
- Is. 49:6 - He says, "It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth."

The Flow of Jesus' Ministry

- Passover 29 AD – Passover 30 AD
- 3rd full year of public ministry
- End of the Galilean ministry (about first month)
- Training of the Twelve (about 6 months)
- In and out of Jerusalem for three feasts (about 6 months)



The Flow of Jesus' Ministry

- Before this...
 - Mostly in Capernaum and Galilee (Mark 1:14-7:23).
 - Among crowds.
 - Teaching about the kingdom.
- After this...
 - Mostly in Gentile territory (Mark 7:24-10:52)
 - Among His disciples.
 - Teaching them about the coming cross—that is at this point not very far away.
 - 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34

I. Jesus Initiated A Gentile Ministry (24-26)

- Matthew tells us that when this woman saw Jesus and His disciples, (15:22a) she "began to cry out, saying, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David."
- Matt. 15:22b-23a - my daughter is cruelly demon-possessed." But He did not answer her a word.
- Matt. 15:23b - And His disciples came and implored Him, saying, "Send her away, because she keeps shouting at us."
 - Cf. Matt. 11:12 - "From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and violent men take it by force."
- Matt. 15:24 – But He answered and said, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

I. Jesus Initiated A Gentile Ministry (24-26)

- "The woman"
- "A Gentile" – literally, a Greek.
- "Of the Syro-phoenician race."
- Matthew (15:22) adds that she was Canaanite.

III. Jesus Authenticated Genuine Gentile Faith (29-30)

- Cf. Matt. 15:28 - Then Jesus said to her, "O woman, your faith is great; it shall be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed at once.
- Cf. Ps. 87:4 - "I shall mention Rahab and Babylon among those who know Me; Behold, Philistia and Tyre with Ethiopia: This one was born there."

II. Jesus Reiterated His Primary Mission (27-28)

- How should we understand Jesus' reluctance to help this woman?
- There are two possibilities...
 - 1) He doesn't want to help this woman, but is ultimately persuaded.
 - 2) He knows what He is going to do, but the conversation is intended to draw out...
 - The genuineness of her faith.
 - The point Jesus wanted to make to His disciples and to us.

Three Great Lessons...

- 1) About Jesus' Ultimate Mission.
 - "let the children be satisfied first."
 - 7:1-23 – Jesus declared the laws of uncleanness null and void.
 - Especially the food laws which divided Jew and Gentile even from social interaction...
 - 7:24ff – He moved directly to minister to Gentiles.
 - Cf. Acts 10:28 – [Peter] said to them, "You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a man who is a Jew to associate with a foreigner or to visit him; and yet God has shown me that I should not call any man unholy or unclean."

II. Jesus Reiterated His Primary Mission (27-28)

- In Matt. 15:24 - He answered [her cries for help] and said, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."
- Jesus gives us here a glimpse into his mission—he was sent specifically to the chosen people of God.
 - Acts 3:25-26 - "It is you who are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, 'AND IN YOUR SEED ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH SHALL BE BLESSED.' 26 "For you first, God raised up His Servant and sent Him to bless you by turning every one of you from your wicked ways."
 - Acts 13:44-48; 18:6
 - Rom. 1:16 - For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.
 - Rom. 15:8-9 - For I say that Christ has become a servant to the circumcision on behalf of the truth of God to confirm the promises given to the fathers, 9 and for the Gentiles to glorify God for His mercy; as it is written, "THEREFORE I WILL GIVE PRAISE TO YOU AMONG THE GENTILES, AND I WILL SING TO YOUR NAME."
- Mark 7:27 – "Let the children be satisfied first..."

Three Great Lessons...

- 2) About Jesus
 - His compassion—even for gentiles!
 - His authority – to cast out a demon from a distance by willing it to be so.
 - His willingness to receive even utterly pagan idolaters who will turn to Him in faith.

Three Great Lessons...

- 3) About Saving Faith.
- Matthew 15:28 – Jesus commends her faith.
- The attributes of her faith...
 - A) Persistent
 - Heb. 11:6 - And without faith it is impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and *that* He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.
 - B) Humble
 - C) Completely trusting
- Matt. 11:28-29 - "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS."