

Sunday Morning Message

August 28, 2016

Looking Unto Jesus and His Treatment of a Gentile Dog - (Originally preached on October 16, 2011 - Thankful for the Crumbs)

Text – Matthew 15:21 – 28 (parallel passage – Mark 7:24 – 30)

Congregational Reading – Matthew 15:25 – 28

Our theme for the year is *Looking unto Jesus*

Our theme verses are Hebrews 12:1 – 2

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:1-2)

This year, we will be preaching messages from the 4 gospel accounts in the New Testament and we will be closely examining the life of our Lord Jesus Christ while He walked the earth, learning the principles that He teaches us, specifically looking for ways to apply His life to our own.

Introduction

[Re-read the text slowly, explaining the story.]

First Jesus ignores the woman.

Second - after the disciples try to get Him to send her away, He states that He was sent to the Jews, not the Gentiles.

Third – He calls her a dog.

Yet even after being rejected three times by the Lord, she persisted.

Notice her great statement in v 27.

Notice Jesus' comment about the woman's faith in v 28.

Turn to Matthew 8:5 – 13 – another account of Jesus healing a Gentile, and commenting about his level of faith.

In both of the accounts that we have read this morning, the Lord made comments about the faith of these Gentiles. Jesus said that the Centurion had greater faith than any He had seen in Israel.

George Mueller said, "Faith does not operate in the realm of the possible. There is no glory for God in that which is humanly possible. Faith begins where man's power ends."

Too many of us have faith only in that which is possible through human efforts, but true faith will have to rely upon the omnipotence of God.

What was it about the faith of these Gentiles that impressed the Lord?

Transition

This morning we are going to quickly examine three characteristics of this Syro-Phoenecian woman, and see how these three characteristics will also be part of any Christian today that exhibits "great faith".

I She Recognized Her Unworthiness

She was very humble.

"But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble." - (James 4:6)

"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall. Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud." - (Proverbs 16:18-19)

Satan had a problem with pride – *"I will be like the most high."*

Eve had a problem with pride – Satan caused her to yield by saying, *"ye will be as gods, knowing good and evil"*.

Humility is a key to a right relationship with God.

Turn to 2 Kings 5:9 – 14 – Naaman was also a Gentile that needed healing, but he had a problem with pride and needed to be humbled before he could be healed.

She (the Syro-Phoenecian woman) was little in her own eyes.

"And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the LORD anointed thee king over Israel?" - (1 Samuel 15:17)

Note – a man can't get saved until He realizes his unworthiness.

II She Revered the Lord

The smaller we get – the bigger God gets.

She had a big God.

She knew that this healing was nothing for the Lord to do. This was a mere crumb off of His table. I am thankful for the crumbs that have fallen off of his table for me also. Salvation, a wife and family, a Ministry, marvelous provision, protection, etc.

How big is your God?

What do you need God to do in your life today? What problem do you have that you need a “Big God” to solve for you.

Financial trouble?

Family problems?

Physical needs?

Our church needs a classroom addition that can be used for Sunday School and for the Christian School. We need a big God.

In order to have a big God, we have got to get small.

"O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together." - (Psalm 34:3)

"And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord," - (Luke 1:46)

I want to see God do something so big here at Jersey Shore Baptist Church, that the people in this community could come to only one conclusion – that God did it.

It appears that these Gentiles saw something bigger in Jesus than the Jews did. To this Canaanite woman, Jesus was God – a Big God!

III She Repeated Her Request – she persisted – she didn’t give up.

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." - (Matthew 7:7-8)

Illustrate – man needing three loaves from Luke 11:5 – 8 - “because of his importunity”

Widow from Luke 18 with the unjust judge - “avenge me of my adversary”

Even the apostle Paul “besought the Lord thrice” to remove his thorn, until God told him to stop asking.

Conclusion

This Gentile woman got her prayer answered.

The Bible has a lot more to say about prayer than we talked about here:

The request has to be in the will of God.

The person requesting must “abide” in Christ.

The person requesting must not regard iniquity in his heart.

But from the passage that we have looked at today, we can see that in order to get God to do big things in our life:

- 1 We have to get small.
- 2 We have to see Him Big.
- 3 We have to be persistent.

Illustration – Hudson Taylor - As a young man preparing to go to China, Hudson Taylor determined to learn to live by faith alone while he was still in England. His resolve was "to learn before leaving England to move man through God by prayer alone." He worked for a doctor and was paid quarterly. When the time drew near to receive his salary, Taylor was disturbed that his employer said nothing about it. Taylor had only one half-crown piece, but he determined not to break his resolution and ask for his salary. While visiting a needy home on the Lord's Day, Taylor felt led of God to give his last coin to the needy family. The next day he received an anonymous gift through the mail, four times what he had given to the poor! The following Saturday, the doctor finished up his work and said, "Taylor, is not your salary due again?" Taylor told him that it was and became disappointed when he learned that the doctor had forgotten about the salary due and sent all his funds to the bank! He prayed about the matter (for he had bills of his own to pay) and left it with the Lord. That evening, the doctor visited him and said that one of his richest patients had come over after hours to pay his bill! He gave the money to Taylor, who rejoiced. He had learned he could trust God and therefore go to China as a missionary.

When Hudson Taylor went to China, he made the voyage on a sailing vessel. As it neared the channel between the southern Malay Peninsula and the island of Sumatra, the missionary heard an urgent knock on his stateroom door. He opened it, and there stood the captain of the ship. "Mr. Taylor," he said, "we have no wind. We are drifting toward an island where the people are heathen, and I fear they are cannibals." "What can I do?" asked Taylor. "I understand that you believe in God. I want you to pray for wind." "All right, Captain, I will, but you must set the sail." "Why that's ridiculous! There's not even the slightest breeze. Besides, the sailors will think I'm crazy." But finally, because of Taylor's insistence, he agreed. Forty-five minutes later he returned and found the missionary still on his knees. "You can stop praying now," said the captain. "We've got more wind than we know what to do with!" (sermonillustrations.com)