

Mark 7:24-30 – Sharing the Children’s Bread with Wild Dogs

TSK, GreekLexicon, Rienecker, Handfuls, Henry, Geneva, Robertson, Clarke, JFB, Poole, Barnes, Trapp, Maclaren, Calvin, FFG, NIV, Wallace

Brothers and Sisters in the Lord: Is Christianity a Jewish religion? No. **The Jews were a part of Christianity.** Christianity was in existence long before the Jews became a people. God simply started with the Jews to redeem the ones he had chosen. And to prove the point even stronger, **God chose an old man and a barren woman (non-Jews) to start the Jewish nation and continue the redemption process.**

This meant that the Jews could not say that they contributed anything to man’s salvation or the good of the world. Further, **God chose a perfect place, a center, so the Gospel could easily spread** to the inhabitable places: North into northern Europe, East into Asia, West into Europe, and South in Africa. Further, **God saved foreigners alongside of the Jews:** Many foreigners left Egypt for Canaan with Israel, then there were converts like Jethro, Rahab, Ruth, the Ninevites, and Nebuchadnezzar.

Today you will see how Jesus started to open the doors more fully to the Gentiles so they could get the message of salvation – a salvation that he promised to the world.

Our headings are:

Jesus traveled to foreign lands

Jesus tested a foreign woman’s faith

Jesus taught about a foreign woman’s faith

Our goals are: **Seeing your gracious inclusion, as Gentiles, into the kingdom of Jesus through his suffering and death on the cross, you will faithfully serve your Redeemer with fervor.**

Jesus traveled in foreign lands

24 From there He arose and went to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And He entered a house and wanted no one to know it, but He could not be hidden.

1. After rebuking the Pharisees for abusing the law and misleading their fellow Jews, Jesus traveled to the region of Tyre and Sidon.

What do we know about Tyre and Sidon? Tyre was at the end of Israel, a part of the land given to the tribe of Asher, but Asher never really conquered it. Sidon was just North of Tyre in Syrian territory. Tyre and Sidon were seaport cities with much commerce.

2. Why did Jesus travel to Gentile lands?

Going to the Gentiles might have seemed as a contradiction to what Jesus said at other times.

Matthew 7:6 "Do not give what is holy to the dogs; **nor cast your pearls before swine**, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.

Matthew 10:5 These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: "**Do not go into the way of the Gentiles**, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans.

"But go rather to the **lost sheep of the house of Israel**."

3. There are two reasons Jesus went to Gentile lands.

a. Jesus went to Gentile lands to symbolically set the stage for the spread of the Gospel as he had promised.

Genesis 22:18 "**In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed**, because you have obeyed My voice."

Psalms 22:27 **All the ends of the world Shall remember and turn to the LORD**, And all the families of the nations Shall worship before You.

Isaiah 54:1 "Sing, O barren, You who have not borne! Break forth into singing, and cry aloud, You who have not labored with child! **For more are the children of the desolate Than the children of the married woman**," says the LORD. 2

"Enlarge the place of your tent, And let them stretch out the curtains of your dwellings; Do not spare; Lengthen your cords, And strengthen your stakes. 3 For you shall expand to the right and to the left, And your descendants will inherit the

nations, And make the desolate cities inhabited.

So when the Lord told his disciples not to go to the Gentiles, he wasn't against getting the message to the Gentiles, he simply wanted them to get better prepared for that work.

b. Jesus went to Gentile lands as he was quite frustrated with the rejection and opposition he received from the Jews.

(Israel's rejection was the Gentile's reception.)

Romans 11:17 And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree,

4. Lessons:

a. The Lord is patient, but his patience with those who keep rejecting him will not last forever. The time will come when he will stop striving to make you surrender. So if you have been fighting him, stop. Surrender.

b. God is not fooled by those who pretend to be Christians.

c. Don't ignore those who look like they will not believe. Do not ignore those who might be from "hard" religions. Everyone needs the Gospel. Be willing to go to anyone's house.

Jesus tested a foreign woman's faith

25 For a woman whose young daughter had an unclean spirit heard about Him, and she came and fell at His feet. 26 The woman was a Greek, a Syro-Phoenician by birth, and she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter.

1. While Jesus was in a foreigner's home, a woman came and asked him to heal her young daughter of an unclean (evil) spirit.

2. What do we know about this woman?

She was a Syro-Phoenician. She spoke Syrian. She was of Phoenician race.

She was a woman of faith. This means she had heard the Gospel. Maybe she did not have all the details straight in her life, but she evidenced faith.

She asked, not demanded, the Lord to cast out the demon from her daughter. She was much wiser than many who have the Bible today who claim they have right to be healed of their diseases by virtue of their faith.

She showed she believed by bowing down before the Lord.

Luke 6:17 And He came down with them and stood on a level place with a crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and be healed of their diseases...

And she did directly testify to this fact. She knew that Jesus was the Messiah!

Matthew 15:22 And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, "Have mercy on me, **O Lord, Son of David!** My daughter is severely demon-possessed."

She was not the only woman from this territory heard the message and believed. Jesus spoke of another woman who lived there 800 years before! She too received God's blessing.

Luke 4:24 Then He said, "Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country. 25 "But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a great famine throughout all the land; 26 "but to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, in the region of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow.

27 But Jesus said to her, "**Let the children be filled first**, for it is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs."

3. In order to further test this Gentile woman's faith, Jesus pushed her buttons a little harder.

a. First, Jesus did not answer her, seemingly ignored her.

Matthew 15:23 But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, "Send her away, for she cries out after us."

This is no doubt how you might feel sometime...as if God were ignoring you his bride.

Song of Solomon 5:6 I opened for my beloved, But my beloved had turned away and was gone. My heart leaped up when he spoke. I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer.

But don't think for a moment the Lord was ignoring. He was always speaking to her spirit even while he was silent. He was strengthening her faith to persist in prayer.

b. Second, Jesus told her that she was a like a dog and her child was like a dog....and dogs should not get good things that belonged to the children of the house. Israel was his firstborn – his oldest son- and he loved Israel.

Exodus 4:22 "Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD: "Israel is My son, My firstborn."

In that culture a dog was a wild animal and only managed to survive by scraps. Dogs were seen as vile or profane.

c. Third, Jesus told her (Matthew's account), that he did not come to bring the message of hope to the Gentiles.

Matthew 15:24 But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

He didn't come to do that, but that was a job for which he was preparing his disciples.

28 And she answered and said to Him, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs under the table eat from the children's crumbs."

4. How would she respond to her buttons being pushed?

a. She showed humility. She told the Lord that her child was a dog (so she was one too), and she was willing to even get the scraps from him for her daughter. Was this minimizing God's grace? No. She was indeed magnifying God's grace, so much so that **even the trinkets of grace were precious**. She knew that even the least thing from Jesus was greater than anything she had! She wanted a crumb of power and grace! One commentator characterized as saying in effect: "*Lord, I confess the Jews are children; I am a dog, a poor heathen, no proper member of the household of God; and it is truth that it seems unreasonable that I, being a dog, should be served before all the children are filled. Lord, I do not beg such a full manifestation of thy power and goodness for the Gentiles. I beg but a crumb of mercy for myself and poor child...*"

b. She was persistent. She did not stop asking for favor even after she might have felt insulted. Even when Jesus refused to speak to her, she persisted. Even when the disciples tried to send her away she persisted (Matthew 15).

5. Lessons:

a. Your doors must always be open for those who want to hear the message of Jesus. You should know that message, even in a simple form so an enquirer can understand it.

b. If you want to be raised up and receive God's blessings, you have to learn to go down on your knees and plead for mercy. Yes, humility is the cause of being raised up.

c. Pray for your children...pray that Satan would not grab hold of their hearts... This is the greatest blessing you can ask for your children. Notice the woman did not plead for a good career choice for her child. She did not pray for wealth and a comfortable life. It would have been okay to pray for those things, but he prayed for the most important thing: freedom from evil.

d. The Jews had priority with the Gospel, not the monopoly. So share it with others. (Maclaren: Once there is first, there is a second!) The Jews got the Gospel first, but they weren't the last.

Ephesians 2:12 that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no

hope and without God in the world. 13 **But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.**

Jesus taught about a foreign woman's faith

29 Then He said to her, "For this saying go your way; the demon has gone out of your daughter."

1. Because the woman showed her faith (Jesus knew she had faith long before) Jesus cast out the demon that hounded the girl.

Jesus stated that the woman's faith was great (Matthew). The miracle did not create faith.

30 And when she had come to her house, she found the demon gone out, and her daughter lying on the bed.

2. When the lady returned home she saw her daughter lying on the bed, free of the demon.

This was the crumb from the table: The demon was permanently gone from the child. This strengthened her faith even more.

3. Lessons:

a. Don't wait until you see your children's sins manifested before you pray. Pray for them now – like Job prayed for his children. Pray for Juke, Theodore, and Aaron, and young Ricardo or Su. Who else could you go to for help with your children than the only one who could change their hearts and drive out their wickedness?

b. Examine your hearts and see how much you trust Jesus and how great is your faith. Is your faith worth noting? Do your children see it? Can Jesus say: I have never seen such faith in Scarborough as I see in you?

c. For your faith to be strong, it has to be fed – fed the Word of God and mixed with the Spirit.

Conclusion:

Jesus went to a foreign land and firmly established the promised spread of the Gospel to the Gentiles. There he showed to the world a Gentile woman who had faith in him and he commended her to the world.

Brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. The Gospel was not just for the Jews, but for the Gentiles also. Take it. Eat it up. Taste and see that the Lord is good.

2. Do not become arrogant that you do have the Gospel. Remember Romans 11:17: "And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree, 18 do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you. 19 You will say then, "Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in." 20 Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear. 21 **For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either.**" So God is not beholden to you; you are to him!

3. Share this faith with others. Invite others to come and share it. Serve the Lord in

spirit and in truth.

Finally: Faith in Christ and his work saved the woman. If you don't have Christ you will be severed and sent to hell. Ask God for faith!