

Weaving the Word

Housebroken

January 5, 2020

Welcome to where we're learning to love Jesus just a little more!



How do you get Jesus' attention?

Begging? Whining? Hounding?



Well, are you ready to fall in love with Jesus *even more*? First though, I think we'll have to *like* Him a *little less ... for just a little bit*.

We last left Jesus teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum being rejected as the Bread of Life.

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. For a woman whose young daughter had an unclean spirit heard about Him, and she came [to the entrance of His hide out] and *cried out* to Him, saying, "Have *mercy* on me, O Lord, [She calls Him "Kyrios"; literally: *Master/Lord*] Son of David! [She even uses His prophetic title as Messiah] My daughter is severely demon-possessed." But He *answered* her not a word. [He's in hiding; but, she's in pursuit] And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, "Send her away, for she cries out after us." [Likely as they're going out and coming in. So, Jesus goes to her in the entryway] But He *answered* and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Then she came and fell at His feet and *worshipped* Him, the woman was a Greek, [i.e. *Gentile*] a Syro-Phoenician by birth, [Why is this important? To show that she's two kinds of Gentile: **non-Jew by birth and non-Jew by faith**] and she *kept asking* Him to cast the demon out of her daughter saying, "Lord, [Kyrios/Master/Lord] help me!" But He *answered* and said to her, "Let the [Jewish] children be filled first, for it is not good to take the [Jewish] children's bread and throw it to the little dogs." ["And you are a *little dog*." But, how would healing *her daughter* take something away from *them*? Does He only have so many miracles in Him?! It's not like He's in the middle of ministering to the Jews; He's hiding out in a house! And they just rejected Him as the Bread of Life. *Hmm*] And she *answered* and said to Him, "Yes, Lord, [Kyrios/Master/Lord]" yet even the *little dogs under the table* eat from the [Jewish] children's crumbs which fall from their masters' [Kyrios/Master/Lord's] table." Then Jesus *answered* and said to her, "O woman, great is your faith! For *this saying* [NIV: *such a reply*] go your way; let it be to you *as you desire*. The demon has gone out of your daughter." And when she had come to her house, she found the demon gone out, and her daughter lying on the bed. And her daughter was healed from that very hour. – Mt 15:21-28; Mk 7:24-30; NKJ



She couldn't have chosen better words: "Lord, Son of David", yet, Jesus "answered her not a word." Why? **Was it that He *wouldn't* or *couldn't*?** First, let's keep in mind: **a mustard seed of faith to Jesus, is great faith for us.** He is the Bread of Life; and yet, **all we need to begin with is a crumb.**



Two hardened criminals, crucified with Jesus, insult Him, until one softens, surrenders, and finally, humbly turns to Him and says, “Remember me.” To which Jesus replies, “Absolutely. See you in paradise!” (Mt 27:38, 44; Lk 23:42)

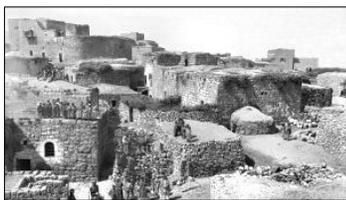


That tiny, weak, plea took tremendous faith; if not, the other would’ve done the same. What did they have to lose? Their pride. And *that’s* huge. And, Jesus didn’t speak to either one until one of them *chose* to plant a mustard seed of faith, and turn to Him.

Now, remember the *dad* who begged Jesus?

A man [with a demon-possessed son] approached Jesus and knelt before him. “Lord, I beg you. Have mercy on my son,” he said. [But, begging will get you nowhere with God. In fact, begging expresses belief that He *doesn’t* desire to show mercy. And Jesus warned His disciples: “When you pray, do not heap up empty phrases (NKJ: vain repetition) as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.” (Mt 6:7-8 ESV) Do you think He didn’t know He was gonna heal that woman’s little girl *all along*?] “O unbelieving generation,” Jesus replied ... [But, the begging father makes it worse] “If you can do anything, take pity on us and help us.” “If you can?” said Jesus. [Look; either say, “If you will” or “I know You can”, but “If you can” ain’t nothin’ but a hound dog!] “Everything is possible for him who believes.” [Not that He will, which presumes to know God’s plan for a given moment. But that He can, which accepts His plan while trusting His will, His love, and His power] Immediately the boy’s father exclaimed, “I do believe; [Believe what? Not much. But enough. He believes Jesus can help him believe what he can’t] help me overcome my unbelief!” ... [And that great big tiny little seed is all it took! And later] [the disciples] asked, “Why couldn’t we drive it out?” He replied, “Because you have so little faith. [How little?] I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed ... Nothing will be impossible for you.” – Mt 17:15-20; Mk 9:19-24; Lk 9:38 NIV

[And yet, back home in Nazareth] He did not do many miracles there because of their lack of faith. And he was amazed at their lack of faith. [Barely a measly mustard seed among them all!] – Mt 13:58; Mk 6:6 NIV



Contrast the synagogue ruler who throws himself at Jesus, knowing he’s throwing away his reputation, colleagues, and career.



[Jairus] fell at his feet and pleaded earnestly with him, “My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live.” So Jesus went with him. [Because Jairus had just enough belief; but then] ... [some men came] “Your daughter is dead,” they said. “Why bother the teacher anymore?” Ignoring what they said, Jesus told the synagogue ruler, “Don’t be afraid; just believe.” [Believe what? “That you can trust Me. And that it’s always okay to bother Me for help.”] – Mark 5:22-24, 35-36 NIV



Back in Tyre, Jesus lets this woman tire herself out before saying, “Sorry puppy, but I’m only here for the Jews,” which, keep in mind, included *believing Gentiles*. Remember the Roman Centurion in Capernaum? He was a Gentile who loved the Jewish nation and built the synagogue that Jesus taught in. (Lk 7:5) He pleaded with Jesus to ...



“Only say the word, and my servant will be healed.” [Psalm 107:20 says, “He sent out His word and healed them”] ... [And, Jesus said] “With no one in Israel have I found such faith. ... many will come ... and recline at table with Abraham ... while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the *outer darkness*.” – Matthew 8:8-12 ESV



So, where’s Abraham’s table? Well, in the parable of The Rich Man and Lazarus, a beggar who, along with the dogs, longed to eat what fell from the *rich man’s* table, is taken there when he dies.



[Whereas, in the hereafter, the rich man howls] “Father Abraham, have pity on me ... I am in agony in this fire.” But Abraham replied, “**Son**, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things ... but now he is comforted” – Luke 16:24-25 NIV

Top Photo: Ancient Tyre

[Likewise, Jesus said] It will be more bearable for *Tyre and Sidon* at the judgment than for you. [The Jewish cities where Jesus “fed the children”] – Luke 10:14 NIV

[Because] If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in *Tyre and Sidon*, they would have repented long ago, – Luke 10:13 NIV

Throughout the OT, **unbelievers and hypocrites are referred to as dogs**, wolves, foxes, heel-lifters, and peers-against-the-wall; because, **they mark their own territory and stay outside**.

Outside are the dogs, [not *dog-dogs*, but] those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood. – Revelation 22:15 NIV



[That’s why Jesus said] Do not give *dogs* what is sacred; – Matthew 7:6 NIV

The word for *tiny dog* or *puppy* is used only one time. **This woman is just a little dog**. Still, the devil’s out to get Jesus *and His little dog too!*



[Dogs were always kept outside. And] To those on the outside everything is said in parables so that, they may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding; otherwise [if they’d choose to perceive and understand] they might turn and be forgiven! – Mark 4:11-12 NIV

Parables aren’t designed to keep little dogs out of the truth; but **to coax ‘em to enter in, and dig for it, find it, and chew on it**. It sure works on *this gal!* She gets in and gets *Him*. She’s outside begging in vain repetition for a wish to be granted by a guy with some kind of god-magic.

And, Jesus would be guilty of *misleading* if He allowed her to believe He can be moved by right words without a right heart. She's not professing or declaring heartfelt devotion. She's just barking in hollow, pointless, repetition; because, she "[heard about him](#)". Not just *where* He is, but *who*, and *how* to approach Him. So, He's got'a find a way to help her form a little faith.

To get His attention, she's crying out in a way *she thinks He wants to hear*; because, *we all do that!* Until we're house broken. She's using the *right* words, but they're *empty* words. So, she's outside yapping away. And Jesus lets her caterwaul until *she's* dog tired, and *His disciples* are disturbed. "Send her away already." "She keeps crying out after us!" "Oh really, I hadn't noticed."

Our problem is, we have their words without their tone. And, **so much is revealed about us by the tone we apply to Jesus.** Not just to His words in His Word, but to *us*, in our life. I picture her tone slowly changing from empty zealotness to a hoarseness that's *almost heartfelt*. Just needs a little shove. Know how I know? *I know Him!* And He only waits when He *has to*.

Suddenly, He opens the door and speaks in a manner that surprises her into dropping all pretense, and just speaking from her heart. "Look, I *know* I have *no right*; but, you called me a *puppy*. And **we both know puppies are brought inside 'cause they can't care for themselves.** So, You got a box for me under Your table?" **So, was it that He *wouldn't* or *couldn't*? Neither. He was *in process!*** Because *she* wasn't far from the kingdom.

O woman, [you're not a puppy. You're inside, and sitting at My table, and I'm here to serve. So guess what: your little girl is healed. And guess why] **great is your faith!** [For down here. What an adorable little mustard seed!] **For this saying** [which was very clever, by the way] **go your way; let it be to you as you desire.** [Because you, My dear, desired a crumb of the Bread of Life, which is just enough, for now]

For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly ... a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. – Romans 2:28-29 ESV

Jesus opens the door and says, "Sorry, I only came for the Jews." And she says what she says; and He says, "Well look at you, you're a Jew! I came for you!" And she's got'a be like, "What just happened?" Imagine her trying to explain her great faith to friends:

"I tried to get His attention for *hours*. Praising Him. Begging Him. Crying and wailing. He finally opens the door and says He's not allowed to waste His kids' bread on *puppies*. That is *not* how *anyone* described Him when you all told about Him! He caught me so off guard – and *He knew it* – and something just clicked between us. I wasn't offended. I didn't get aggressive. I mean, I must'a *looked like something* the dogs drug in! I don't even know exactly what I said. I just talked how I'm talking with you. *From the heart*. I said, "I get it. You're the Lord. I'm a little dog. So, can You slip me something under the table?" And He laughs – like, *really laughs* – and tells me my *joke* just healed my daughter! And that He appreciated my *great faith*. And *He meant that*.

I think 'cause I stopped being phony. Apparently, *that's* how you get His attention."

Now, tell the truth, don't you love Jesus just a little more?