

Recognized By A Canaanite Woman **Matthew 15:21-28**

Introduction

In this scripture a Canaanite woman shows us the power of persistence.

The Lady's Request (vv.21-23)

Jesus had been facing mounting persecution by the Pharisees and Sadducees while ministering in Galilee. He decided to leave and go to Sidon (located in Phoenicia). These cities were Gentile and therefore considered unclean by the Jews. However, the gentiles in Sidon had heard about Jesus.

A Canaanite woman came to Jesus to beg Him for a miracle. Her daughter was possessed by a demon and nothing had been able to free her. The disciples told Jesus to send her away because she was annoying them with her persistent crying out

The Lord's Rejection (vv. 24-26)

When Jesus heard the woman's request He rejected her. He told her that he was not sent for anyone but the lost sheep of Israel His response was not meant to exclude the woman but to help her realize her place and approach Jesus as one who does not deserve His grace.

Despite the rejection the woman did not give up. She came and knelt before Jesus crying out for Him to help her. Because she humbled herself before Jesus, He hears her cry. But before he grants her request Jesus makes a statement designed to test her faith – He tells her that it is not right to take the children's (Israel) bread (blessings) and toss it to the puppies (Gentiles). If we want to be heard by Jesus, we need to humble ourselves before Him with complete faith in His ability to change our situation.

The Lady's Response (vv. 27-28)

The woman responded that even dogs eat crumbs that fall from their master's plate. She was willing to take any portion she could get. The Canaanite woman acknowledged and accepted her place "under the table" showing her submission to Jesus. When she showed her willingness to submit to Jesus, she proved herself fit to receive a blessing from Him.

Life Application

There are times in the life of every believer when it seems that God is not listening. We have presented our request and still nothing has changed. When it seems like God isn't listening, is when our faith has to work its hardest. Sometimes God delays His response in order to give our faith a workout. God promised that if we humble ourselves and present our request before Him that He would answer us. So, be humble, be persistent and don't worry because God will take care of you.

....The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. . - James 5:16b

Questions for Discussion and Meditation

*What role does faith have in overcoming the evils of ethnic or racial prejudice?
Is there prejudice in the body of Christ?*

Preview of Next Week's Lesson

In Matthew 16 Jesus begins preparations for the end of His ministry