

2-26-2025 – Jesus Said What?? (part 2)

Mid-week encouragement!

Jesus' parables: confusing; challenging. But sometimes, direct – shocking!

Said what?? What is our idea of Jesus? **Gentle, kind, patient, loving.**

- “When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.” **Mt. 9:36**

Mark 7 NIV – ²⁴ Jesus left that place and went to the vicinity of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know it; yet he could not keep his presence secret. ²⁵ In fact, as soon as she heard about him, a woman whose little daughter was possessed by an impure spirit came and fell at his feet. ²⁶ The woman was a Greek, born in Syrian Phoenicia. She begged Jesus to drive the demon out of her daughter. ²⁷ “First let the children eat all they want,” he told her, “for it is not right to take the children’s bread and toss it to the dogs.”

²⁸ “Lord,” she replied, “even the dogs under the table eat the children’s crumbs.”

²⁹ Then he told her, “For such a reply, you may go; the demon has left your daughter.”

³⁰ She went home and found her child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

Shocking. Jesus doesn’t want to heal? Calls her a dog? **Contrary/know.**

- Read **3 theories**: 1) Jesus replied - in Greek, **Kunarton** - a pet puppy.
 - o Written in Greek / for a Gentile audience. But not much better.
- 2) Jesus was quoting a popular proverb of the day; not so harsh.
 - o Still, she’s a woman seeking Jesus’ help; His reply says she’s **inferior**.

Does Jesus hesitate b/c she **isn’t Jewish**?

- He already healed the **Centurion’s** servant (Roman soldier, not Jewish). He didn’t hesitate. So that can’t be it. What’s going on?

Context: Jesus just had an incident w/ Pharisees of over “**unclean**”

Some disciples did not perform Jewish hand-washing ritual.

- “It’s not what goes into the body that defiles you; it’s what comes from the heart.” **Mark 7:15** **Jesus goes directly to Tyre**
- Jesus **deliberately** goes to **Tyre**... He again **breaks w/Jewish law/trad.**
 - o **Tyre** is present day Lebanon. Israel is to S. Syria is N & E.
 - o **Not a Jewish city**; still not. Primarily Muslim & Christian.

With that in mind, & b/c it’s **confusing**, . . . **look to more scripture.**

Matt. 15 - ²¹ Then Jesus left Galilee and went north to the region of Tyre and Sidon. ²² A Gentile ^[Caananite] woman who lived there came to him, pleading, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! For my daughter is possessed by a demon that torments her severely."
²³ But Jesus gave her no reply, not even a word. Then his disciples urged him to send her away. "Tell her to go away," they said. "She is bothering us with all her begging."
²⁴ Then Jesus said to the woman, "I was sent only to help God's lost sheep—the people of Israel." ²⁵ **But she came and worshiped him**, pleading again, "Lord, help me!"
²⁶ Jesus responded, "It isn't right to take food from the children and throw it to the dogs."
²⁷ She replied, "That's true, Lord, but even dogs are allowed to eat the scraps that fall beneath their masters' table."
²⁸ **"Dear woman,"** Jesus said to her, "your faith is great. Your request is granted." And her daughter was instantly healed.

3rd theory - It's a testing of faith. 3x. But whose?

In Matt's account, Jesus is first **silent** to the woman... Why? He's giving the **12** an **opportunity** to handle . . . to heal.

- They say "she's bothering us." **She's been talking to them, too.** No luck.

My thoughts: Jesus has **already** been working to **teach the disciples**. Prepare...

- He sent them out to heal (Mt. 10). -- He fed 5,000. That was **for them!**
- He's taught them about **"unclean"** – aren't defiled by food.

Now here, they do nothing for her. Saw her as a **Gentile**. . . **bothering** them. After His silence, He says - was sent to Israelites - then can't throw food/dogs.

Why? B/c that's been the **mindset** of the **Jews**.

- A **Gentile** is non-Jewish. Viewed as **unclean** b/c didn't follow Jewish law; called **dogs** b/c they were "pagans who didn't believe in God." **Inferior.**

But this woman calls Him "Lord." She believes in Him.

1st Century episode of **"What Would You Do?"**

- **Jesus is concerned about faith – hers – but really the 12.**
- The disciples can't forget her ancestry . . . Jesus can.
 - His **first mission** – to the **Jews**; God's **chosen people** thru Abraham.
 - **Isaiah 49:6** - "It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth."
 - **But the coming mission of the 12** – Go into ALL the WORLD.
 - **Paul** echoes it in **Acts 13:47** – be "a light to the Gentiles"

- Jesus – as prophesied - is a light for all the world; His **healing of this** Gentile woman's child shows our **future matters** more than our **past**.
 - **"Dear woman ... your faith is great."** - To Jesus, she is "dear."
 - To our Savior, we are **dear**. Beloved. **Precious** in His sight.
 - To our Savior, **faith** matters more than our family background.
 - To our Savior, **persistent faith** is important.

This moment is **Jesus living out** the Parable of the Persistent Widow:

- **Luke 18** - One day Jesus told his disciples a story to show that they should always pray and never give up. ² "There was a judge in a certain city," he said, "who neither feared God nor cared about people. ³ A widow of that city came to him repeatedly, saying, 'Give me justice in this dispute with my enemy.' ⁴ The judge ignored her for a while, but finally he said to himself, 'I don't fear God or care about people, ⁵ but this woman is driving me crazy. I'm going to see that she gets justice, because she is wearing me out with her constant requests!'"
 - ⁶ Then the Lord said, "Learn a lesson from this unjust judge. ⁷ Even he rendered a just decision in the end. So don't you think God will surely give justice to his chosen people who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? ⁸ I tell you, he will grant justice to them quickly! But when the Son of Man returns, how many will he find on the earth who have faith?"
- The **judge**, like **Jesus**, was at first silent – **ignored** the woman.
 - **Persistence** is important – **don't give up!** The woman didn't give up!
- After telling the story – **Jesus questions: will He find people of faith?**
 - This Gentile woman had faith. She believed. She persisted.
 - Jesus commended her faith as great... b/c it was, healing happened!

Matt. 11 - ²⁰ Then Jesus began to denounce the towns in which most of his miracles had been performed, because they did not repent. ²¹ "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. ²² But I tell you, it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you."

- Faith matters to Jesus. . . backgrounds don't. Miracles are for belief.

According to **Mark**, **after this event**, Jesus leaves Tyre, heals a deaf man in Sidon before going back to the Sea of Galilee... feeds 4,000.

According to **Matthew**, Jesus left Tyre, returned to Sea of Galilee. Fed 4000

- Jesus went there for 1 purpose – to open the minds of the 12.
 - All people have a place at the table. The cross was for all/believe.