



MATTHEW

The Savior-King and His Kingdom

The King hears you!

Matthew 15:21-28

Message #42 of 80 – S1073

Sermon given on November 26, 2023



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

The King hears you!

Matthew 15:21-28

Opening Comments

- Open your Bibles to **Matthew 15**
- Today, we continue a series through the gospel of Matthew – **The Savior-King and His Kingdom**
- Let's open this time in our service with a word of prayer. - **Pray**

Teaching

- **The King hears you!**
- Sometimes the Bible is a little stingy with details, at least to my liking.
- This is true in the account that we have before us this morning.
- **Matthew 15:21**
- Tyre and Sidon are on the coast of modern-day Lebanon.
- We are not told why Jesus went to Tyre and Sidon.
- This is Gentile territory.
- And as far as the Scriptures tell us, He has this encounter with a foreign woman and then He returns to Israel.
- There are many unanswered questions.
- Did He go there just to have this encounter with this woman?
- If so, who is she? Why was she important to Jesus' mission?
- We don't get answers to any of those questions, so we are left to take the interaction at face value.
- **Matthew 15:22-23a**
- 'woman of Canaan' = a pagan Gentile woman.
- From a Jewish perspective, there was every reason in the world to reject her but Jesus doesn't usually act like other Jews.
- Jesus seems to ignore her pleas for help.
- This is a very curious response from Jesus.
- Jesus appears to show her no compassion here.
- The disciples suggest.
- **Matthew 15:23b-24**

- Based on Jesus' response in verse 24, the disciples are asking Jesus to give her what she wants and then send her away.
 - They do not seem to express and compassion for her.
 - It is sad but true that many churches and Christians are not good witnesses for Christ.
 - If you are an unbeliever, don't judge Christ by Christians.
 - Jesus is wonderful, kind, gracious, generous, loving, and merciful.
 - He will never let you down.
 - 'I was not sent...' - Jesus was the Jewish Messiah.
 - This desperate woman is not going to give up that easily.
 - **Matthew 15:25**
 - The word 'worshipped' here means she bowed down before Jesus.
 - It not certain what she believed about Jesus more than she believes He had the power to deliver her daughter from bondage to the demon.
 - We see in this woman a lesson in perseverance in prayer.
 - Even after it seemed that the Lord was ignoring her, she pressed on in prayer.
 - Jesus finally responds to her.
 - **Matthew 15:26**
 - 'dogs' was an ethnic slur Jews would use to describe Gentiles.
 - Jesus' statement was meant to challenge her faith.
 - As a Gentile, she had no right to the Jewish Messiah.
 - At least that is what the Jewish religious leaders would say.
 - Jesus' response to this prayer could have been interpreted as rejection, but she pressed on.
 - **Matthew 15:27**
 - This is a crucial aspect of faith.
 - She understands that she doesn't deserve Jesus' help.
 - She comes to Jesus in humility. She needs Jesus' help.
 - She believes He can help her.
 - This woman is modeling what Jesus said in (**Matthew 7:7-8**).
- Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ⁸ For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.**
- Ask, seek, and knock and keep on...

- Her persistence pays off.
- **Matthew 15:28**
- This woman was desperate. Her precious daughter was demon-possessed.
- It is impossible for us to imagine what that might be like.
- We must remind ourselves why this woman came to Jesus.
- She was desperate to have her daughter delivered from the demon.
- If her daughter was not demon-possessed, would she have come to Jesus? Not a chance.
- She would have gone on living her life and never had an encounter with God-in-the-flesh (Psalm 119:67, 71).

Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep Your word... ⁷¹ It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I may learn Your statutes.

- Difficult circumstances can be used by God to force us to at least consider coming to God.
- Only God can take the horrible circumstances and experiences of life and make them into something beautiful and immortal.
- Only God can deliver us from every kind of evil or distress.
- One of the most profound types of evidence of our faith is patient persevering during difficult things.
- In fact, James tells us that we should rejoice because of what those difficult things produce in us (**James 1:2-4**).

My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. ⁴ But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

- If we are at all sensitive to the working of the Holy Spirit in our lives then we will benefit from the fruit He produces through trials, tribulations, testing, and temptations (**Romans 8:28**).

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose.

- Trials make us think about God and seek to understand Him and His ways better.
- Trials can wean us from the world and its passions and temptations.
- Trials can send us to the Bible.
- Trials tend to drive us to our knees in prayer.

- Good health is a blessing, but sickness is better if it draws drives us to God.
- Prosperity is a great mercy; but adversity is better if it draws us nearer to Christ.
- Good relationships with others are a great joy; but broken relationships are better if that is what it takes to get us to yield our will to the Holy Spirit.
- God created us to walk in an intimate communion of fellowship with Him.
- If we do, we experience the life Jesus promised us (**John 10:10b**). **I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.**
- God knows exactly what it will take to bring you to that life.
- And if something difficult is needed, He will bring it as an expression of His love and grace.
- This foreign woman had heard about Jesus and believed He could do for her what she needed Him to do.
- She came to Him with her need and humbly pleaded with Him to heal her daughter.
- Even after Jesus ignored her and the disciples became frustrated with her, she persisted in her requests. And then once she confessed her unworthiness, Jesus gave her what she desired.
- This Gentile woman teaches us three things about **How to approach God**.
- First – **Approach God by faith!**
- We must believe Jesus can do for us what we desire (**Hebrews 11:6**). **But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.**
- Second – **Be persistent!**
- We must pray and keep on praying until God responds.
- The parable of the persistent widow in Luke 18 is a picture of that.
- Paul taught us that we should pray without ceasing.
- Third – **Approach God in bold humility!**
- God is perfectly holy, and we are not so we must always approach God humbly.

- But He has invited us to approach boldly, or with confidence (**Hebrews 4:16**).

Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

- We come boldly, but we are approaching the throne of Almighty God.
- Nothing in us makes us worthy of that great privilege except faith in the finished work of Christ Jesus.
- One of the glorious mysteries of the gospel is that Christ makes it possible for each of us to have a real, living relationship with Almighty God.
- And that relationship isn't waiting for us to get to heaven – it began the moment we humbled our heart before God and experienced His forgiveness because of Christ's sacrifice on the cross.
- The abundant life is lived through an intimate, communion fellowship with our Father in Heaven
- Let's pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help us approach God with even more faith knowing that He hears us. **Pray**
- Worship Team comes up to play the last song!