

WEEKLY SERMON

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Kingdom for all

Matthew 15:21-28.

Calling someone a dog is quite a strong comment. In our reading Jesus calls a gentile woman a dog. We might be offended on her behalf, but to our surprise she is not offended at all.

Instead of retaliating her first words are, 'Yes Jesus'. She accepts the apparent insult and turns it to her own benefit. Without going into a long discussion why Jesus made such a strong comment I want to draw your attention to two points in this reading.

First is **Great Faith**. This gentile woman is in a desperate situation. You can imagine if someone's child is suffering, they would do whatever they possibly can to help their child. The woman must have tried all sorts of remedies but without success.

Now here she comes across the one who is the Lord of all. Even evil spirits listen to Jesus. The woman kneels at Jesus' feet. She humbles herself before Jesus. She begs for her daughter's healing. She remains persistent in her asking. She perseveres, and says, '*Sir, even the dogs eat the crumbs that falls from their master's table* (27).

And Jesus said, 'Woman you have great faith! Your request is granted (28). It is the deep, humble, and great faith that matters. When we pray to God for ourselves or for others, sometimes we may be discouraged because our requests are not answered straightaway. But we learn from this woman to have great faith and persevere in our asking to receive God's blessings.

The second is **God's Kingdom**. This miracle is another sign of God's Kingdom inaugurated by Jesus. The doors of His Kingdom have been opened to all. And we know, since after Jesus' death and resurrection, Jesus' gospel has been spreading to all the nations beginning from Jerusalem.

The Kingdom blessings are being shared to all despite any differences in race, colour, culture or language. His Kingdom includes all those who seek Him, those who repent of their sins, those who humble themselves before Him, and those who have deep and profound faith in Jesus. They are all accepted into God's eternal Kingdom just like this woman.

Jesus is building up His Kingdom even today. He is adding people to His Kingdom from every tribe, tongue, and nation. We can become citizen of His Kingdom and receive His eternal blessings. Instead of being offended, we must humble ourselves before Him and have strong faith - like This woman - to enter His Kingdom.

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