

## Ask in Faith

Matt.15: 21 – 28

This woman knew that Jesus could heal her daughter. She didn't know how He would do it she just knew that he could do it. Faith is knowing that something can or will happen without knowing how it will happen.

The first point I think we can take away from this very short encounter with Jesus and the Canaanite woman, is that this woman did not worry about the minutia, the how and the what ifs. She just wanted Jesus to help her demon-possessed daughter. She knew that he could do that.

So, applying to us today, when we pray to Jesus and ask for something, we don't have to figure out how He's going to do it before we ask. We don't have sit around and wonder how He's going to do it after we ask either. I think that we often cause ourselves more worry and anxiety pondering how Jesus might do something than if we would just ask in faith. Or even worse we worry because we're

not sure He's even going to hear our prayer. What if he says no? We have doubts and that causes us to worry. In fact, the book of James says that very thing. "6 But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.

<sup>7</sup> That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. (Jam 1:6-7 NIV)"

The next thing the woman does is not give up. When she got no response from Jesus, she started pestering the disciples. She was so persistent that they finally went to Jesus on her behalf so that she would go away and leave them alone.

This something I think we do very well. This is the prayer chain, the prayer lists, and using social media for prayer requests. Have prayer will ask for more could be our motto. When we hear of tragedy or illness this church prays. The parable of the unrighteous judge, or the man whose friend comes and asks for help after bedtime, and this scripture show us

that persistent even pestering prayer will prevail.

So now the woman has the ear of Jesus, and she makes her request. "Help me Lord." And he says, "It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs." He is basically telling her that he knows he can help her he isn't going to make her his priority now. This is in keeping with scripture Christ has always said He was going to the Jews first, the chosen people, and then to the gentile. Now at this point the woman could have been insulted. She could have given up but instead she acknowledges her standing in Jesus' eyes as a gentile but she points out that even dogs get crumbs from the master's table.

The point here is to remain humble in making our intercessions before God. We shouldn't claim any privilege, or think somehow our request is more important than others. We need to remember our place in God's kingdom as being the least. And then let Jesus raise us up. As it says in Luke 14: 8 –

10: <sup>8</sup> "When someone invites you to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honor, for a person more distinguished than you may have been invited.

<sup>9</sup> If so, the host who invited both of you will come and say to you, 'Give this person your seat.' Then, humiliated, you will have to take the least important place.

<sup>10</sup> But when you are invited, take the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he will say to you, 'Friend, move up to a better place.' Then you will be honored in the presence of all the other guests.

What was Jesus response to her faith and humility? He immediately granted her request.

This passage in Matthew brief as it is gives us clear steps to follow when making an intercessory prayer to God through Jesus.

1. Ask in faith. We don't have to supply the how or the why, or worry about the answer we just need to ask and believe.
2. Persistent, pestering prayer will prevail.

3. Remain humble. We don't earn a gift from God.

Once again from the book of James: <sup>14</sup> Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. <sup>15</sup> And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven. <sup>16</sup> Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

Effective power prayer come from humble faithful and persistent people. Let's make sure that describes us.