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Andrew M. Davis

Sermon Notes

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The Astonishing Gift of Faith in a Gentile Woman

Matthew 15:21-28

So much misunderstanding and false teaching about the role of faith in the Christian life

Well publicized are “faith healers,” who fit into the general category of “name it and claim it Christianity,” or the “Word of Faith” movement

The “Word of Faith” movement sees faith somewhat like a commodity... if you have enough, you can trade with God... if you don’t have enough faith, God will not heal you or bless you

Basically it turns faith into man’s work by which he makes himself acceptable to God

Even worse, Word of Faith teachers openly say that, if you have any trouble or difficulty in your life—any financial, health, relational troubles—all of this can be traced to one thing: you don’t have enough faith

So, if your loved one dies, not only do you have to deal with the sadness of the loss, but also knowing it was in some sense your own fault... “If only you’d had more faith this would never have happened!!”

Similar to Job’s friends... comforting him in his loss by saying it was all due to his sin

In 1980 Harvest House published a book by Larry Parker entitled **We Let Our Son Die**. The book tells the tragic story of how Larry and his wife -- after being influenced by one of America's numerous "word of faith" (or "word-faith") teachers -- withheld insulin from their diabetic son, Wesley. Predictably, Wesley went into a diabetic coma. The Parkers, warned about the impropriety of making a "negative confession," continued to "positively confess" Wesley's healing until the time of his death.

Even after Wesley's death, the Parkers -- undaunted in their "faith" -- conducted a resurrection service instead of a funeral. For more than one year following their son's death, they refused to abandon the "revelation knowledge" they had received through the "word-faith" movement. Eventually, they were tried and convicted of manslaughter and child abuse.

Many other similarly tragic stories could be recounted. And yet, the carnage unleashed by this movement is not **limited** to physical death. Literally thousands are swallowing the

spiritual cyanide dispensed by the word-faith teachers, leading to the shipwreck of their faith in God.

Hank Hanegraff:

for the word-faith teachers, healing and prosperity became so important that they had to find some way to **guarantee** them, and they did this by exalting **man's** faith at the expense of **God's** sovereignty. Thus, they developed the doctrine that God created the world out of nothing **by faith**, and that He created men as "little gods" to exercise the **same kind of faith**. Faith therefore becomes a powerful force that gets results, whether in the hands of a believer or a nonbeliever.

Well, to learn the true nature of faith, it's best to look at the Scriptures...

This encounter between a Canaanite woman and the Savior of the World is a good display of true faith in action... and also of the Lord's wisdom in developing faith by challenging it

Jesus commended this woman as an example of GREAT FAITH

***Vs. 28 Then Jesus answered, "Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted."
And her daughter was healed from that very hour.***

Let's learn from her, and from the Lord, what is GREAT FAITH

I. One of Jesus' Most Puzzling Encounters

Robert Stein, *Difficult passages in the Gospels*: "The problem is obvious. Jesus' words appear harsh, austere, insensitive. They seem atypical of Jesus. In the Gospels, He is portrayed as kind, loving, and compassionate. The words (of this account) would cause little difficulty coming from a mean, harsh, unloving individual. The Jesus of the Gospels, however, is a loving and kind Jesus with a special compassion for the outcasts of society, and this woman is an outcast in the Jewish mind."

Let's set the context

A. Jesus Retreats

1. Greek word means more than just "went away"
2. Jesus was effecting a strategic withdrawal from Judea
3. This was a strategic retreat... to accomplish a certain purpose
4. Why? To escape building pressure that would bring issues to a head too soon

- a. Pressure from the huge multitudes that were crushing in on Him at all times, with their overwhelming needs (for miraculous healings) and their inappropriate demands (that He become their King immediately)

Mark 6:31-32 Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." ³² So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place.

John 6:15 Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself.

- b. Pressure from possible arrest at the hands of Herod Antipas, who thought Jesus was John the Baptist, risen from the dead
- c. Pressure MOST OF ALL from the Jewish religious leaders, the Scribes and Pharisees, who had already decided Jesus had to die (12:14) and whom Jesus had deeply offended in Matthew 15

Matthew 15:12 Then the disciples came to him and asked, "Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this?"

These three pressures, PLUS Jesus' desire to be alone with His disciples and do some intense discipleship made this a strategic withdrawal

5. BUT it didn't work!!

Mark 7:24-25 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 evil spirit came and fell at his feet.

B. Tyre and Sidon: Notorious in Jewish History

1. Tyre and Sidon were well-known in Jewish history... a center of a prosperous pagan society founded on shipping, trade and commerce all over the Mediterranean
2. First entered Jewish history in a positive way: Hiram, king of Tyre, sent King David a wondrous gift after David had established Jerusalem as his capital city

2 Samuel 5:11 Now Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, along with cedar logs and carpenters and stonemasons, and they built a palace for David.

3. Later Hiram sent Solomon building materials and a skilled craftsman for the Temple

4. Amazingly enough, materials and craftsmen came from Tyre after the exile to Babylon to help rebuild the temple as well!
5. BUT the flip side was far darker
 - a. Tyre and Sidon represented worldly prosperity and luxury through abundant sea trade... likened by Isaiah to plying the trade of a prostitute
 - b. Worse, they were actually involved in the slave trade... selling people to Edom and even buying and selling Jews

Amos 1:9-10 This is what the LORD says: "For three sins of Tyre, even for four, I will not turn back my wrath. Because she sold whole communities of captives to Edom, disregarding a treaty of brotherhood, ¹⁰ I will send fire upon the walls of Tyre that will consume her fortresses."

Joel 3:4-6 'Now what have you against me, O Tyre and Sidon and all you regions of Philistia? ... You sold the people of Judah and Jerusalem to the Greeks, that you might send them far from their homeland.'

- c. Worse still, they mocked and celebrated the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians

Ezekiel 26:2-4 "Son of man, because Tyre has said of Jerusalem, 'Aha! The gate to the nations is broken, and its doors have swung open to me; now that she lies in ruins I will prosper,' ³ therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I am against you, O Tyre, and I will bring many nations against you, like the sea casting up its waves. ⁴ They will destroy the walls of Tyre and pull down her towers; I will scrape away her rubble and make her a bare rock.'

- d. Oracle to the King of Tyre quite probably a hint concerning Satan himself... implying Satan was actually the true ruler of Tyre and Sidon

Ezekiel 28:12-17 "Son of man, take up a lament concerning the king of Tyre and say to him: 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: "'You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. ¹³ You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: ruby, topaz and emerald, chrysolite, onyx and jasper, sapphire, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mountings were made of gold; on the day you were created they were prepared. ¹⁴ You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones. ¹⁵ You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you. ¹⁶ Through your widespread trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned. So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God, and I expelled you, O guardian cherub, from among the fiery stones. ¹⁷ Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor. So I threw you to the earth; I made a spectacle of you before kings.'

e. Therefore several prophets predicted the total devastation of Tyre and Sidon, including Ezekiel, Joel, Amos, Jeremiah and Isaiah

6. YET for all of this, Jesus knew them better

a. He knew that hundreds of Gentiles had been coming to see Him, to listen to Him preach and to have their illnesses cured

Luke 6:17-19 A large crowd of his disciples was there and a great number of people from all over Judea, from Jerusalem, and from the coast of Tyre and Sidon, ¹⁸ who had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. Those troubled by evil spirits were cured, ¹⁹ and the people all tried to touch him, because power was coming from him and healing them all.

b. one of Jesus' most amazing statements was about how much readier the Gentiles of Tyre and Sidon were to respond to the Gospel than were the Jews of His hometown

Matthew 11:21-22 "Woe to you, Korazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! 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.

7. Jesus' strategic retreat to this region exactly paralleled Elijah's exile to this place during his flight from evil King Ahab, which Jesus had referred to in His very first sermon in the synagogue in Nazareth

Luke 4:24-26 "I tell you the truth," he continued, "no prophet is accepted in his hometown. ²⁵ I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah's time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. ²⁶ Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon.

C. Who Was this Woman?

1. Matthew describes her as a Canaanite, the very people God had commanded Joshua to destroy completely when the Jews conquered the Promised Land

2. Canaanite women in particular were the focus of a major warning from God

Deuteronomy 7:1-6 you must destroy them totally. Make no treaty with them, and show them no mercy. ³ Do not intermarry with them. Do not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons, ⁴ for they will turn your sons away from following me to serve other gods, and the LORD's anger will burn against you and will quickly destroy you.

This woman in previous generations might have been seen as a major temptation for the people of God... but Jesus has saving intention toward her

3. Mark goes into even more detail about her

Mark 7:26 The woman was a Greek, born in Syrian Phoenicia.

4. So, this woman would have been a complete outcast as far as the Jews were concerned... a Canaanite woman
5. BUT YET she has a tremendous faith in Christ, and is for all time memorialized in Scripture as a clear example of conquering faith

D. What Was Her Plight?

1. Her little daughter was demon-possessed

Vs. 22 A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is suffering terribly from demon-possession."

2. Mark's gospel heightens the fact that she was young... he says "Her little daughter"
3. Demon possession is a very serious spiritual affliction
 - a. A demon takes over the mind and personality and even body of a human being
 - b. The demon or demons do bodily harm to the person and make the lives of everyone around them a living hell
 - c. Nothing could cure this little girl
4. This seems to have been an especially bad case... an extra Greek word is used to heighten that sense

E. Jesus' Strange Actions

1. First, He didn't answer her at all

Vs. 23 Jesus did not answer a word.

2. Second, He seems to limit His ministry to Jews

Matthew 15:23-24 Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, "Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us." ²⁴ He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel."

3. Third, in dealing with her directly, He seems to insult her and call her a dog

*Matthew 15:25-26 The woman came and knelt before him. "Lord, help me!" she said.
²⁶ He replied, "It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs."*

4. Mitigating factors

- a. We don't have a record of tone of voice or facial expressions
- b. The Greek implies Jesus had a longer conversation with her than is recorded here... literally "Jesus was saying to her, 'It is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to their dogs'"
- c. "Dogs" here in Greek is not the wild, aggressive stray dog that roams the street and fends for itself by fighting off other strays and picking through garbage; the word used here is more like "puppies"... a family dog that's almost one of the family

YET... for all of that, Jesus' actions seem strange

II. What Were Christ's Motives?

A. Ruling Out False Options: It Was Not Because...

1. Not because He didn't care about Gentiles, or had no saving purpose toward them

Genesis 12:3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

Isaiah 49:6 he says: "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 you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth."

Luke 2:28-32 Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying: ²⁹ "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. ³⁰ For my eyes have seen your salvation, ³¹ which you have prepared in the sight of all people, ³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

- a. After Christ's resurrection, He would send His disciples to the ends of the earth
- b. One of the places they would go first would be this very region

Paul, on his journey to Jerusalem, landed at Phoenicia, and went and visited the disciples in Tyre

They welcomed Paul warmly and through the Spirit warned him not to go to Jerusalem

Acts 21:5 All the disciples and their wives and children accompanied us out of the city, and there on the beach we knelt to pray.

- c. Jesus clearly had a saving intention for the entire world, including Tyre and Sidon
2. Not because He lacked the power to do miracles in a Gentile land
 - a. Jesus was God Omnipotent... there was nothing He could not do
 - b. Jesus was no more or less powerful in Tyre and Sidon than He'd been in Judea
 - c. Jesus could do anything His Father's perfect wisdom and love called on Him to do
 - d. He would prove this decisively in a moment by healing her daughter
 3. Not because He lacked mercy or compassion for her plight or that of her daughter
 - a. Jesus had the most perfect compassion of any human being in history
 - b. Four separate times in Matthew's gospel, Jesus' deep compassion is specifically mentioned as the focal point of the miracle
 - c. His compassion was especially moved by earnest faith and deep humility
 - d. Anyone who came to Him empty and as a beggar went away full and rich, with their need abundantly met
 - e. Jesus did not lack compassion for this woman or her daughter, even though she was a Gentile

Jonah 4:10-11 the LORD said, "You have been concerned about this vine, though you did not tend it or make it grow. It sprang up overnight and died overnight. ¹¹ But Nineveh has more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left, and many cattle as well. Should I not be concerned about that great city?"

This woman was created by God, knit together specially in her mother's womb

This demon-possessed daughter Jesus Himself knit together in this same mother's womb

Jesus did NOT lack compassion on either one of them

4. Not because He was weary and annoyed and gave her a surly answer based on His fatigue

James 3:2 We all stumble in many ways. If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to keep his whole body in check.

- a. Perish the thought!!
- b. Here we are thinking as man does, not as God does
- c. Yes, Jesus had retreated from the crush of the ministry in Judea
- d. Yes, part of the motive was more time alone with His disciples
- e. Yes, Jesus got weary and needed rest and refreshment
- f. BUT NO, these things never bubbled over into a surly, self-centered, churlish answer
- g. The weakness of our flesh sometimes

Illus. Reading an article about President Eisenhower's encounter with British General Bernard Montgomery while giving Montgomery a tour of the Battlefield at Gettysburg. Eisenhower was an amazingly patient man, good as a conciliator, an excellent compromiser, and therefore the perfect choice as the Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in Europe, because he could keep the peace well between American and British interests. He was also very patient and understanding with such boisterous and flamboyant generals as General Patton for the Americans and Montgomery for the British.

But on this one afternoon, May 27, 1957, as now President Eisenhower was giving Montgomery a tour of Gettysburg (which Eisenhower loved so much he bought a home in 1950 adjoining the battlefield), Montgomery so provoked and him and annoyed him and prodded him about the battle, criticizing both Union and Confederate generalship, that Eisenhower lost his famous cool demeanor

It can happen to anyone... someone is annoying, prodding you

Perhaps it's your boss, an annoying coworker, an opposing motorist or a police officer; perhaps a referee at a ballgame or another shopper at the supermarket

All of us have to admit we've been prodded by our own weariness and weakness into an angry or sinful outburst, or at least a snide remark or sarcastic put-down

- h. But let's remember who we're talking about... Jesus Christ was God in the Flesh... WORDS were everything for Him

John 6:63 The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.

- 5. Not because He was taking a break from ministry and didn't want to care for her needs at that point

- a. Jesus could do both!
 - b. He wasn't shocked or dismayed the crowds had found him there
 - c. He knew full well this was part of His ministry
6. Not because there was only so much "bread" to be fed to His children, and if He gave some to her there wouldn't be enough for them
- a. Jesus had limitless power and ability
 - b. He wouldn't have been any more taxed to feed 6000 than He was to feed 5000
 - c. How many candles can be lit from one candle? Is there any limit
 - d. How many healings could Jesus do
7. Not because she didn't ask properly or with enough faith
- a. Jesus commends her faith in the end
 - b. He wasn't forcing her to give more or He wouldn't respond
 - c. It wasn't that she hadn't groveled enough and He wanted her to show proper respect

It wasn't for all these reasons... why then?

B. The Proper Order of God's Redemptive Plan: Jews First

1. To the Jew First

- a. Peter spoke about this to the Jews in the Temple

Acts 3:26 "For you first, God raised up His Servant and sent Him to bless you by turning every one of you from your wicked ways."

- b. Over and over the Apostle Paul displayed God's commitment
- c. "To the Jew first, then to the Gentile"
- d. He acted it out in his ministry... always going to the Jewish synagogues first
- e. He spoke it to hostile Jews who were rejecting the gospel

Acts 13:46 Then Paul and Barnabas answered [the Jews] boldly: "We had to speak the word of God to you first. Since you reject it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles."

f. He wrote about it in Romans

^{NIV} Romans 1:16 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

This was God's strategy

It was part of God's redemptive plan for Christ to be sent FIRST to His own people, then to have them REJECT HIM so that He would die on the cross

^{ESV} John 1:11 He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.

So Jesus declared the FOCUS of His ministry... it was the Jews

Matthew 15:24 He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel."

2. Christ Hadn't Died Yet, so the Gentiles were still on the outside
 - a. The Gentiles were excluded from citizenship among the people of God by the Laws of Moses
 - b. Once Jesus died on the cross, the curtain in the temple was torn in two and the barriers to access to God were removed for everyone, including BOTH the Jews and Gentiles
 - c. Ephesians 2

Ephesians 2:11-15 Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (that done in the body by the hands of men)-- ¹² remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. ¹⁴ For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, ¹⁵ by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations

C. The Proper Order of Christ's Strategic Plan: Apostles First

1. Christ also had come to this region to focus on His disciples
2. One way to understand His statement is that the disciples are the children and the children's bread is the dedicated time Jesus came to Tyre to spend with them
3. Jesus could only be doing one thing at a time in the days of His ministry on earth

4. He had focused on the “lost sheep of Israel”... within them He had more narrowly focused on His disciples
5. Within them more narrowly pouring His life into the Twelve Apostles
6. “It’s not right to stop working with these so I can do a healing ministry here in Tyre and Sidon”

D. To Test Her Faith?

1. Common explanation: Jesus was testing her faith, seeing if she would come back
2. More specifically, He was humbling her and seeing if she would overcome the obstacles
3. Perhaps this is true, but it doesn’t go far enough
4. I think, knowing her heart, Jesus was not merely testing faith, but I think He was DEVELOPING and STRENGTHENING her faith, as well as putting it on display for the rest of time

Illus. Physical therapist strengthens weakened muscles by testing them vigorously, even OPPOSING the motion so the patient has to exert more force, more willpower, more strength, thus developing the weak muscle

So Jesus seems to OPPOSE her and FIGHT AGAINST her, despite the fact that He really DESIRES to give her what she wants

Ultimately, Jesus wants to put this woman’s faith on display for all time

III. True Faith Put on Display

A. The Basis of Faith

1. Faith must have a BASIS... something to trust, a reason to believe
2. We don’t have faith in faith itself...
 - a. True faith is not blind... a leap into the dark
 - b. Nor is it an optimistic outlook

**I believe, for every drop of rain that falls,
A flower grows...**

**I believe that somewhere in the darkest night,
A candle glows...**

John MacArthur: “That sort of faith is essentially faith in faith, which is to say no faith at all. To jump out of an airplane with a parachute is an act of faith. To jump without a parachute while exclaiming, ‘I believe’ is an act of stupidity. To say no more than ‘I believe in love,’ or ‘I believe in believing,’ or ‘I believe it will all work out’ is contentless faith and therefore pointless and powerless.”

3. Canaanite woman clearly had heard of Jesus’ miracles and knew of the Jewish prophecies concerning the Messiah... look at the titles she uses and the expectation she has that Jesus WILL be able to cure her daughter

"Lord, Son of David.."

She calls Him... she has HEARD of Christ and has believed what she has heard; FAITH COMES FROM HEARING THE MESSAGE ABOUT CHRIST

B. The Reverence of Faith

1. She calls Him “Lord”
2. Later on, she bows down before Him and worships Him
3. She is submissive, reverent... not presuming on Him or demanding from Him
4. She knows He is exalted and treats Him accordingly

Application: The “name it and claim it” word of faith folks get very demanding with God, as though God is pleased with being bossed around like He were some kind of servantboy

When we come with a request to the Lord, we should be reverent and submissive...

Ecclesiastes 5:2 Do not be quick with your mouth, do not be hasty in your heart to utter anything before God. God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few.... Stand in awe of God

Genesis 18:27 Then Abraham spoke up again: "Now that I have been so bold as to speak to the Lord, though I am nothing but dust and ashes,

C. The Confidence of Faith

1. There is no doubt in her mind whatsoever that Jesus is CAPABLE of doing this
2. That is why she is so persistent, as we shall see
3. She calls Him “Lord,” so she knows He can do all things
4. The essence of great faith is great confidence that God has the power to perform the thing which is desired

Romans 4:21 being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.

Ephesians 3:20 to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us

D. The Repentance of Faith

1. "Have mercy on me" she calls
2. She recognizes she doesn't deserve anything from the Lord...she's not in a position to demand anything

Romans 9:15 he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion."

3. Once we acknowledge that we are sinners, all we can do is cry out for mercy and humbly accept what comes... anything we get is more than we deserve
4. Repentance and faith are two sides of the same coin... genuine saving faith involves BOTH repentance concerning our sinfulness and faith in Christ concerning what He has promised

E. The Persistence of Faith

1. Jesus puts up ONE ROADBLOCK AFTER ANOTHER, as we have mentioned
2. First, He doesn't answer her; then He speaks to His own disciples in her hearing, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel": then He says "It is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to their dogs"
3. True belief is PERSISTENT, and does not easily give up in prayer
4. Notice her persistence springs also from her LOVE for her daughter

True intercession: to link yourself up entirely with the misery of another and pray for that person as though it were happening to YOU

Vs. 22 have mercy on ME! Vs. 24 "Lord, help ME!" she said.

I think God tests us in prayer to strengthen our compassion, so we care MORE for the person we're praying for

5. Faith OVERCOMES all obstacles and keeps persisting

Genesis 32:26 Jacob replied, "I will not let you go unless you bless me."

Genesis 32:28 "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with men and have overcome."

Revelation 2:7 To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.

Romans 8:37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

F. The Humility of Faith

"Yes, Lord," she said, "but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table."

Amazing answer!! She finds hope even in a seeming put-off...

The image is a household dinner table; there must be some runoff, some extra that could fall from the table after the children are all fed

1. We've already noted her role as a suppliant... begging for mercy
2. We've already noted how far she goes with it, even prostrating herself in front
3. When Jesus treats her like this, she doesn't bristle, she doesn't bridle up against His words
4. He calls her a dog of sorts, but she actually agrees

"True, Lord"... she says

Yes, I am a dog, and less than a dog... but please heal my daughter anyway!!

5. Faith takes its rightful place and says appropriate things

Mark 1:7 And this was his message: "After me will come one more powerful than I, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie.

Matthew 8:8 The centurion replied, "Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed.

The arrogance of the Word of Faith approach, the name it and claim it, is it advocates demanding things from Almighty God... it speaks against saying "If it is your will, Lord"... it advocates things like

STORM THE GATES OF HEAVEN... I've always found that weird... like heaven is some enemy fortress and we need to storm heaven and plunder heaven for what we want

NO!! Humility of faith sees things as they really are—God is infinitely powerful, wise and loving; we are amazingly weak, ignorant, and selfish... we come humbly and ask for what is on our hearts as it lines up with His word

G. The Reward of Faith

Vs. 28 Then Jesus answered, "Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted." And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

1. Faith perseveres to get the reward... it perseveres until it obtains
2. Jesus made her wait some... he makes other people wait MORE
3. But in the end, she got what she wanted
4. The ultimate reward of faith is this: eternity in the presence of Almighty God; not merely healing for a demon possessed daughter
5. True faith receives everything God has promised

Ephesians 1:3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

Psalms 16:11 You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand

IV. Application

A. Learn to Pray Like This

1. Do you care enough about others to take their case to Jesus

B. God's Silence

1. Sometimes God seems totally silent, and that can be a terrible trial
2. Be willing to persevere in prayer even when it seems nothing is happening

C. Learn the Lessons of Great Faith

1. Make sure your faith has a strong BASIS in the Word of God... find out HIS nature, HIS purposes, HIS promises, and base your faith on that
2. Be reverent in your approach to God... understand how exalted He is, and speak to Him accordingly
3. Be strengthened in your faith and grow in confidence... know that God can do IMMEASURABLY more than all you can ask or imagine, then ask confidently and trust Him to give you according to His will
4. Be repentant in your faith; let God speak to you of your sin and be humble and willing to hear what He says; do not be proud but be willing to ask for His mercy
5. Be persistent... don't give up quickly
6. Wait on God until you have your reward