

Bible Stories for Adults

Jesus Heals a Canaanite's Daughter

Mark 7:1-30

Opening

- Gathering: What are some things that society approves but God condemns?
What are some things that society condemns but God approves?
- Today's Focus: Jesus taught that a sinful heart makes one unclean while a faithful heart makes one whole.
- Key Verses: *But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these make a man unclean.* Matthew 15:18
- Then Jesus answered, "Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted. And her daughter was healed from that very hour." Matthew 15:28*

Opening Prayer

Lesson

Past The Peak (*John 6:22-7:1*)

- What miracles did Jesus perform about a year before He died?
John 6:10-13, 16, 19 (1-21) = Fed 5000 with 2 fish and 5 loaves, walked on water to disciples
- How did the crowd feel about Jesus after being fed with 2 fish and 5 loaves?
John 6:14-15 = They knew He was the Messiah and were ready to make Him king
- How did Jesus feel about the Jews recognizing Him as the Messiah?
John 6:24-27 (21-27) = They knew who He was but misunderstood His purpose and being
- How did the Jews respond to Jesus' clarification of His purpose and being?
John 6:32-35, 40-42 (28-42) = They lost faith and couldn't believe Jesus was what He claimed
- How did the Jews react as Jesus further explained that we must feed on Him, the Word of God?
John 6:52, 57, 60-61, 64-66 (43-66) = Many disciples fell away from Jesus out of lack of faith
- Did the twelve apostles want to leave also?
John 6:67-69 (67-71) = No – *Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.*
- Did the Jews just ignore Jesus from this point on?
John 7:1 = No, many wanted to silence Him

Clean and Unclean Food (*Mark 7:1-23*)

- Was Jesus able to avoid problems from devout Jews from Judea by staying in Galilee?
Mark 7:1-5 = No, they tracked Him down with accusations (ceremonial washings)
- How did Jesus point out that these Jews were trying to cause trouble rather than keep the Law?
Mark 7:6-8, 13 (6-13) = Pharisee law ignored some of God's Laws while adding to others
- How did Jesus then make sure the crowd understood God's desire for cleanliness?
Mark 7:14-15 = Cleanliness is judged by what comes out of a man
- Was Jesus concerned that He might offend the devout Jews by speaking against Jewish standards?
Matthew 15:12-15 = No, they weren't leaders for God's standards
- How did Jesus feel about His apostles being slow to learn this close to the end of His ministry?
Matthew 15:16 = He was a little frustrated – Dull was *not understanding*, not *stupid (moros)*
- What did Jesus mean by His "parable"?
Mark 7:18-23 = Cleanliness is based on what is in the heart

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A Place to Teach (*Matthew 15:21*)

What, therefore, became a key focus of Jesus' ministry as He neared its end?

Mark 9:30-32 = Spending time with just His apostles teaching and preparing them

What happened whenever Jesus tried to find a place to be with just His apostles?

Matthew 14:13-14, 34-36 = Crowds tracked him down and He turned away no one

Where did Jesus finally find a place where the Jewish crowds wouldn't follow?

Matthew 15:21 = The region of Tyre and Sidon in Phoenicia – out of Jewish territory

International Travel Log

Tyre and Sidon were cities of Phoenicia, which was a part of Syria (Libo-Phoenicia was in North Africa)

Tyre was 40 miles NW of Capernaum, Sidon was 60 miles N of Capernaum

Tyre means *The Rock* - 2 great rocks offshore joined by a 3000 ft long ridge - natural harbor

Rocks gave defense, Tyre had a famous fortress, taken by Alexander the Great in 332 BC

Solomon got craftsmen and cedar logs from Tyre to build palace and temple (1 Kings 7 and 9)

Tyre & Sidon sailors were first to navigate by the stars - Could sail across Mediterranean, even at night

Other ships hugged coastline during the day, anchored at night

Tyre and Sidon were independent and rival city-states - ruled 15-20 mile radius

Each had their own kings, their own coinage and their own gods

Pagan, idolatrous, sacrificed infants to dedicate buildings

Canaanites - Even Worse than Samaritans (*Matthew 15:22*)

Besides finding a quiet place, why would Jesus take His apostles to Tyre/Sidon at this time?

Ezra 6:21 = Further explain God's meaning of clean/unclean (Gentiles regarded unclean)

What did the Jews understand about this region of Tyre and Sidon?

Joshua 19:24, 28-29a = It belonged to the tribe of Asher

What command had the Israelites been given before they were sent into the promised land?

Deuteronomy 20:16-18 = Completely destroy all inhabitants so they don't distract you

Why were Canaanites still living in the region of Tyre and Sidon?

Judges 1:31-32 (2:1-3) = They weren't driven out, God left them as tests and thorns

How were Jews to deal with these Canaanite neighbors?

Joshua 23:7 = They were not to associate with them

A Messiah's Work is Never Done (*Mark 7:24-26*)

How hidden was Jesus able to keep Himself and his disciples for this time of teaching?

Mark 7:24-26a = Word got out and a woman came and found Him

How could this Gentile woman have known about Jesus?

Mark 3:8 = People from the area had gone to see Jesus in Galilee

Why did this woman come looking so hard for Jesus?

Mark 7:26b = Her daughter was demon possessed, He could help her

What kinds of problems could this woman have had with her possessed daughter?

Mark 9:17-18 = Can't talk, seizures, foams at mouth, gnashes teeth (son)

Mark 5:2-5 = Violent, strong, lived with dead, hurt himself (man with legion)

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Waiting in Silence (*Matthew 15:22-23a*)

How did Jesus reply to this woman's cries?

Matthew 15:22-23a = He stayed silent

Why didn't Jesus just simply turn around and grant the woman's request?

Matthew 9:1-2 = He had to see her faith before He could heal her daughter

Why did Jesus need to see her faith?

Matthew 13:58 = God sends His blessings and miracles in response to faith

What did Jesus credit whenever He healed someone?

Matthew 9:22 = The evidence of their faith

Luther: *Christ drives her faith (so) deep into her heart that it becomes strong and firm.*

Is this the gracious and friendly Lord? He is silent as a stone.

The Closed Door? (*Matthew 15:23b-24*)

How did the apostles respond to this woman's pleas?

Matthew 15:23b = They asked Jesus to get rid of her (maybe by a quick healing?)

How did Jesus seem to further close the door on this woman's request? = She was unworthy

Matthew 15:24 = He told his disciples that He was sent only to the Jews

Was Jesus really sent to the Jews rather than the entire world?

Matthew 10:5-6 = Yes, His ministry focused on reaching the lost sheep of Israel

Does this mean that God is God of the Jews only?

Romans 3:29-30 = No, He is God of all creation and all people

So why did Jesus say He came for the Jews?

Romans 1:16 = He came first for the Jew, then for the Gentile

Being sent to the Jews first, how did they receive Him?

John 1:11 = He came to the Jews, but they did not receive Him

Who did receive Him? = *Children born not of natural descent ... but born of God*

John 1:12-13 = Those He called the Children of God - both Jews and Gentiles

Why was Jesus sent to the Jews first? = *Gentiles may glorify God for His mercy*

Romans 15:8-9 = God promised the patriarchs to be the path of Christ to the Gentiles

How early had God told the Jews they would be the path of His grace to Gentiles?

Genesis 12:1-3 = When He first called Abraham - the Father of the Jews

I will bless you ... you will be a blessing ... and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.

How did Gentiles become blessed by the promise to Abraham when Jesus died and rose?

Galatians 3:7-9 = Those who believe are children of Abraham and heirs to the promise

Persistence (*Matthew 15:25*)

After Jesus' reply, did she accept her position as woman and Canaanite and leave Jesus alone?

Matthew 15:25 = No, she knelt before Him and begged for mercy

Why would this woman be so persistent?

Ephesians 2:12-13 = He was her only hope, not only for her daughter but also to save her

Should we keep bugging God with our requests or just ask once and leave it in His hands?

Luke 18:1-7 = We should *always pray and not give up* - God wants to hear us

How are we able to persevere and persist even when things look hopeless as for this woman?

Hebrews 11:26-27 = By keeping our eyes and faith on our Lord, we can persevere

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Going to the Dogs (*Mark 7:27-28*)

How did Jesus reply to the woman's plea?

Mark 7:27 = *It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs.*

Who were the *children* that Jesus referred to?

Romans 8:16 = The children of God - The Jews until Christ's resurrection

Who were the dogs? = Matthew 7:6 - *Do not give dogs what is sacred*

Revelation 22:15 = Those not of God's family, Non-Jews were contemptibly called dogs

The word Jesus used for dog referred to pet lap-dogs, not scavenging street dogs

Kittel: *Probably chosen by Jesus to show that there is a distinction between Jews and Gentiles, but to still give the Gentiles a place in the house*

How did the woman reply to Jesus' explanation of why He shouldn't help her?

Mark 7:28 = *Even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs*

People ate with their hands, wiped their hands on bread and threw it to the dogs

What was the woman saying about her understanding of how the Messiah could save her?

John 4:22 = *Salvation is from the Jews* - not just to the Jews

Great Faith (*Mark 7:29-30*)

How did Jesus respond after the woman showed she was seeking Him out of faith?

Matthew 15:28 = He commended her great faith and said her daughter was healed

Did the woman believe that Jesus had healed her daughter as He said?

Mark 7:30 = Yes, she left Jesus and went home in faith

What one other person did Jesus commend for having *great faith*?

Matthew 8:5-8, 10, 13 = The Gentile centurion from Capernaum - also healed from a distance

How does God deal with those who know Him and trust in Him?

Psalms 9:10 = He never forsakes them

What does Jesus promise to those who know and have faith in Him?

John 14:13-14 = *You may ask Me for anything in My name, and I will do it*

Closing Prayer

Response - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. What traditions have I put before God?
(*Matthew 15:1-9; 1 Samuel 10:8; 13:7-14; Isaiah 1:11-20; Hosea 6:6; Amos 5:21-27*)
2. How have I been unclean before God this past week?
(*Matthew 15:17-20; 12:33-35; Romans 8:1-17; Galatians 5:16-25; 6:8; James 3:5-6, 13-18*)
3. When have I been slow to understand God's truths?
(*Matthew 15:15-16; 16:19; John 16:12-15; 1 Cor. 3:1-2; Ephesians 1:9-10; 3:2-6; Hebrews 5:11-14*)
4. Do I persist in taking my cares to God or do I give up too quickly?
(*Matthew 15:22-28; 11:28-30; Luke 11:1-13; 18:1-7; Ephesians 6:18; 1 Thess. 2:13; 3:10; 5:17, 25*)
5. Does God consider me to be one of His children or just a dog?
(*Matthew 15:26-27; 7:6; Deuteronomy 14:1-2; John 1:11-13; Romans 8:13-17; Philippians 3:2; 1 John 3:1-2; Revelation 22:15*)