

# (Through the Bible) Matthew 14-15

by Chuck Smith

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*Jesus' compassion and ministry to the multitude, despite his own weariness and emotional turmoil, demonstrate his power and provision for those who trust in him.*

**Duration:** 1:03:49

**Scripture:** Isaiah 29:13, Matthew 14:15-21, Matthew 15:1-9, Matthew 15:13-14, Matthew 15:17-20, Mark 7:6-7

**Topics:** "Faith And Trust", "Jesus Ministry"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares two stories from the Bible to illustrate important lessons. The first story is about Jesus feeding the multitude with just a few loaves and fishes, showing the abundance that comes from sharing and the power of a child's example. The second story is about Jesus walking on water and Peter's attempt to do the same. It highlights the importance of keeping our focus on Jesus and not getting distracted by our circumstances. The speaker emphasizes the compassion and ministry of Jesus, even in moments when he sought solitude but was met with a multitude of people.

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## Transcript

This time let's turn in our Bibles to Matthew's Gospel, chapter 14. And at that time Herod the Tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus. And he said to his servants, this is John the Baptist.

He's risen from the dead and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him. For Herod had laid hold on John and bound him and put him in prison for Herodias sake, his brother Philip's wife. For John said unto him, it is not lawful for thee to have her.

And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude because they counted him as a prophet. But when Herod's birthday was kept and the daughter of Herodias danced before him and pleased Herod, whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask. She, being before instructed of her mother, said, give me here John the Baptist head in a charger.

So the king was sorry nevertheless for the oath's sake. And them which said it meet, he commanded that it be given to her. And he sent and beheaded John in the prison.

And his head was brought in a charger and given to the damsel and she brought it to her mother. And the disciples came and took up the body and buried it and went and told Jesus. Here we have the story of Herod and the beheading of John the Baptist.

He was called Herod Antipas. He was the son of Herod the Great. The word Tetrarch means the ruler over a fourth part.

When Herod the Great died, he had many sons, but three of them were given rule over part of the territory that Herod the Great once governed. Herod Antipas, the one who had beheaded John the Baptist, was married to the daughter of a Nabataean king, Aretha. And he went to Rome where he visited his brother Philip, Herod Philip.

And there he fell in love with Philip's wife. And he enticed her to leave his brother and to return with him as his wife. But in order to do this, he had to then divorce Aretha, the daughter of the Nabataean king, which he did.

And he took Herodias as his wife. Now John the Baptist spoke out against that. John the Baptist was a straight shooter.

And he said, it isn't lawful for you to do that. It wasn't lawful for him to put away Aretha without a cause. And of course, it wasn't lawful to marry his brother's sister.

So John the Baptist spoke out boldly against him and he paid the price of incurring the displeasure of Herod, for Herod imprisoned him and would have put him to death. Yet there was such a popular appeal that John had to the people. He was a little fearful of putting him to death.

Josephus, in his Antiquities, the historic account of the Jews, helps us in this a little bit. He said that Herod actually was desiring to put him to death because of the tremendous popularity that John had among the people. And he was actually a little threatened by the popularity of John the Baptist.

Herodias ultimately, of course, was the downfall of Herod. She was a very cruel and cunning woman. She, of course, was upset because John had spoken out against the marriage, had a deep kind of desire for revenge.

And so she allowed her daughter to dance for Herod on his birthday. Her daughter's name was Salome. The dances were of those oriental type which were very suggestive and sensuous.

Salome was probably only 16 or 17, and for her mother to allow her to do this shows the fact that there was no real morality in the heart of Herodias at all. Very immoral woman. And when Herod's passions were aroused by the dance of Salome, in that moment of excitement and the applause for the dance and all the crowd around, he said, ask whatever you want and I will give it to you.

And her mother Herodias had already coached her in advance that she should ask for the head of John the Baptist on a charger. And when she made this request, of course, Herod wanted to back down, but he had made the promise and so he held to it. Now, later on, when Caligariac became the emperor of Rome, there was another son of Herod, Agrippa, that he sent to reign over some of the provinces of Israel and he gave to Agrippa the title of king.

And so you remember Paul addressing him, King Agrippa? Now, Herodias said to her husband Herod Antipas, look, he has the title of king, you ought also to have the title of king, because she had this desire to be known as Queen Herodias. And so this real thing in her, to be wanted to be known as queen, she put her husband up to going to Rome to talk to the emperor Caligariac that he would give to Antipas also the title of king. However, Herod Agrippa heard of the plan and so he sent messages ahead to Caligariac and

said, hey, Antipas is not to be trusted.

He is very likely to rebel against you. He's looking for position and power. And so Caligariac believed the report that he received from Agrippa.

And when Antipas came requesting that he received the title of king, instead of receiving it, he had taken a lot of money with him. And she said, what's money, you know, go and bribe Caligariac for this title of king. Caligariac took the money, but he banished Antipas to Gaul.

And so that was the end of his ambition. And that was the end of Herod Antipas. He and Herodias were... Herodias, Caligariac said, look, you can stay here if you want.

But she said, no, you know, I'll be with my husband. That's the only honorable thing she did. So, she was banished with him to Gaul.

The end of this man who fought the prophet of God because the prophet had enough courage to speak out against his sin, had him in prison. And so we read of the death of the cousin of Jesus, John the Baptist. And when Herod heard of all that Jesus was doing, though he had put John the Baptist to death, his conscience was probably still troubling him.

He said, this is John the Baptist. He's raised from the dead. And that's why he can do these marvelous works.

He no doubt really believed that John the Baptist was indeed a true prophet. A while ago, a fire truck went up that way. Now it's come back this way.

I guess they're lost. I'm not surprised. They've been harassing us here at Calvary Chapel like you can't believe.

Sending out inspectors every month. And the whole game is to find something that the other inspectors haven't found. And they go through here with a fine tooth comb, just trying to find anything.

And it takes them a long time, several hours. And then they'll find some little thing and write us up another citation, you know. And they're minor kind of things.

And one says, oh, that's all right. The next one says, no, this is a code. And we've been having a... Well, Romaine's been having... I don't know who has the worst of it, but I just hope we don't burn.

I don't know they'd be able to find us or not. When these tapes go across the country, people don't know what we're talking about really. But so now in verse 13, when Jesus heard of this horrible atrocity against John, it no doubt shocked him.

And he went by ship into a desert place apart. Desert, not meaning desert like the Mojave or Sahara, but a deserted place. Because there really isn't any real desert around the Sea of Galilee, but there are places that are deserted or uninhabited.

And so he went to one of the uninhabited areas there across the Sea of Galilee. Over on the opposite side of the sea, there were several sort of deserted areas. So when the people had heard that he was leaving, they followed him on foot out of the cities.

And when Jesus went forth, so he got around the other side and here was a great multitude of people waiting for him. Now, the Sea of Galilee is only eight miles across. And from the area of Capernaum, if you cross over to the area of Bethsaida or Gennesaret, it isn't really that far.

And you can watch a little boat go all the way across. So as they're taking off for Capernaum, it's easy to tell which direction they're going. They just watch which direction they're going.

Then the people run around the upper end of the lake and then they'd be there waiting for him when he got to the other side. This must have been difficult. Here you're troubled because of this horrible atrocity.

And you're wanting to get alone for just a little bit to sort of, you know, put things together, get things in perspective. And so you try to get off alone and have just a little time to wait upon God and to pray and to sort of get yourself collected. And you get to the other side and here's the whole multitude of people waiting there for you.

Now, it would have been very easy for Jesus to have been brusque and say, look, I came over to get a rest, you know, can't you leave me alone? And I know so many people who have a great ministry today who might do just that. But Jesus, when he saw the great multitude, was moved with compassion toward them. Oh, God gives the heart for the ministry like Jesus.

That whenever we see the people, rather than feeling, oh no, you know, why do they have to come here? Don't they know I want to be alone? That whenever we meet them, we are moved with compassion towards them. God give us a heart of compassion towards the needs of people. And the needs of people always moved the heart of Jesus with compassion.

He could not see a needy person without being moved with compassion towards them. And he healed their sick, spent time with them. Now, many of these people were not really seeking him.

All they were seeking was help, the healing of their sick. And it would be very easy to sort of jump on the crowd and to needle them and get after them. Because all you want is the benefits.

You really don't want to make the commitment. And that was so true. But Jesus never chided them.

He never got on them. He just went ahead and ministered to them freely. And I love him for that.

Now, when it was evening, his disciples came to him and they said, this is a deserted place and the time is now passed. You better send the multitude away that they might go into the villages and buy themselves some food. But Jesus said unto them, they don't need to depart, give them to eat.

And they said unto him, we only have five loaves and two fish. And he said, bring them to me. And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass.

And he took the five loaves and the two fishes. And looking up to heaven, he blessed and he broke. And he gave the loaves to his disciples and the disciples to the multitude.

And they did all eat and were filled. The word filled in Greek is glutted, that it would be a more appropriate translation. They were, they all ate and were stuffed.

And they took up of the fragments that remain twelve baskets full. And they that had eaten were about five thousand men beside the women and children. So here is that recording of the marvelous multiplication of

the loaves and the fishes to feed the five thousand.

Now there are those who have difficulty with miracles. And so when they read this story, they try to read into it a plausible explanation to remove the miraculous from it. We are told that these five loaves and two fish came from a little boy who probably, when he told his mother, I want to go over and see Jesus.

She packed him a lunch. And so when the multitude was there, they said, Lord, we, we, we, you better send them away that they might buy food. And he said, no, they're hungry.

They might faint in the way. Let's feed them. They said, oh, well, we had, you know, several thousand dollars worth of bread.

We couldn't feed this crowd. Jesus said, well, what do you have? And Andrew said, there's a little kid over here with five loaves and two fish. But what's that to a multitude like this? And so the little boy came and gave his five loaves and two fishes to Jesus.

And he then blessed them and broke the bread and distributed. And there are those who explain that in those days they wore these long robes and they had sleeves that tied at the wrist. And quite often people carried bread and fish in their sleeves.

And that when everybody was hungry and they all knew they were hungry, everybody was so selfish. None was willing to share their own little lunch that they had tied in their sleeves. But when the little boy came forth and offered to Jesus his five loaves and two fishes, everyone was so touched and moved by the beautiful example of this little child.

They all untied their sleeves and shared with each other. And there was really enough there that they could gather 12 basket fulls after everybody had eaten. And so it was the touching example of a little child that moved the multitude.

And isn't that a beautiful story? God's got a hot place for men who try to mess with the word. And immediately Jesus constrained the disciples to get into a ship and go before him to the other side while he sent the multitudes away. So he said to the disciples, go ahead and get in the boat and go over the other side.

I'll send the multitude away. And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray. And when the evening was come, he was there alone.

Now notice this. And I think this is important to note. It had been an extremely hard day.

Jesus had received the news of the horrible atrocity. His cousin, John, had been beheaded by Herod. And he felt it sort of imperative to just get alone for a while.

So he got into the ship with the disciples and they headed over to the other side. But the people seeing the direction where they were going, ran around the upper part of the Galilee and met him when the ship landed. And here was the multitude.

And Jesus spent the day ministering to them. He's weary emotionally because of what had happened to John. No doubt wearied physically by ministering to these people, being pressed by them all the day long.

Up until the evening, he feeds them. And then he sends them away as the disciples are heading back. Hard day, troubling news, physically exhausted.

Time to really flake out. But instead, he went up into a mountain apart to pray. Oh, the importance that prayer had in the life of Jesus.

Now, if he being the son of God felt the necessity to be strengthened through prayer on these kind of occasions, how much more we weak, failing disciples or followers of him need to spend time in prayer to be strengthened by God. We would say, oh, it's time to really get a rest. You know, I really need to get a nap.

I really need to get my strength. But instead, he went up and spent the evening, the night in prayer, according to another gospel. But prayer was his place of strength.

He discovered to be a place of great strength, even as you can discover that prayer is a place of great strength indeed. And so when the evening was come, he was there alone. But the ship was now in the midst of the sea and it was tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary.

Coming from the side of Gadara back across the sea, there is that valley that comes into the Sea of Galilee from the Mediterranean, where when they get these storms, it usually blows in through that Kinneret Valley. And so in coming back, you're coming against that wind that comes howling through that valley. And so the disciples were faced with this dismal prospect of trying to row against the wind and against the flow of the wind whipped waves because they were heading back towards the area of Capernaum.

And so they were in the midst of the sea and they were being tossed with the waves, for the wind was coming from that direction of the Mediterranean. And in the fourth watch of the night, Jesus went unto them walking on the sea. That is almost morning.

And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, it's a spirit. And they cried out for fear. But immediately Jesus spoken to them, saying, Be of good cheer.

It is I. Be not afraid. And impulsive Peter answered, Lord, if it is you, bid me to come to you on the water. And Jesus said, Come on.

And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid and he began to sink and he cried, saying, Oh, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand and caught him and said unto him, Oh, thou little faith, why did you doubt? Amazing story, isn't it? How that Peter was able for a time to walk on the water and it would appear that he could walk on the water as long as he kept his eyes on Jesus.

But suddenly maybe a wave crashed splash in his face and he looked around. Oh, what am I doing out here? You know, and he started to sing. Lord, save me.

And Jesus, I can hear Jesus chuckle as he said, Oh, you have little faith. What happened to you? You know, you started. Well, what happened to you, Peter? Oh, you have little faith.

I think that the lesson is keeping our eyes upon the Lord. I think that is so important for us. It is so easy for us to get our eyes on our circumstances and we start looking around at the boisterous waves.

We start looking at our problems. We start looking at our situations and we begin to sink because every one of us are faced with daily situations that can really sink us if we really get into it. We need to keep our eyes on the Lord who is the master over the sea, over the waves, over the winds.

And looking at Jesus, he was able to walk for a ways on the water. Getting his eyes off of Jesus and on the waves, he began to sink. And as long as we keep our eyes on Jesus, we can walk on the water, so to speak.

Now, to me, it is great that when Peter started to sink, he knew where to call. Lord, save me. I've been in the same boat.

Man, how many times I've cried, oh, Lord, save me, you know. And the graciousness of Jesus. Oh, thou little faith.

Why did you doubt, Peter? You're doing all right. And when they had come into the ship, the wind ceased. Then they that were in the ship came and worshiped him, saying, of a truth, thou art the son of God.

They just had seen such a tremendous demonstration of his divine powers. And when they were gone over, they came to the land of Gennesaret. And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all the country round about and brought unto him all that were diseased.

And Gennesaret is there that it is Kinnereth or Gennesaret. It's the name of that valley coming from the area of the Mediterranean aqua area. And they besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment.

And as many as touched were made perfectly whole. Now, Jesus did not have some kind of magic garment that if you touch it, you would be healed. The healing took place in each case because of the faith of that person.

And the touching of his garment was the point for them to release their faith. There is sort of a passive kind of faith if such a thing can exist. A believing that God can do it.

Knowing that God can do it. Being fully persuaded and assured that God can do it. And I think that we all probably fit in that category.

Who believe in God. We know that God can do anything. And I'm faced with some malady or whatever.

And someone says, well, God can heal you. Yes, I know that is true. I don't doubt that.

I go to the hospital and I see these people in critical condition. The doctors have given them up. And I say, well, God can heal you.

And I believe that. I believe God can do anything. But there is something to activating that faith.

To where it is not, I believe that God can heal you, but that I believe that God will heal you now. That moment when faith is activated to receive that touch or healing from God. And I think that this touching of the hem of his garment created a point of contact for those people to release their faith.

In other words, in their minds, they were saying, I know that the moment I touch the hem of his garment, I'll be healed. And that was so in their minds that the moment they were able to grab the hem of his garment,

they released the faith and it was no longer just a passive. I know God can, but I know that God is.

And in that moment, released their faith to take them at that moment, their healing. And the moment they activated or released the faith, they were healed. There were many things in the new Testament that formed points of contact for the releasing of faith.

And Jesus actually established more or less points of contact on various occasions. When he put mud in the blind man's eyes and said, now go and wash it out the mud. And as soon as you wash it out, you can see the man believed that the minute I can wash this mud out, I'm going to see.

And it was a point of contact for the releasing of his faith. In the old Testament, when the prophet Elisha told Naaman to go dip in the river Jordan seven times, when you come up from the seventh time, you're going to be healed. It was a point of contact for the releasing of faith.

In the book of Acts, they sent out from Paul handkerchiefs or more literally sweatbands and his aprons, and they would lay them on the sick and the people would be healed. Peter, when he was walking down the street, they would set the sick in the way so that his shadow would fall on them. And the shadow of Peter falling on them was a point of contact because they, Oh, I know as soon as Peter's shadows falls me, Oh, I'm going to be healed.

And they had that point of releasing faith and somehow we need to, to be able to release the faith so it will become activated. So I know that as soon as, you know, it'll happen. And it's a point of contact to release the faith.

And there is a valuable lesson there. Then Jesus, then came to Jesus, scribes and Pharisees, which were from Jerusalem. Hey, these guys had come a long way to challenge him.

They came all the way from Jerusalem clear up to Galilee, which was about a journey of almost well over a week from Jerusalem to Galilee. So they came up to the Galilee and they said, why do your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? Now the Jews, of course, had the written law, but on top of the written law, they had developed the oral traditions and these oral traditions many times actually superseded the law as traditions have a way of becoming so embedded in our being that it's harder to break traditions than almost anything else. And Jesus was not one to conform to traditions.

He was not in any ways a traditionalist. Of course, they also had the Talmud, the several volumes of the amplification and explanation of the law. So in it, many, many traditions.

So why do your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they don't wash their hands before they eat bread. Now from this, don't immediately conclude that they're a bunch of dirty slobs. According to the tradition, there were many things that could make a person unclean, but this uncleanness was a ceremonial uncleanness, which if you were ceremonially unclean, you could not enter into the temple.

And many things could make you ceremonially unclean. If you would touch anything that was unclean, you became unclean. Now, if you touched anything that was touched by something unclean, you became unclean.

And to them, Gentiles were unclean. And if a Gentile walked across the dusty road and you would walk across and you would, the dust that his foot touched would become unclean because he was an unclean Gentile. And thus, if you walked in the same dust, you became unclean because you touched the unclean

dust that was made unclean by a Gentile who walked over it.

There were certain foods that if you ate them would make you unclean. And so, this business of washing became quite a tradition. And there were certain ways by which you had to wash in order that you might ensure that you were cleansed from all of the dust or impurities or the unclean things that you might have come in contact with.

And you had to do this before you touched your food, else your food would be unclean. And when you ate it, you would become unclean because you were eating unclean food. So, they had the traditional ceremony for washing.

And you would have to hold out your hands in an upright manner and they would pour water over your hands as you rubbed your hands back and forth, up and down. And the water had to drip off of the wrist because the water is now unclean because it's touching whatever was unclean on your hands. And you've got to make sure the water doesn't fall on you.

So, you hold it out and up so that the water drips off your wrist and doesn't hopefully run up your arm or that portion of your arm would be unclean. Having then poured the water over and washing your hands in this upright manner, then because the dirty water from your unclean fingers has come down over your hands, you've got to get rid of that. So, you put your hands down next and they pour water over the top of your hands as you are rubbing your hands in a downward manner.

And then finally, rubbing your fingers together as water is poured over to get rid of all of the uncleanness. And here were the disciples just, you know, grabbing the bread and eating it without going through this whole little ritual. And this is what Jesus was being challenged on.

Your disciples aren't following the traditions. There's nothing in the Bible that says you've got to wash your hands a particular way. And at this point, Jesus is about ready to blow tradition totally out the window.

So, his disciples were accused of transgressing the traditions, not going through the ceremonial washing of their hands before they eat their bread. But he answered and said unto them, why do you also transgress not the traditions notice, but you transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? Oh, watch out now. Because even within the church, it is possible for us to develop certain traditions and to get hung up on traditions.

And it is also possible that many of the traditions within the church are actually a violation of the commandment of God. There was a lady who came to church here at Calvary Chapel, invited by some of her friends. And she was visiting here from Missouri.

And she happened to belong to the Missouri Synod Lutheran Church. And after service, she came up to me and she was shaking. She was so angry.

She said, why didn't you face the altar when you prayed? I mean, she was really upset. And I said, what? She said, when you pray, you didn't turn and face the altar. Why didn't you? I said, well, I guess because I don't think Jesus lives in the altar.

But the traditions, you say, why didn't you turn towards the statue of Jesus when you prayed? But by traditions, there is the violation of the commandment of God that says we're not to have any images. You see, we're not too far removed from the Pharisees and from the Jews who allowed tradition to actually

develop to the point that by the traditions, there was actual a violation of the commandment of God. So they were accusing the disciples of Jesus of not keeping the traditions.

Jesus said, hey, you're violating not the traditions, but the commandments of God by your traditions. For God commanded saying, honor thy father and mother and he that curses his father or mother, let him die the death. But you say, whosoever shall say to his father or mother, it is a gift by whatsoever thou may be profited by me.

And he honors not his father, his mother, he shall be free. And thus you have made the commandment of God of none effect by your traditions. Now the Bible says you weren't to curse your father or mother.

That's the commandment of God. You're to honor them, not to curse them. But they had a tradition.

If you prefaced your curses by saying, look, this is for your good and your benefit. You're a dirty, rotten little, you know, it's a gift. Now I'm doing it for your benefit.

I'm telling you this for your benefit. They were free as long as they would preface it by that. This is a core band.

This is something by which you might be benefited. And so Jesus points out that through their tradition, they had actually made allowance for an actual violation of the commandment of God. And thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your traditions.

You hypocrites. Jesus is pretty straight. In fact, he gets so straight, it's almost scary.

Uh, when we move along in Matthew here, you hypocrites. Well, did Isaiah prophesy of you saying this people drawn near to me with their mouths and they honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me teaching for doctrines, the commandments of men.

Now the church has developed many dogmas that they teach for doctrine and are in the same position as were these scribes and Pharisees in the time of Christ, who began to honor and hold traditions and the commandments of men, even over the commandments of God. So he called the multitude and he said unto them now here and understand this and here goes tradition bond. It's not that which goes into the mouth that defiles the man, but that which comes out of the mouth.

This is what defiles the man called the multitude. Listen now, hear me out. It's not what goes into your mouth that defiles you.

It's what comes out of your mouth that defiles you. Oh boy. That is just going against that whole tradition of, of how you're to eat with washed hands and, and really even what you're to eat.

So go out and enjoy a pork chop. It's not what goes into your mouth. It's going to defile you.

Just make sure it's cooked well. So all the tapeworms and the trichina is dead so that you won't become infected each shrimp, because it's not what goes into a man's mouth that defiles a man. It's what comes out of his mouth that defiles him.

This is heavy, heavy duty. Then his disciples said unto him, Hey Lord, don't, you know, they were really offended at what you said. And Jesus answered and said, every plant, which my heavenly father hath not planted shall be rooted up.

There are plants that are growing, weren't planted by the heavenly father. They're going to be rooted up. Just let them alone.

Notice he didn't say go out and argue just to let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both of them will fall in the ditch.

Then Peter said to him, Lord, what did you mean by the parable? And the parable was, it's not what goes into the man's mouth that defiles him that comes out. Peter said, what do you mean by that Lord? And Jesus said, don't you understand that whatsoever you eat goes into your belly and is cast out into the drug. It goes through your body.

It's purged. But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart and they are the things that defile a man for out of the heart proceeds evil thoughts and murders and adulteries and fornications and thefts and false witness and blasphemies. And these are the things that defile a man.

But to eat with unwashed hands doesn't defile you. You don't have to go through a ceremonial washing before you eat food. It doesn't defile you.

It goes through your body, passes through. But what you say, what comes out of your mouth, it reveals what's in your heart and out of the mouth, the hatred, the bitterness, those things that you express, the lust, the desires, these things that are in the heart, the things expressed by the mouth. And there is the true defilement of a man.

Then Jesus went from there and he departed into the coast of Tyre and Sidon. Now going into the coast of Tyre and Sidon, he's actually moving into the territory that is Phoenician and thus moving out from the totally Jewish community. And behold, there was a woman of Canaan, a Syrophenician woman, who came out or lived in those same areas.

And she cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David, for my daughter is grievously vexed with the devil. But he did not answer her a word. And his disciples came and they besought him, saying, Lord, would you send her away? She's bugging us.

What they were saying is, Lord, take care of the daughter. Get rid of the woman. She's, you know, she won't let us alone.

But he answered and said, no doubt in the hearing of the woman, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. And he answered and said, it's not right to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs.

And she said unto him, that's true, Lord. Yet the dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their master's table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith.

Be it unto thee even as you will. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour. Now, as we read the translated text, we have difficulty.

Difficulty understanding Jesus treating a woman in this rather cold and almost insulting manner as it would appear from our text. But let us note a few things. Number one, Jesus from the beginning knew he was going to heal the daughter.

He knows all things. Jesus said the Bible says they didn't need to testify to Jesus about anything because he knew all men. He knew what was in men.

He knew what was in the heart of this woman. He knew the faith that was there. And he was drawing skillfully from her this great expression of faith that was there.

And so his first rebuff was that of silence. He didn't answer her at all. And over the apparent silence of Jesus, she persisted until the disciples were so bugged by her.

They said, Lord, why don't you just, you know, take care of her? And she knows she's a menace. And Jesus, no doubt, as I say, in her hearing said, look, I'm only sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And so she came and she worshipped him saying, Lord, help me now continuing to draw her out.

He said it isn't right to take the children's bread. That is. The children of Israel and those benefits of healing that he had brought to them, it isn't right to take that and to cast it.

And here's where you got to be careful. There were two words for dogs and the Jews often called the Gentile, Gentile dogs. And it was a dirty word.

Now there are no swear words in Hebrew. They have no words to swear by in Hebrew, no curse words. If a Jew wants to curse, he has to curse in English.

There are no curse words in which I think is quite fascinating. But the dirtiest thing they can call a person is a dog. They had these wild dogs that ran in packs that everybody hated.

They were vicious. They were just hated. And so they would refer to usually rather than these, they would rather than say he's a Gentile, they'd say he's a Gentile dog.

But then there was another Greek word for dog, which is a little puppy, which was usually around the table as the children were eating. Now, when they ate, they didn't have utensils like we have, the knives and forks and spoon. And so the kids didn't have to learn table etiquette, but they would just pick off with their hands and you would eat with your hands.

And after you were through with your meal, you would then take a piece of the bread and you would wipe your hands off with the piece of bread. Just clean all the grease and juices off with a piece of bread. And then they'd usually take that piece of bread and toss it to the little puppies that were around the table.

And so it was a very common picture in the minds of the people when Jesus said, it isn't right to take the children's bread and to cast it to the little puppies or to cast it to puppies. And she said, yes, Lord, but the little puppies eat the bread that falls from the master's table. She said, all right.

Great is your faith. It was faith that conquered over the silence of Jesus. It was faith that conquered over the seeming reluctance of Jesus.

It was faith that won. This mother was desperate. Some of you mothers have wayward daughters.

Now, probably none of you would go so far as to say they're vexed by the devil, but here was a mother in real distress and she came to Jesus and her faith triumphed. Listen, come to Jesus. Don't go away until you've received.

There was no way she was going to go. Until she received help. Jesus answered and said to her, Oh woman, great is thy faith.

Interesting. He said that also of the Roman centurion and of this Seraphim woman and Jesus departed from there and he came near to the sea of Galilee and he went up into a mountain and he sat down there and great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame and blind and dumb and maimed and many others. And they cast them down at Jesus feet and he healed them in so much that the multitude wondered when they saw the dumb speaking, the maimed all and the lame walking, the blind were able to see and they glorified the God of Israel.

Then Jesus called his disciples under him and he said, I have compassion on the multitude because they've continued with me now for three days and there's nothing to eat and I will not send them away fasting lest they faint in the way. And his disciples said unto him, where should we have so much bread in the wilderness as to fill this great multitude? And Jesus said unto them, how many loaves do you have? And they said seven and a few little fishes and he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground and he took the seven loaves and the fish and he gave thanks and break them and gave to the disciples and the disciples to the multitudes. And again, they did all eat and were stuffed and they took up of the broken meat that was left seven baskets full.

And they that did eat were 4,000 men beside the women and children. And he sent away the multitude and they took the ship and they came to the coast of Magdala. Now Magdala is probably two miles south of Capernaum there in the sea of Galilee.

They have discovered the ruins of the city of Magdala from which Mary Magdalene did come. And you can see the ruins there at Magdala today. And incidentally, um, someone wasn't reading the scriptures carefully and they built a church there at Magdala that they call the church of the loaves and the fishes where they said Jesus fed the multitude.

But notice he didn't come there until after he had fed the multitude in the mountains apart from there. But it's convenient for the tour buses. And so they take you down by the sea of Galilee there at Magdala to show you the mosaic of a church where there's a loaves and fishes and the mosaic on the floor.

And they swear that this is the spot where it all happened.

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