

The Syrophenician Woman Matthew 15:21-28

by R.A. Torrey

R.A. Torrey's sermon on the Syrophenician Woman illustrates the power of persistent faith and humility in seeking divine help.

Scripture: Psalm 51:4-5, Matthew 15:21-28, Matthew 21:21, Mark 7:24-30, Luke 15:18-19, Luke 18:42-43, John 4:50-53, Romans 9:4, Galatians 3:7, Ephesians 2:15-16

Topics: "Faith", "Persistence in Prayer"

Description

R.A. Torrey explores the story of the Syrophenician woman in Matthew 15:21-28, emphasizing her persistent faith in seeking healing for her daughter. Despite being initially ignored by Jesus and facing cultural barriers, her earnest cries and humble approach reveal a profound understanding of her need for mercy. Torrey highlights how her faith, characterized by persistence and humility, ultimately led to her daughter's healing, illustrating that great faith can be found in unexpected places. The sermon underscores the importance of approaching God with earnestness and humility, regardless of one's background or circumstances.

Transcript

(Compare Mark 7:24-30)

DISCOVERY OF THE FACTS

1. Faith Seeking a Blessing, vv. 21, 22

Where is the scene of this miracle laid? For what purpose did our Lord depart to those parts? (12:15; 14:3; 15:12.) Did He desire to have His presence in those parts known? (Mark 7:24.) Why did it become known? Can it ever be hid when He is present in a house?

Who came to Him there? What brought her? What made her think that He could help her? How did she show that she was in earnest? ("Cried," v. 22; "crieth" vv. 23, 25, 27.) What was her prayer? Did He often hear that cry? (9:27; 17:15; Luke 17:13; 18:13.) Did He ever let it pass unheeded? Why did she cry: "Have mercy on me"? Why didn't she cry: "Have mercy on my daughter"? How did she address Him? What did the title "Son of David" mean? (1:1; 20:30, 31; 22:42-45.)

2. Faith Tested, vv. 23-26

What was Christ's reply? Why did He not answer? Did He answer her by anything if not by a word? What prayer did the disciples make to Him? Why? Did they want Him to heal her child and thus send her away, or simply send her away without the blessing? (Matt. 19:13; Luke 18:39.) What did He reply? What did His answer imply under the circumstances? What did He mean by saying that He was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel? (John 10:16; Eph. 2:16, 17.) When was the barrier that stood between Christ and the Gentiles removed? (Eph. 2:15, 16.)

Did she give up? Suppose she had? Did her persistence do any good? What is meant by "she worshipped Him"? What was her prayer? What were its characteristics? What did our Lord reply? What sentence is added in Mark's account? (Mark 7:27.) What is implied by "Let the children first be fed"? What did He mean by "the children's bread"? (Ro. 9:4.) Was the word He used as harsh as "dogs" sounds to us? Was the Gentiles' position like that of a little dog under the table compared with Israel's as a child at the table?

3. Faith Overcoming Difficulties and Obtaining the Blessing, vv. 27, 28

What did the woman reply? What does the answer reveal? Is one who is willing to take a lowly place likely to get a blessing from Christ? (8:8; Ps. 51:4, 5; Luke 15:18, 19; 23:40-42.) Is one who does not? (Luke 18:11.) What is the force of her reasoning: "The dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table"? In what sense was what she asked crumbs that fell from the Master's table?

What reward did she get? What was it overcame the real obstacle that lay in the way of His granting her request? What word of Christ is illustrated by that? (Matt. 21:21.) What did this woman's faith make her? (Gal. 3:7.) Whose else faith did our Lord commend as great? (8:8-10.) Where do we find the greatest faith today, in Christian or heathen nations? What does faith usually get? (8:13; 9:29; Mark 5:34; 9:23; Luke 7:50; 18:42, 43; John 4:50-53.) When was her daughter healed? Where can any one find deliverance from Satan's power? How can he get it?

CLASSIFICATION OF TEACHINGS

1. Our Lord Jesus

His nature--divine, 25; human, 27.

His office--Messiah, 22; sent of God, 24.

His desire for solitude; could not be hid, 21, 22.

His mission--first to the Jew, 23, 24, 26; then to the Gentile, 26.

His fidelity to His mission, 24.

His compassion--could not send the needy away unhelped, 23, 24; healed the sufferer, 28.

His justice--demanded that the woman take her right place before He granted the desired blessing, 26.

What He does--tries faith, 23, 24; answers prayer; gives faith all it asks; commends faith; heals the sick, 28; delivers from Satan's power those who are grievously vexed by him, 22, 28.

2. The Syrophenician Woman

(1). Her position:

Outside the covenant promises and blessings, 22, 24, 27; in sore distress, 22; no helper, 25.

(2). What she did:

Believed in Jesus as the Messiah, came to Him, at first on wrong grounds, prayed, believed, 22, 28; worshipped, persisted, 25-27; humbled herself and took her rightful place, 27.

(3). What she got:

Testing, instruction, 23-26; commendation, blessing, 28.

Another arrangement:

(1). Her trouble, 22.

(2). Her hindrances:

Her position as a heathen, 22, 24; the unsympathetic disciples, the seemingly unheeding Saviour, 23.

(3). Her mistake:

Came as one within the covenant, 22-24.

(4). Her faith:

Great, 28; prayerful, persistent, 22, 25; prevailing, 24, 28.

(5). Her prayer:

Earnest, 22, 23; direct, brief, personal, 25; definite, 22, 25; humble, persistent, 22, 25, 27; believing, prevailing, 28.

(6). Her humility:

Took the dog's place, 27.

(7). Her victory:

Immediate, complete, 28.

3. The Daughter

What she was--in Satan's power, grievously tormented, 22.

What she had--a believing, praying mother, 22.

What was done for her--taken in prayer to Jesus, 22, 25, 27.

What she got--immediate and complete deliverance, 28.

4. Faith

Where found--often where least expected, 22, 28.

In whom rooted--Jesus, 22.

How manifested--in coming to, praying to, holding on to, expecting much from Jesus, 22, 25, 27.

What it accomplishes--overcomes seemingly insurmountable obstacles, 24; obtains all it asks, pleases Christ, wins commendation, 28.

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