

Be Sure of Him

by Richard E. Bieber

The sermon emphasizes the importance of having a radical, undiluted faith in Jesus, which involves total commitment, trust, and surrender to His promises.

Scripture: Matthew 15:21, Romans 13:11, 2 Timothy 1:12, 2 Timothy 2:17

Topics: "Radical Faith", "Spiritual Discipline"

Description

Richard E. Bieber preaches on the powerful story of the Canaanite woman's unwavering faith in Jesus, emphasizing the need for believers to go deeper in their commitment to Christ, stripping away anything that competes with Him. He challenges listeners to be fully awake, fully committed, and to have a radical, undiluted faith in Jesus, as this is essential for the work God has called us to. Bieber urges for radical surgery in spiritual lives, clearing away clutter, and embracing disciplines like prayer, emphasizing that faith in Jesus must be active, unwavering, and willing to surrender completely.

Transcript

And Jesus went away from there and withdrew to the district of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out and cried, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely possessed by a demon." But he did not answer her a word. And his disciples came and begged him, saying, "Send her away, for she is crying after us." He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me."

And he answered, "It is not fair to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." Then Jesus answered her, "O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire." And her daughter was healed instantly. Matthew 15:21-28 It doesn't matter whether you've been a believer for twenty years or six months or two weeks. The message coming to all believers at this hour from Jesus Himself : "I want something more than you've committed to me so far.

We're going into deeper water now." When you take that turn in the road and start heading up to your Jerusalem it's like being lifted out of childhood and put down on a battlefield where toy weapons won't do it anymore - you've got to have the real thing. Why God put up with our half-slumbering faith for so long is a mystery. But one thing is clear, He is calling us from now on to be fully awake and fully committed - to strip our lives of everything that competes with Jesus Christ.

"You know what hour it is, how it is full time now to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed; the night is far spent, the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of lightPut on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to gratify its lusts." Romans 13:11-14 If this means radical surgery in your spiritual life so be it. If it; if it means clearing away the clutter, do it. If it means disciplines in your life as you've never had before, like a serious discipline of prayer, do it.

If it means disengaging yourself from a hundred useless pursuits, do it. If it means that your friends think you've become a fanatic, so be it. And the reason Jesus is calling for more and putting His finger on those things in our lives that must go, is because the work He is giving us cannot be accomplished by anything but a radical, undiluted faith. This work cannot be done by people who are still leaning on the flesh; whose minds are dull and flabby from living the soft, self-indulgent way of this world, who are confident when the money's rolling in and scared when it isn't, happy when the sun is shining and depressed when it rains.

It is going to be done by people whose lives are rooted and grounded in Jesus Christ and in nothing else.... who know that nothing in this world can be relied on but Jesus. God is giving us a chance to be people of faith. If we refuse He will raise up others. There will be an army of faith to get the word out at this eleventh hour. It's coming into being now, with us or without us. Faith in Jesus Christ, and nothing else. Faith that knows who Jesus is, what He has done, what He will do, and lives and dies willingly for His name.

Every problem we are now experiencing can be traced to lack of this faith. If we're half-hearted it's because we don't really believe. If we're undisciplined it's because we don't believe. If we're living in defeat and discouragement it's because we don't believe. If we're fruitless, If we're without love, If we're being disobedient - at the bottom of it all is unbelief. No one is going to sink their whole life into following Jesus unless they believe in Jesus all the way, unless they believe that Jesus has conquered sin on the Cross, unless they believe that Jesus will do what He says He will do.

Until a man or woman believes in Jesus with everything they've got, whatever relationship they think they have with Jesus is imaginary. Faith cannot be passive and limp. Faith cannot be hot and cold. Faith in Jesus is a day-in-and-day out walk. Here's why a half-baked faith in Jesus is imaginary: - nothing ever comes of it, -it produces no fruit. It may be less disruptive to have an imaginary wife who always smiles, never gets tired, brings me my imaginary slippers, and never disagrees with me.

But the real wife who makes real demands and speaks real words is the one who calls forth real love and who gives real comfort and who bears and mothers real children. To be married to an imaginary wife doesn't involve any commitment - but to married to a real wife does. An imaginary husband, who is handsome and strong and constantly adoring, might thrill one in a dream. But living with a real husband is far more satisfying---and challenging. To believe in an imaginary Jesus doesn't involve any commitment - but to believe in the real Jesus means total commitment, total trust, absolute surrender, utter dependence on his promises, complete obedience to His word of command.

When you're sure of Jesus, certain that you can depend on everything He says, when you know that He's there doing this redemptive work in your life, guiding you, sustaining you, living in you, then things happen! Divine things, awesome things of which this sin-blinded world doesn't have a clue. You want to know why Saul of Tarsus bore such fantastic fruit, why his words are as alive today as ever? Because Paul was sure of Jesus! "But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and am sure that he is able to guard

until that Day what I have entrusted to Him." 2 Timothy 1:12 But the Lord stood by me and gave me strength to proclaim the word fully that all the Gentiles might hear it.

So I was rescued from the lion's mouth; the Lord will rescue me from every evil and save me for His heavenly Kingdom. To Him be the glory for ever and ever. 2 Timothy 2:17-18 This man believed! So the question is:, Do you believe in Jesus? Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of the living God? Do you believe that Jesus is the Lamb of God who took away the sins of the world on that Cross? Do you believe that Jesus is alive from the dead and at the right hand of power?

Do you believe that this Jesus is in our midst at this moment with all authority in heaven and on earth? Do you believe that Jesus is able to save you from the lion's mouth? Do you believe that Jesus is able to deliver you from that burden? Do you believe that Jesus is willing to fill you afresh with the Holy Spirit this day? Do you believe that Jesus is able to bring you through the fire? Do you believe that Jesus is able to confirm your word of testimony with signs following?

Do you believe that Jesus wants to send you forth today with a double anointing of His power? Don't expect Jesus to give you showers of blessing just because you say you believe. Faith is not what you say or what you feel but what you will, what you cling to even when you see no sign of his presence. Will you still believe when Jesus is silent? Will you still believe when Jesus holds the blessing back? When the master holds out the bone, the dog looks at the bone. When the master hides the bone behind his back, the dog looks at the master.

When there is no bone, the dog still loves his master and trusts him. The dog that doesn't belong to the master will leave when no bones are apparent. He'll go trotting off looking for someone else to offer him bones. But the dog that belongs to the master sticks by his master bones, or no bones. That dog is often more faithful than the master's own children. "it is not fair to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table."

You may think you're one of the children, an Israelite, a believer, a Christian. But the test is, where is your faith when no bread seems to be coming? Where is your faith when God's ways baffle you? Are you still sure of the Master's love? Or do you start wavering and looking around for another way? This Gentile dog - this Canaanite woman - shows us what faith in Jesus really is. We may know this incident by heart, but how we need to learn and practice its lesson! This episode located in Matthew 15 follows on the heels of a long series of encounters with unbelief.

After those beautiful parables of the Kingdom in Matthew 13 Jesus goes back to his home town, teaches in the synagogue, and confronts unbelief. "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? Are not his brothers and sisters with us? Who does he think he is?" They are offended - they won't believe. Then John is beheaded, and Jesus withdraws to the wilderness followed by throngs of people. "Feed them" Jesus says to His disciples and they stand there like dummies - unbelief again.

After that feast in the wilderness Jesus sends the disciples away in the boat and comes to them in the middle of the night walking on the water. "It's a ghost!" they cry - unbelief again. "Take heart, it is I. Have no fear." "if it's you Lord, bid me come to you on the water." "Come." Peter starts out but soon unbelief takes over again and down he goes. "Lord, save me!" "O man of little faith, why did you doubt?" Along come the Pharisees and Scribes. Jesus offers them the Kingdom of God and they start picking at Him about their beloved traditions.

"How come your disciples don't wash their hands before they eat?" - unbelief! So Jesus tells them it's not what goes into a man's mouth that defiles him - but what comes out of it. Even His own disciples don't get it. "Are you also without understanding?" says Jesus. And why were they without understanding? Because of their unbelief. Finally, as they approach Tyre and Sidon this Canaanite woman comes to Jesus with the first real faith He has seen in a long time. What a joy! This woman isn't even a daughter of Israel but she calls Him Lord, Son of David - she believes!

"Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David, my daughter is severely possessed by a demon." No answer. Not even a word. Jesus is going to show these stiff-necked disciples, who have seen and heard unspeakable mysteries and are still blind as to what real faith is. "Lord, send her away. She's getting to be a pest." "I was only sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But she came and knelt before Him saying, "Lord, help me." And He answered, "it is not fair to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs."

"Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table." "O woman, great is your faith. Be it done for you as you desire!" And her daughter was healed instantly. This woman wasn't chasing signs and wonders. She was pursuing Jesus with a broken heart for her demon possessed daughter. She was sure of Jesus. No matter what He said or what anyone else said or did, she was sure that Jesus would help her. And he did! And he always will! It is to this faith that the Spirit of God is calling every person who reads these words.

Calling you to repent of your unbelief and break clean away this day from the things your unbelief has enmeshed you in, and put your faith in Jesus - commit yourself to Him now! You're wasting your time coming to church if you never get around to believing in the Jesus crucified and risen who is proclaimed here. You're wasting your time reading that Bible if you still refuse to believe the things Jesus tells you there. And prayer - prayer is an empty monologue and it's little short of blasphemy to end it with "In Jesus' Name" if you won't believe what Jesus promises you.

And don't say you can't believe. It's not a matter of "can or can't", it's a matter of "will of won't." The Spirit of God is now speaking to your heart bearing witness to the Crucified One. And He is giving you the power to put yourself into the hands of Jesus now if you will. Will you? There is nothing else in this world that you can be sure of - nothing! Every other anchor will let go and every other foundation will crumble. So take your life off those other foundations and put it totally on Jesus, the Son of the living God, and do it now. And God will confirm your faith with things you have never seen before. Fruit will flow from your ministry to the glory of God alone that will surpass your wildest dreams.

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