

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

I have had the privilege of training many interns that have worked alongside me over the past 23 years.

One of the things that I have discovered is that some people tend to catch on quicker than others despite that most of my interns tend to be engineering graduates.

And the thing that I have found, at least in my experience, is that it is not necessarily a hearing issue as much as it is a heart issue.

I would say the same thing applies in our spiritual lives.

Unless we prepare our hearts to receive God's message, it will not make an impact in our lives.

The scriptures warn the believer the dangers of becoming dull of hearing.

[Heb 5:11 NKJV] 11 of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.

It is not that we are unintelligent or incapable of understanding; it is that we become lazy or sluggish regarding things that concern our faith.

If the gospel doesn't have an impact in our lives then how will it ever impact those that we share it with???

Let's pray...

[Mar 7:24-37 NKJV] 24 From there He arose and went to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And He entered a house and wanted no one to know [it], but He could not be

hidden. 25 For a woman whose young daughter had an unclean spirit heard about Him, and she came and fell at His feet. 26 The woman was a Greek, a Syro-Phoenician by birth, and she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter. 27 But Jesus said to her, "Let the children be filled first, for it is not good to take the children's bread and throw [it] to the little dogs." 28 And she answered and said to Him, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs under the table eat from the children's crumbs." 29 Then He said to her, "For this saying go your way; the demon has gone out of your daughter." 30 And when she had come to her house, she found the demon gone out, and her daughter lying on the bed. 31 Again, departing from the region of Tyre and Sidon, He

came through the midst of the region of Decapolis to the Sea of Galilee. 32 Then they brought to Him one who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech, and they begged Him to put His hand on him. 33 And He took him aside from the multitude, and put His fingers in his ears, and He spat and touched his tongue. 34 Then, looking up to heaven, He sighed, and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened." 35 Immediately his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke plainly. 36 Then He commanded them that they should tell no one; but the more He commanded them, the more widely they proclaimed [it]. 37 And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, "He has done

all things well. He makes both the deaf to hear and the mute to speak."

Show map:

Over the past several weeks, we have seen the ministry of Jesus Christ focused on the region around the Sea of Galilee –

He and the disciples have pretty much just been going back and forth – crossing over from one side to the other.

Now, Jesus and His disciples find themselves along the Mediterranean Sea in the cities of Tyre and Sidon.

They are far from the multitudes that were following them – perhaps they are seeking a little time of rest.

Now, in the first miracle we are going to look at this morning, we find this woman whose daughter has an unclean spirit.

The scriptures clearly reveal the significance of this woman is that she was Greek meaning that she was a gentile.

It is important to note that Jews did not mingle with the gentiles.

To do so would deem them ceremoniously unclean. For a Jew to interact with a gentile would be the same as interacting with someone who was a leper.

They wouldn't even think about going into a gentile's home.

We see an example of this later on in the gospels as the religious ruler when they had Jesus arrested and falsely

accused Him of trying to over throw Rome, they bring Him before Pontius Pilate.

And in their hypocrisy – despite their false accusations against Jesus Christ that would have defiled them according to the Mosaic Law, they refused to go into the Praetorium because they didn't want to be defiled.

So here Jesus interacts with this Gentile woman.

And the second half of verse 26 states that, she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter

The gentile woman has a need; we might even say that it is her daughter that has the need because she has a demon in her.

So the gentile woman is interceding on behalf of her daughter.

When we intercede for someone else, we are making that person's need our own need and that is what the woman is doing.

But notice that it clearly states that she kept asking. She doesn't just ask once and stops.

She was persistent in her petition.

Let's look closely at Jesus' response in verse 27 again,

[Mar 7:27 NKJV] 27 But Jesus said to her, "Let the children be filled first, for it is not good to take the children's bread and throw [it] to the little dogs."

Now, here is one of the reasons that we have to read the scriptures in context – because taking this verse out of context, it appears that Jesus is calling this broken-hearted mother a little dog.

This is by no means the case –

The Greek word that is utilized here for dog is not the one that is used for a mangy wild dog – it is the word that is used to describe a puppy.

The picture that Jesus is giving here to the woman is one that was and is still played out at my house.

Since we have three dogs, our small dogs will tend to wait underneath the table for us to give them some of our food.

And my kids will give them a nugget or a French fry that they do not want.

Now, Matthew, in his account provides more insight to this event that is not recorded in Mark.

Turn with me to Matthew 15,

[Mat 15:23-25 NKJV] 23 But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, "Send her away, for she cries out after us." 24 But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." 25 Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, help me!"

Matthew records that the disciples wanted to Jesus to get rid of her – as she was persistent in asking for her daughter.

Here Jesus defines the focus of His mission which was supposed to be the Jews first.

In the book of Acts, when Jesus speaks to His disciples He tells them the order again, Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria and then the rest of the world.

Paul in the book of Romans

[Rom 2:5-10 NKJV] 5 But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, 6 who "will render to each one according to his deeds": 7 eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; 8 but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness--indignation and wrath, 9 tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the

Jew first and also of the Greek; 10 but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

So let's see the woman response to what Jesus just told her.

[Mar 7:28 NKJV] 28 And she answered and said to Him, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs under the table eat from the children's crumbs."

The woman's response wasn't one of outrage because Jesus called her a little dog.

What she says here in verse 28 is, "I understand that the focus of Your ministry is to the Jews – that they have a special place in God's redemptive plan. Yet I also

understand that Your ministry extends beyond the Jewish people, and I want to be part of that extended blessing.”

She is not asking for the portion that was supposed to be given to the Jews – she simply wanted a nugget that the Jewish people did not want.

Jesus then responds to the woman’s faith by healing her daughter. He didn’t even have to say a word; He simply told the woman that her daughter was healed from the unclean spirit.

You see, by not answering the woman’s prayer initially, Jesus was drawing from the woman an expression of faith in order that not only her daughter would be healed, but that she herself would develop a relationship with Him.

Many times, we find ourselves in the position of this gentile woman.

Why doesn't God answer my prayers right now? Why does He make me wait? Why is He being difficult with me?

By waiting, He allows us to discover true faith, by waiting we learn perseverance and prevailing prayer and also we learn to set our eyes on the eternal instead of our present situation.

We must always remember that God's delays are not necessarily His denials. Just because God doesn't say yes to you today doesn't mean He may not say yes tomorrow or the day after or the week after. Don't worry about it. Just leave it in His time.

Our next event takes us back to the south eastern part of the Sea of Galilee.

Decapolis means 10 cities and the interesting thing of these 10 cities is that they were 10 Greek cities occupied by Rome.

So again, we see the ministry of Jesus extend into gentile nations.

Here, just like in our last event, we have a group of friends who are interceding on behalf of someone else.

This man is deaf and the scriptures tell us that he also has a speech impediment.

Jesus takes aside and proceeds to heal the man in an unusual way.

He puts His finger on the man's ear, He spits on His fingers and He touches that man's tongue.

Over the past few weeks, we have seen Jesus heal in many different ways, in some of the miracles He uses touch, in others He speaks and in the previous one we studied today He simply said your daughter is well.

What Jesus did to the deaf/mute man is a fulfillment of scripture. Where???

Turn with me to Isaiah 35,

[Isa 35:4-6 NKJV] 4 Say to those [who are] fearful-hearted, "Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come [with] vengeance, [With] the recompense of God; He will come and save you." 5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be

unstopped. 6 Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, And streams in the desert.

As Jesus touched this deaf/mute man the scriptures tell us that He looked up to the heaven's and sighed – this means that Jesus groaned. Why did He groan? Because of the consequences of sin – remember, everything goes back to the Garden of Eden, death and suffering. But one day, we will have glorified bodies where we will no longer groan.

[2Co 5:1-4 NKJV] 1 For we know that if our earthly house, [this] tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2 For in this we **groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, 3 if**

indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. 4 For we who are in [this] tent **groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life.**

The same word that is used here in 2 Cor 5 is the word that is used to describe Jesus as he looked up to the heavens and said, "Be Opened"

Immediately, the man was healed.

And once again Jesus tells them not to tell anyone but they told everyone.

[Mar 8:1-21 NKJV] 1 In those days, the multitude being very great and having nothing to eat, Jesus called His disciples [to Him] and said to them, 2 "I have

compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat. 3 "And if I send them away hungry to their own houses, they will faint on the way; for some of them have come from afar." 4 Then His disciples answered Him, "How can one satisfy these people with bread here in the wilderness?" 5 He asked them, "How many loaves do you have?" And they said, "Seven." 6 So He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. And He took the seven loaves and gave thanks, broke [them] and gave [them] to His disciples to set before [them]; and they set [them] before the multitude. 7 They also had a few small fish; and having blessed them, He said to set them also before [them]. 8 So they ate and

were filled, and they took up seven large baskets of leftover fragments. 9 Now those who had eaten were about four thousand. And He sent them away,

A few weeks ago, our text covered another mass feeding of the multitudes.

This second feeding is often neglected because it sounds so much like the previous one that many people simply lump them both as the same miracle.

These are two separate events

- The number of people:

The first incident it says that there were 5000 men. I had mentioned that with woman and children the total amount of

people would have been about 15k. This event puts the total of people at only 4000

- The timing of the event takes place:

In the first event, Jesus tells the multitude to sit on the grass, so it is most likely taking place during the springtime. In this event, Jesus tells them to sit on the ground most likely an indication that this takes place during the long hot summers.

- The available resources:

In the first event, the disciples took the lunch of a small boy – we found that in the gospel of John. There were five loaves and two fish. Here, there are seven small loaves and a few small fish.

- The leftovers:

In the first event, there were 12 baskets of leftovers that were collected from the mass feeding. In this event, the leftovers are collected in seven large baskets. The Greek word that is used in this even in chapter 8 for baskets is the same Greek word that is used in the book of Acts when it tells us that Paul was lowered in a basket as he escapes those that were trying to kill him in Damascus.

- Most significant difference is that these are separate peoples as the first group was a multitude of Jews while this multitude was a group of Gentiles.

The disciples however, appear to have forgotten everything Jesus had taught them from the previous event.

Jesus tells them that He has compassion on them and their reaction is "How can one satisfy these people with bread here in the wilderness?"

How are we going to feed these people in the middle of the wilderness Jesus???

They have seen Jesus walk on water, they have seen Jesus feed 15k people, they have seen Jesus heal the multitudes yet, the disciples appear to always go back to trying to resolve the situation with earthly wisdom – just like we do.

We can imagine Jesus hoping one of the disciples might say, "Jesus, You did this before. You can do the same kind of work again."

Jesus hoped they would regard His past faithfulness as a promise to meet their present need.

Just like in the previous feeding of the multitudes, Jesus gives thanks and breaks the bread – the multiplication is occurring in the hands of Jesus as He breaks the bread.

And just like the previous time, the multitudes ate until they were filled and Jesus orders the disciples to pick up the leftovers.

Now in verse 10, they head back to the west side of the Sea of Galilee which is the Jewish side and here Jesus encounters the religious rulers once again.

10 immediately got into the boat with His disciples, and came to the region of Dalmanutha. 11 Then the Pharisees came out and began to dispute with Him, seeking from Him a sign from heaven, testing Him. 12 But He sighed deeply in His spirit, and said, "Why does

this generation seek a sign? Assuredly, I say to you, no sign shall be given to this generation." 13 And He left them, and getting into the boat again, departed to the other side.

An old dude once said, ““Faith does not ask for signs. True faith takes God at His Word and is satisfied with the inward witness of the Spirit.”

The religious rulers had been witnesses to the many miracles that Jesus had already performed.

Here they want to see Jesus perform another one. It is interesting that it says that they are testing Jesus similar to when Satan tested Jesus in the wilderness.

One of the ways Satan tested Jesus was by asking Jesus to turn stones into bread.

Church, it is important to note that God doesn't do miracles to entertain those who have no intention of believing. The disciples had already made up their mind regarding who Jesus was - as they already had accused Him of being demon possessed.

In Matthew's account,

[Mat 16:4 NKJV] 4 “A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.” And He left them and departed.

The “sign of Jonah” referred to the death and resurrection of Jesus. Just as Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days, Jesus was in the belly of the earth for three days.

The Pharisees and the Sadducees were the ones that put Jesus to death, and even though He rose from the dead, most of them would still not believe.

They wanted a sign, they got their sign and they did not believe.

The Children of Israel were the same way when they came out of Egypt. They saw the Red Sea open, they saw manna rain down from the sky and countless other signs yet, when they got to the Jordan – they too didn't believe.

14 Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, and they did not have more than one loaf with them in the boat. 15 Then He charged them, saying, "Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod." 16 And they reasoned among themselves,

saying, "[It is] because we have no bread." 17 But Jesus, being aware of [it], said to them, "Why do you reason because you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive nor understand? Is your heart still hardened? 18 "Having eyes, do you not see? And having ears, do you not hear? And do you not remember? 19 "When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments did you take up?" They said to Him, "Twelve." 20 "Also, when I broke the seven for the four thousand, how many large baskets full of fragments did you take up?" And they said, "Seven." 21 So He said to them, "How [is it] you do not understand?"

We finish our study this morning with another lesson for the disciples. We find Jesus once again focused on doing the

will of God and we see the disciples interested in feeding their earthly appetite.

Jesus gives them two warnings and he uses the term leaven in both. Keep in mind that leaven in scripture almost always is a reference to sin.

1. He warns them about the dangers of false religion and legalism. That is what the Pharisees taught. They only took care of the outside instead of what was in their hearts. They were hypocrites.
2. He warns them regarding living in the flesh. Herod was one who lived in the flesh. Earlier we had studied how Herod enjoyed hearing the words that John the Baptist spoke but yet he lived a life that was contrary to the word of God.

Allowing any of those two types of leaven will definitely affect our spiritual lives. The leaven will keep us from discerning the things of the Lord.

Instead of realizing that Jesus was trying to teach them an important lesson, the disciples thought that they were in trouble because one of them dropped the ball and forgot to bring bread with them.

Despite Jesus repeatedly meeting their needs, their concern was what they were going to eat next.

Jesus quotes from the book of Jeremiah here in verse 18,

**[Jer 5:21 NKJV] 21 'Hear this now, O foolish people,
Without understanding, Who have eyes and see not,
And who have ears and hear not:**

This was in reference to the people of Israel and their idol worship.

Religious rituals are a lot like idol worship,

It involves a bunch of nonsense that nobody understands, yet we repeat it over and over again because we think this is what it means to do the “god-thing”.

Religious rituals without meaning makes one dull of hearing.

God doesn't want us to be religious. He wants us to know Him and walk with Him.

He doesn't want us to have religion. He wants you to have a relationship with Him.

Amen.

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

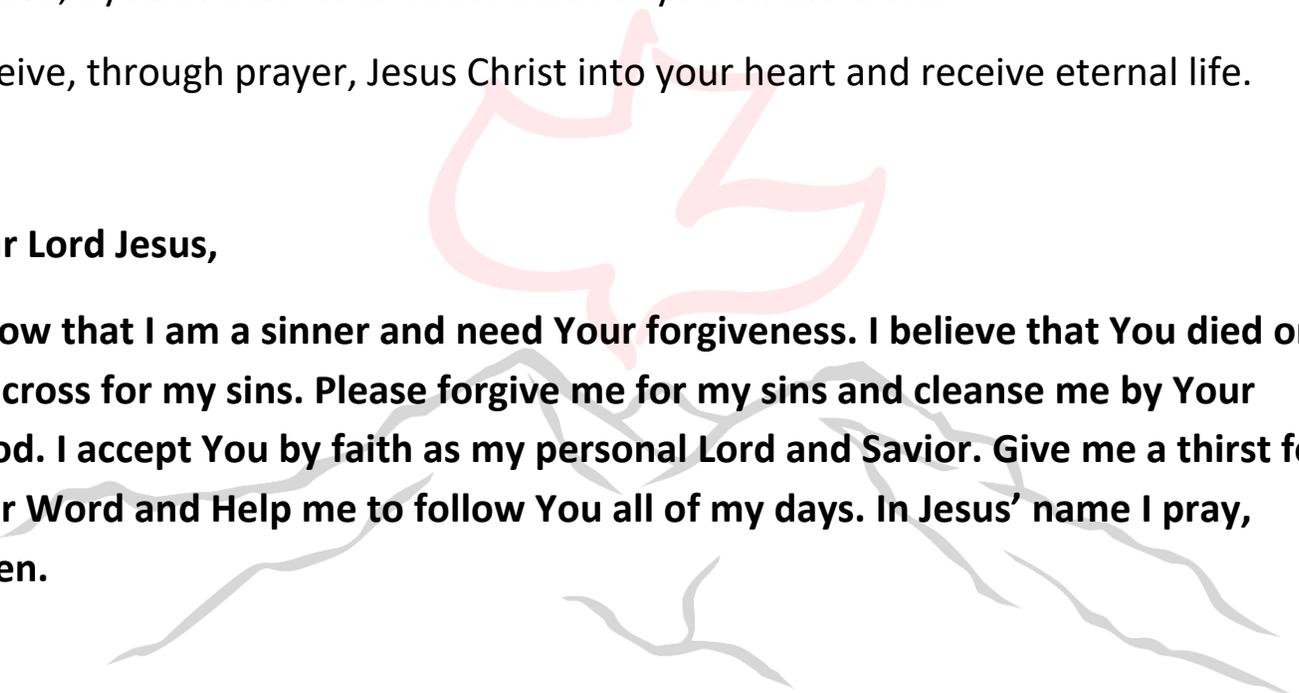
Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.



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