

"The Hidden Heart of God"

Matthew 15:21-28 - 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 was crying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely oppressed 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 out 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 right 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.

Let's face it. This is a weird story. Here comes a Canaanite woman, asking for help—just like everybody else in Jesus' life. But Jesus doesn't say a single word! That's not like Him. He doesn't usually ignore people.

Maybe that's the reason why His disciples felt comfortable saying the rude thing they did. They said, "Send her away, for she is crying out after us." They didn't say, "Lord, please help her," even though that would have gotten rid of her just as quickly. But she was a Gentile, and maybe they didn't feel the need to be kind to her.

And Jesus keeps saying strange things. He says, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel," and after she keeps begging, He says, "It is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." I can't believe it! Is this Jesus talking? If He said this to me, I would probably run home in tears.

Not this lady! She has a little girl to take care of. As long as Jesus doesn't say straight out no, she's going to keep begging Him.

I wonder if that's the kind of faith Jesus was looking for? It didn't matter what test He set before her, she just kept coming. And Jesus rewarded that. "O woman, great is your faith!" And He healed her daughter.

Sometimes it seems like God's heart is hidden from us. We know from the Bible that He is kind and loving, but the circumstances of our lives seem to be saying exactly the opposite. We pray and cry out, and things just get worse. We are tempted to give up—to stop praying—even to leave the faith.

Let's not do that! Let's keep crying out to God—begging Him—harassing Him, even, until He helps us. Isaiah encouraged people to do that, too. He said, "You who call on the

LORD, give yourselves no rest, and give Him no rest" (Isaiah 62:6b-7a, NIV). Again, He said, "I will wait for the LORD, who is hiding His face from the house of Jacob, and I will hope in Him" (Isaiah 8:17).

We know what the heart of God is like. It is the heart of Jesus, who loved us so much that He became a human being like us, and lived among us. It is the heart of someone who would do anything, even suffer and die, to rescue His people. It is the heart of someone who gives good gifts, even everlasting life, to those who trust in Him.

Is God hiding His face from you? Call out to Him anyway—because you know His heart in Jesus.

THE PRAYER: Lord, hear my cry for help, and let me always trust in You. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

This Daily Devotion was written by Dr. Kari Vo.

Reflection Questions:

1. Have you ever had a friend or relative behave in a way you didn't understand?
2. Have you ever felt that God was hiding from you?
3. What do you do when you feel like God is hiding or not listening?

[Today's Bible in a Year Reading: 1 Chronicles 7-9; 1 Corinthians 7:20-40](#)