

## Living Off Of The Crumbs

**Intro:** Have you ever had one of those days, when you just wanted to kick back and relax? You didn't want to do any work, you didn't want to do any chores, you didn't want to be bothered by the everyday things of life? Maybe you just wanted to chill out in the hammock in the back yard, or sit on a beach with a good book, or binge watch your favorite movies, or maybe just read the newspaper in peace.

I think that we all have had days like that.

In our passage today, Jesus is taking a trip. He is getting away and going to the coast. He has just finished healing the multitudes, dealing with some very bent-out-of-shape Pharisees and correcting some wrong thinking on the part of his disciples.

Turn to Mark chapter 7. Today we are going to look at a turning point in the ministry of Jesus Christ.

Earlier in chapter 7 Jesus had to correct some wrong thinking on the part of the Pharisees and on the part of his disciples. He told them that doing the right things, did not make a person right with God. He also told them that "things" do not make a person unclean. Rather, it was the overflow of the heart, that led to actions that made a person clean or unclean. If you want live a righteous life, then our actions need to be controlled by the Holy Spirit. You can go back and listen or watch last week's sermon by going to our webpage.

Let 's begin today by looking at Mark 7:24

### **The Path**

[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.](#)

Jesus and the disciples left the region of the Sea of Galilee and head to the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon. **MAP** This would have been a journey of about 40-60 miles. The terrain would have been hilly, rocky and would have taken them some time to reach their destination.

Tyre and Sidon were in Gentile territory. It was also called Syro-Phoenicia. This would mark the first time that Jesus would have left Jewish territory. I wonder what the disciples were thinking as Jesus led them to this region? This was the area that Jezebel, the wicked queen was from. This was the heart of pagan worship, where Baal, Ashtoreth and Astarte (goddess of beauty) were held in high regard.

When Jesus arrived in town, with his 12 disciples, they entered into a house and they didn't want anyone to know about it. He wanted to remain hidden and under the radar so to speak.

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The scripture tells us “[but, HE could not be hidden](#)”. If Jesus wanted to, he could have kept hidden so that nobody knew he was there. But what this verse means is that he was not seeking a public ministry. At other times, in Jesus ministry, he would walk openly in the streets or go to the synagogue, so that he could be seen. In this case, he wanted to have a break and rejuvenate with his disciples. He was not seeking to do “public” ministry in the area.

However, Jesus did come to gentile country to do private ministry and to demonstrate to his disciples the principle, that he had just talked about, while they were in Galilee, mainly that there was no such thing as clean and unclean people.

Look at verse 25 and 26

### **The Problem**

[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.](#)

The Bible tells us that a Syro-Phoenician woman, a non-Jewish woman, heard about Jesus and sought him out. In Matthews parallel account, he adds that she was a Canaanite, the ancient enemy of Israel and the people that God had commanded the nation of Israel to drive out of the land.

This woman, it appears, had heard about Jesus’ healing ministry in Galilee and that is why she goes in search of him.

In Jewish culture, it would not have been proper for a Jewish man to talk to a woman in public. In Jewish culture it would not have been proper to talk to a Gentile. So it would have been improper for Jesus to talk to this gentile woman if he was to keep with the social and religious norms of Jewish society. But Jesus was not interested in doing the right thing socially, he was interested in doing the right thing spiritually.

This woman comes to Jesus because she has a problem. It’s a big problem. She has a little daughter who is possessed by an unclean spirit. A demon-possessed child. Horrific experience for a mother.

Well Jesus arrives in Tyre. Tries to find some privacy but can’t hide. She hears that He’s there. She shows up. Her heart is broken because she has a little daughter with an unclean spirit. The unclean aspect would probably mean that the demon was manifesting itself in some kind of immoral conduct in a child. Horrible situation, and her heart is grieved and broken and she has nowhere to turn.

Do you think she had gone through whatever ceremonies her idol gods required? Probably. Do you think she had tried to appeal to whatever deities she had been taught existed?

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Sure. Whatever she had done in the past, she had lost all confidence in them. She is now doing what [1 Thessalonians 1:9](#) says the Thessalonians did, “They turned from idols to the living God.”

### The Plea

This woman comes and falls at the feet of Jesus and worships him as Messiah. Matthew 15 states [Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely oppressed by a demon.](#) She used the Messianic title, acknowledging that he was the messiah and therefore, capable of healing her daughter.

According to Matthew 15, she kept crying out, to the point that the disciples wanted to turn her away.

[23 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.”](#)

This woman loves her daughter so much that she would do anything to free her from her enslavement. I dare say that all of our parents can relate to this. We would rather harm come to us, then for harm to come on our children.

This woman keeps begging and Jesus keeps silent. Finally, Jesus breaks his silence.

Then Matthew, who was writing to a Jewish audience, adds a few more details. Matthew 15:24 [He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”](#)

What Jesus was reminding her was that His mission was first, to preach the good news of Salvation to the Jews, the Gentiles, would come later.

She was overly persistent. But the Savior does not immediately say anything. It is only after a unspecified time and her continually petitioning Christ, that he finally addresses the woman.

### The Parable

#### Mark 7:27

[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.”](#)

What does that mean? “To the Jew first and also to the Gentiles.” So this is simply an analogy. Jesus loved to use parables, this is a parable, analogy, like a meal. You have the food on the table, you feed the children first. It’s not good, it’s not appropriate, it’s not proper to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs. That’s His little parable, His little analogy. You feed the kids, you don’t take the kid’s food and feed the dogs. There’s a priority here. That’s all He’s saying and the priority is, the right thing to do is to feed the family.

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Why does He say this to her? Because it's critical that she understand that the open door to the Gentiles is still future. And that's why there's no great teaching going on in Tyre and no great teaching events going on in Sidon. She's a dog, in that sense. You really don't think that this is probably the best word to use to describe anybody, particularly a lady, particularly a lady in distress. But Jesus used it.

There's two words in the Greek for dog. One used in [Matthew 7:6](#) means a big dog, big nasty dog, you know, a big street garbage eater dog, and that's the kind of dogs that existed in those days. And the other is a little diminutive dog that might run around the house and eat scraps. There were no sort of lap dogs in those days, but at least he used the diminutive word. He is saying, "Look, this is not the time for the bread of salvation truth to go to the Gentiles."

**28 And she answered and said to Him, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs under the table eat from the children's crumbs."**

She is the first person in Mark to understand a parable of Jesus because she answers him with a metaphor from the parable.

This woman is witty, she's insightful. Her response is not to say, "I'm so offended." Her response, "Yes, Lord, yes, Lord," He's still Lord, "Yes, Lord." Here's her wit, "But even the dogs under the table eat from the children's crumbs."

That's a great response, isn't it? "You're not going to get rid of me with that analogy. Okay, okay, I'm a dog, I buy...I'm a dog, I'll buy that, I'm a dog. I don't have a right to the covenant promises of Israel, I'm a Gentile, I come from an idol-worshiping people. All right, I'm a Canaanite. Okay, we should have been exterminated, but I'm here and this is the situation. And whatever falls off the table, can't I have that?" She knows she's not at that table. I love this about her. She's not offended at all.

Martin Luther wrote about this encounter. "This woman saw the Gospel- that you're more wicked than you ever believed, but at the same time more loved and accepted than you ever dared to hope."

And she's has a sweet wit about her and a humility. "Yes, Lord," no offense, no defense, no resistance. "Even the dogs get to eat the children's crumbs that fall off the table. I know I'm not a Jew. I know I'm not part of the covenant people. I know I'm on the outside. I know I belong to an idolatrous country, an idolatrous race. I know all that. I know You're in the privileged position, the Jews are in the privileged position, I know that. But don't the benefits spill off of them to the rest of us?"

She's absolutely right. And by the way, if I may extend that metaphor, crumbs from the table, a little bit. Keep this in mind that the message that saves the Gentiles is the message that saves the Jews, it's not a different message, not a different bread, it's not a different table, it's not a different meal. Okay? Gentiles are not given a separate revelation, a separate

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object of faith or a separate way of salvation. All Gentile salvation is the gospel that has overflowed from the bounty given to Israel. Romans 9, the covenant, the adoptions, the scriptures, the Messiah all came to Israel and we get the overflow. That's what Romans 9 says. "Through Israel comes the blessing of salvation to the world."

### **The Proclamation**

**29** Then He said to her, "For this saying go your way; the demon has gone out of your daughter."

In fact, her faith is so amazing that in Matthew's account Jesus says, "You have great faith." You don't just have faith, you have mega faith, you have big faith, strong faith, great faith. So she comes to Jesus. We don't know how all of that came about, but she comes to Him.

So, He said to her in verse 29, "Because of this answer," He saw that answer which was evidence of true faith, still penitent, still broken, still knowing she deserved nothing, she calls Him Lord. She has confessed with her mouth Jesus as Lord, even though He hasn't yet died and risen from the dead, and He says, "Because of this, go, leave. 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.

Jesus had such control over the demon world, He didn't have to be present, right? He didn't have to be there. His power was omnipresent. His power was everywhere. And the demon was dispelled out of that little girl and He wasn't even there.

It's a beautiful picture of faith, isn't it? Her faith fights through the barriers of religion, rejects idolatry, humbles itself, it's penitent, it's respectful, it's relentless. It will not let go.

### **Take Away**

God desires humble, persistent faith in Jesus.

Salvation is available to anyone who will humble himself or herself and repent.

The woman's actions remind us, that we are not worthy of the grace of God. None of us deserves to be saved, but yet, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us and he extends to us the gift of salvation.

### **COMMUNION**

Several times a year we commemorate the sacrifice of Jesus by observing the Lord's Supper or communion.

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At Edgewood, we ask that only those who have put their faith and trust in Jesus take communion.

We also like to prepare our hearts as we reflect on what Jesus did for us on the cross.

One of the great prayers of the English language is the prayer of approach to the Lord's Supper, written by Thomas Cranmer, in the Book of Common Prayer. It is based on the passage of scripture that we just studied.

It goes like this:

We do not presume to come to this your table, merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your manifold great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table, but you are the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy.

I Corinthians 11, recounts the details of the last supper and gives us some instruction.

**23** For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, **24** and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." **25** In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." **26** For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

**27** Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. **28** Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. **29** For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself.

While the deacons, pastors and worship team come, let's take a few moments to pray and confess our sins, and prepare are hearts to take communion.

We do not presume to come to this your table, merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your manifold great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table, but you are the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy.

As we hand out the elements today, you will notice that there are two cups, stacked on top of each other, in each place holder. Grab both of them. Twist them to get them loose. If you don't have a relationship with Christ, or if there is a sin that you haven't confessed or made right, please pass the tray along to the next person.

Bread

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and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Juice

**25** In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Benediction

Hebrews 13

**20** Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, **21** equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.