ASKING FOR THE CRUMBS

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**TEXT: Mark 7:24-30; Matthew 15**

**INTRODUCTION**

Does anybody in this room have a need this morning?

I’ll bet most of us have several

I’ll go a step farther and say that most people in this room this morning have several needs and aren’t quite sure how they are going to be met

-- Some are looking at devastating family problem

-- Some are looking at financial difficulty

-- Some are looking at a problem with a child

-- Some aren’t sure of their salvation, and afraid to ask

-- Some are looking at a sickness and wondering what lies ahead

I could stand here all day and not exhaust the list of problems that many of us are facing

-- And in the midst of our problems, we need help

-- We need Someone we can turn to for our solution

-- We need God to work in our life

We don't need Him to lift every burden, …

… just the heaviest

We don't need Him to move every mountain, just the highest

We don't need God to give us the whole loaf, just a crumb

That’s the situation we are looking at in this passage

Jesus is approached by a mother who is in desperate need

And her need has brought her to the Lord

She comes to the Lord and as she does, she is not asking for the whole meal, she is just asking for the crumbs

She is just asking Jesus to move in her situation

Jesus has just told the Pharisees, the scribes, His disciples and the multitudes that nothing in and of itself is unclean

**Mark 7:14-16 …**

He told them that defilement is from within

**Mark 7:20-23 …**

His message was simple:

*What a man is in his heart … is what he truly is!*

As soon as that encounter is over, Jesus and His men go to Tyre and Sidon, which is in the heart of Gentile territory

Once again, they try to get some rest from the business of the ministry

But, we are told in **v. 24** that **“*He could not be hid*”**

That’s always the case!

When Jesus is in … a person, a family, a church, a community, or wherever,

He simply can’t be hid!

Word will get out that He is in the house

That is why we should do everything we can to ensure that we create an atmosphere where He can work thru us!

In this text, a burdened mother finds Jesus

She begins to petition Him for the help she needs

She faces several challenges, and we’ll see her persistence getting her what she came for

As we begin to study this text, I want you to understand that there is hope

God has the solution to our problems

I want to share a few *thoughts* from this passage that I believe will help us find what we need for our own lives as well

I want to Teach on this thought

***“Asking for The Crumbs”***

**~~~Prayer~~~**

First, we see …

**I. HER “REQUEST” – vs. 25, 26**

***“For a certain woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of Him, and came and fell at His feet:” “The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation; and she besought Him that He would cast forth the devil out of her daughter”***

Let’s look at 3 Thoughts here

**A. The Reason She ‘Came’**

This woman came to Jesus because she was concerned about her daughter

The child was demon oppressed and was probably acting out in violence and anger

***“a certain woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit”***

She needed help in a desperate way

It may be that the demon was causing bodily harm to the child

This was the situation in the case of another demon oppressed child,

**Mark 9:22 – *“And ofttimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us”***

Is it possible for a person to be demon oppressed today? (Explain the difference between Oppression & Possession)

We need to be careful not to label every abnormality …

… as a demonic affliction

But, I believe that there is a lot more of it than people are aware of

There is a wide variety of possible symptoms of demon oppression,

Such as a physical impairment that cannot be attributed to an actual physiological problem, a personality change such as depression or aggression, drug and alcohol addictions, supernatural strength, immodesty, antisocial behavior, and perhaps the ability to share information that someone has no natural way of knowing

It’s important to note that nearly all, if not all, of these characteristics may have other explanations,

So again, it’s important not to label every depressed person or epileptic individual as demon-afflicted

On the other hand, Western culture doesn’t take satanic involvement in people’s lives seriously enough

They think it’s too archaic, out of date, or outmoded

In addition to these physical or emotional distinctions, someone can also look at spiritual attributes showing demonic influence

These may include a refusal to forgive

As in **II Cor. 2:10,11 …**

The belief in and spread of false doctrine, especially concerning Jesus Christ and His atoning work

Let’s look at a few …

**II Cor. 11:3,4; 13-15; I Tim 4:1-5; I John 4:1-3 …**

**The Reason She ‘Came’**

**B. The Reason She ‘Cried’**

**Matthew15:23** tells us that she **“*cried*”** after Jesus

The word means to*shout after another*

It’s the idea of a loud, persistent shrieking

This woman was shouting to Jesus for the help

Why was she so Frantic? … She was Desperate

She was heartbroken over the condition of her child and she was Determined to get her child the help the child needed

**The Reason She ‘Cried’**

**C. The Reason She ‘Called’**

**v. 25** tells us that this woman had **“*heard of Him*”**

I’m sure she heard how Jesus had …

-- Healed all manner of diseases

-- Opened the eyes of the blind

-- Unstopped the ears of the deaf

-- Driven the demons from other people

Maybe she heard how Jesus healed the Gaderene

She may have said, “*If He can deliver that man from a legion of demons, surely He can deliver my daughter from the grip of one devil!*”

This woman came to Jesus because Faith and Hope had been aroused in her heart

-- She needed something that society had not been able to provide

-- She was looking for something that her religion had been powerless to give her

-- She needed a solution that she had not been able to provide by her own self-efforts

She was desperate and she saw Jesus as her only hope!

How many of us can identify with this poor, anxious mother?

Perhaps you are dealing with a child that is out of control

Perhaps you are at your wits end over some situation in your life and you need help

Perhaps you have exhausted every means at your disposal and do not know where to turn for help

Maybe what you need is salvation

Or, maybe what you need is restoration and forgiveness

Whatever the need in someone’s life may be;

We can learn a lesson from this woman:

… And that Lesson is - Bring the need to Jesus!

Regardless of what we face in our life today,

The answer will be found in Him!

He can move your mountain; meet your need; save your soul; forgive your sins; touch your loved ones; you name it, He can do it!

But, you have to bring it to Him!

Don't be afraid to call on His name

Matter-of-fact He invites us to come,

**Matthew 11:28 – *“Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest”***

**Jeremiah 33:3 – *“Call unto Me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not”***

We don’t have to bear the burden alone!

Bring it to Jesus, Why? … He cares,

**I Peter 5:7 – *“Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you”***

**Hebrews 4:15 – *“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin”***

And He wants to help,

**Hebrews 4:16 – *“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need”***

**HER “REQUEST”**

**II. HER “RESOLVE” – vs. 27, 28**

***“But Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it unto the dogs” “And she answered and said unto Him, Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs”***

This woman comes to Jesus for help

.. and when she doesn't get the response she hoped for …

She stays after Jesus until she gets what she wants

**A. The ‘Obstacles’**

She had to overcome a lot of Obstacles in order to secure her daughter's healing

It seemed that she met resistance to her request at every turn

Yet, she persisted until she achieved her goal

Look at some of the Obstacles she faced and overcame by faith

**1.** Her Race

**v. 26** tells that she was ***“a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation”***

[**Matthew 15:22**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Mt+15%3A22) tells us that she was a Canaanite

***“And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto Him”***

This reveals a couple of things about this mother

-- She was descended from a Cursed people

When Joshua led the people of Israel into Canaan,

They had been commanded to totally destroy the Canaanites

**Deuteronomy 7:2 – *“And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them:”***

She was a member of a doomed race

-- She was from a people known for their vile religious practices

This woman had two strikes against her from the very start

**2.** Her Religion

**Matthew 15:22** also tells us that she came to Jesus and called out to Him and said,

**“*Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David*”**

Here she was a Gentile mother crying out to the Jewish Messiah

She had no right to come to Jesus through the door of Judaism

She was a Gentile and according to [**Matt 15:23**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Mt+15%3A23)**,**

Jesus gave her the response she deserved

**“*He answered her not a word*”**

**3.** Their Racism

When the disciples see and hear this Gentile calling out to their Messiah, they react by telling Jesus to send her away!

**v. 23 b – *“And His disciples came and besought Him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us”***

They wanted nothing to do with her

She was not one of them!

In their eyes, she was annoying and that was enough to justify them not caring about her at all

**4.** Her Rejection

As Jesus speaks to this woman, His words appear harsh to our ears

His words must have shaken her to the very core of her being

His words probably broke her heart

[**Matthew 15:23-26**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Mt+15%3A23-26) adds some detail concerning this conversation

-- First, Jesus simply ignores her – **v. 23**

It’s as if He turns an indifferent ear to her cries

-- Then, He tells her that His whole purpose in coming to this world was to reach the lost sheep of Israel – **v. 24**

-- When she persists, Jesus tells her that she is a dog and doesn’t deserve the children's bread

**v. 26 – *“But He answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs”***

**Mark 7:27 – *“But Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it unto the dogs.***

The disciples rejected her and now it appears that Jesus is rejecting her as well

**5.** The Reality

The realities of this situation are harsh!

Her daughter was possessed by a devil

She was a member of a doomed race

These religion men did not seem to care about her or her situation at all

It must have appeared to her that her situation was hopeless

Some of us maybe looking at some of the same barriers today

We’ve been praying and seeking God about matters that trouble our heart

We have cried out to Him and asked Him to do this or that in our life and there seems to be no answer

We feel like giving up!

Let me try to encourage you

God's silence is not an indication of God's unwillingness to meet our need

God's silences serve to temper our faith and to remind us that He operates on a different schedule that we do

What obstacles are you facing?

Persist in seeking the Lord and in His time, you will see Him work!

*Your faith should not be defined by what you receive from God;*

*But by what it takes to stop you from getting to God!*

What's stopping you?

**The ‘Obstacles’**

**B. The ‘Opportunities’**

As Jesus speaks with this woman, He never slams the door of hope in her face

Notice that Jesus says, **“*Let the children first be filled…*”**

That word **“*first*”** was exactly what this broken-hearted mother needed to hear!

Jesus didn’t say, “*You cannot have what you are looking for!*”

He said, “*I have come to the children of Israel. And, they must be filled first*”

She took that to mean that *seconds* were available

You see, these obstacles that were thrown in the way,

Where Not placed there to discourage and defeat this lady

These obstacles were placed there to bring her along

Watch the progression

**1.** She first calls on Jesus based on His role as the Jewish Messiah

[**Matt. 15:22**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Mt+15%3A22)**;** [**Mark 7:25**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Mk+7%3A25)

She receives no help from that

She had no right to approach Him on that ground

**2.** She hears Jesus tell her that His mission is to the nation of Israel

**Matt. 15:24,25; Mark 7:27**

When she hears this, she moves beyond seeing Him just as the Jewish Messiah

She now sees Him as her only hope

And she sees Him as being worthy of worship

And in [**Matt. 15:25**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Mt+15%3A25)**,** she bows down and humbles herself at His feet; gives Him the worship He deserves; and again appeals to Him for the help she needs

**3.** Now, she hears Jesus compare her to a dog

**Matthew 15:26,27; Mark 7:27**

The Jews looked at all non-Jewish people as dogs

The word they often used refers to a *mangy, cur*

It’s used as a metaphor for people who they felt were *unclean, filthy and dirty*

In fact, the Jews used this word to refer to sodomites and homosexuals

Jesus used that word in [**Matthew 7:6**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Mt+7%3A6)

***“Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you”***

But if we didn’t study this out we would have missed this

The word used here is different

This word means *little puppies*

It doesn’t refer to a mangy, dirty wild dog

But to a little puppy that is a beloved pet in a home

It refers to an animal that is looked on as a part of the family – Interesting!

I think as she hears this, she immediately catches the meaning

The image here is of the Family pet dog sitting under the table while the family eats a meal

It sits there hoping and expecting that someone will slip it a morsel of food

The puppy can see the food

It can smell the food

It knows what it wants is within easy reach

It just needs someone to acknowledge it and give it a bite

She says, “*I know that it isn't right to take the food from the children's table and give it to the dogs. But, even the dogs are sometimes treated to a morsel from the table. All I am asking for is a crumb*”

She wasn't asking for everything, just for a puppy's portion!

Can you see how Jesus took this woman and her small faith and led her along and helped grow her faith?

The Obstacles of Faith almost always turn out to be opportunities in disguise

*When we continue to seek the Lord in spite of every hindrance we will eventually see Him do what we need done*

**The ‘Opportunities’**

**C. The ‘Obligations’**

A lot of people would have given up!

Jesus seemingly ignored her; the disciples played the race card; Jesus even compared her to a dog; yet she persisted

Most folks would have thrown up their hands in frustration and stormed off in anger saying, “*I don't need this! So much for your God of love; for your message of compassion and your narrow, bigoted religion! I don't want anything to do with a God or a religion like that!*”

That is the way many react when they do not get what they want, when they want it

But, not this woman!

She persisted in spite of everything that was thrown into her pathway. Why?

She persisted because too much was at stake!

Her little daughter needed to be delivered from her bondage

Her family needed to be saved

She needed help and she was determined to get it!

*A crumb might have been all she could get; but she knew that a crumb from His hand was more than enough!*

She wouldn't give up until she got what she needed!

How much does your problem mean to you?

Have you encountered some obstacles along the way that have made you throw up your hands and wait to quit seeking God about the answer you need?

Have you looked at the hypocrisy and the apathy of the church and concluded that since God's people don't care, you won't care either?

Have you decided that God can't help you?

Friend, too much is at stake! Be like this poor mother

Keep bringing that need to Jesus until He answers

Keep seeking His face until He responds

Keep asking, keep seeking, keep knocking and in His time, He'll hand you down a morsel of answered prayer!

[**Matthew 7:7-8**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Mt+7%3A7-8) **-** **“*Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened*”**

**HER “REQUEST”**

**HER “RESOLVE”**

**III. HER “REWARD” – vs. 29, 30 …**

When it comes to Her Reward, let’s first look at …

**A. Jesus’ ‘Response’**

He was amazed by the depth of her faith!

In fact, this woman is only one of two people Jesus referred to as having “*great faith*”,

**Matthew 15:28 – *“Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour”***

The other person was a Roman Centurion who came to Jesus to have Jesus heal a sick servant

Amazingly, both of these people were Gentiles!

Jesus had tested her faith with hard words and her faith had risen to the challenge!

Her faith exceeded that of the people he had come to save!

Here was a Gentile dog that had more faith than the Jewish scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees and priests

This kind of faith excites the Lord!

**B. Jesus’ ‘Reward’**

He rewarded her faith by giving her exactly what she asked for; He healed her daughter!

Her faith was so strong that she didn't ask for proof,

But she took Jesus at His word and turned around and went home to her family

When she arrived home, she found her daughter healed and her family restored!

What a blessing! What a challenge!

I realize that some people in this room are looking at what seems to be the impossible situation

It’s every bit as hard and as painful as that faced by this woman

I know that many of you have prayed and sought God about your situations and things remain the same

I know that the devil and the flesh are whispering in your ear right now

They are saying, “*It's no use! God doesn't care! Go away and don't bother Him with this anymore. It's never going to change*”

I know that some folks are discouraged and defeated and you wonder if there is any use or any help for you

Take heart today, dear friends! There is hope!

Bring that need to Him again today

Don’t give up, this Woman didn’t give up

You say, “*Preacher, you don't understand how big my problem is*”

No, I don't, but He does!

Look with me at what He can do

-- He did it for Jairus

-- He did it for Mary & Martha

-- How about His Disciples in the storm

-- How about the Leper, the blind man, the deaf man, the lame man

If He can do these things, and they are just a small sample of what He can do

Then surely He can answer your prayers!

Surely He can save your lost loved one

**CONCLUSION**

Regardless of what you need today, you can come to Jesus and you can get it

Even if you have sought Him for it in the past and received no answer,

Today might be the day when He says to you what He said to this mother in [**Matt. 15:28**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Mt+15%3A28)**,** **“*Be it unto thee even as thou wilt*”**

Has He spoken to you today?

Go to Him and get what you need