

Matthew 15:21-28

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[0 : 00] Good morning. So we're still in Matthew's Gospel, probably for a few more weeks yet.! And we're in chapter 15.

I'm probably going to have a slightly longer than usual introduction this morning because we stopped last week at the point where Jesus had corrected the thinking of the scribes and the Pharisees.

And he corrected their thinking because they were applying the traditions of the elders as if they were the laws of God. And what had happened was over the years, they had supplanted the laws of God with these man-made laws.

And so they had had a go at Jesus because his disciples were not washing their hands when they ate. And Jesus kind of pointed out to them that that was not the law.

That was the traditions of the elders. And he used that as a stepping stone to move on to the subject of Korban. And you remember last week we talked about the fact that the Jews had created this pathway for people to avoid financially supporting their elderly relatives.

[1 : 20] Because they could declare all their spare money as Korban, which then meant it was given to God. And they weren't then free to use it to support their parents, which was an iniquitous setup.

Absolutely awful because parents were going unsupported. And it was being handled as if it was righteous. You know, as if, well, I've given it to God.

So that's a better thing, isn't it? When in fact you had to disobey the laws of God to do this. And so in order to bring this about, what you'd have to do is break the fifth commandment, which is to honour your father and mother.

And Jesus then pointed out that they talked about defilement, didn't they? And they said that in order to avoid defilement, you don't worry about what you're putting into your mouth because that just goes into your stomach and is eliminated.

What you worry about in terms of defilement is what's coming out of your mouth, because what comes out of your mouth is coming out of your heart. And if your heart's defiled, then defile things come out.

[2 : 27] And hopefully if you are an avid student of God's word, then what will come out of your heart will be the word of God in response to any given set of circumstances. So the bit we didn't get to was.

If we if we look at chapter 15. And verse. Verse 12 onwards.

Then the disciples came and said to him, do you not know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this statement? Now, their offense is actually a key matter for the passage we're going to study in a moment, because their offense, if you remember, they had come from Jerusalem to look at what he was doing.

And from previous studies, you will recall that one of the things they did was they put any contender for the role of Messiah under investigation. So they were being investigated or rather they were investigating Jesus.

Jesus was being investigated. And part of that investigation was this group that turned up from Jerusalem to find out what was going on. And he had caused them offense.

[3 : 40] And if you remember from chapter 12 and verse 14, they'd already decided that they wanted to kill him. So he's in a very precarious situation here under all normal circumstances.

They've already declared they want to kill him. And they're following him around, trying to pick fault in his ministry to give them an excuse. What they need is for Jesus to become unpopular, because if he becomes unpopular, then they can deal with him without upsetting the people.

But you recall from chapter 12 that the reason they didn't deal with him then is because they were afraid of the people. So you've got this going on. And Jesus's answer to their, you know, when he says, you've offended them.

And Peter says this, Jesus says, basically, don't worry about them. They are blind guides of the blind. And if you have a blind man leading the blind, they'll both fall into a pit. This is going nowhere. This is fruitless. So, yeah, these Jewish leaders had been set in place to lead people out of their spiritual blindness.

[4 : 49] And in fact, were leading them further into it. The Jews were always called to be a light unto the Gentiles. But they weren't.

They were being darkness to the Gentiles. So they were doing the exact opposite of what God had called them to do. But let's also keep in mind that the people have free choice as to who they follow. You don't have to follow a leader just because they put themselves up as a leader. And had they been diligent in the word, they wouldn't have followed those leaders. But in fact, they followed those leaders all the time to the extent that they rejected Jesus in order to follow them.

So that kind of brings us to where we are, if you like. We do need to stand on the shoulders of any spiritual giants that we can.

We need to take counsel from those who are further ahead than we are in the Lord, who are able to lead us. But at the same time, we need to apply ourselves to the scriptures like the Bereans did so that we don't follow someone foolishly.

[5 : 59] People can make a good fist of being seemingly being almost supernatural in their abilities to lead, but they can still lead you down errant ways.

And so we need to be diligent in the scriptures ourselves and take responsibility for who we follow. And the Lord finishes that section by repeating something that he kind of said earlier on, which is it's not what it's not eating with unwashed hands that defiles you.

It's what comes out of your heart that defiles you. And therefore, if you remember, we spent a little bit of time looking at Psalm 119 and expressing how we needed to get ourselves into the same mindset as the writer of that psalm, who continually said, Lord, help me to understand your statutes. Keep me in your statutes. Keep me in your word. The heart of the psalmist there was, Lord, I want to be with you. I don't want to be anywhere else. Please keep me with you.

This was not the case for these Jews, hence they were able to be led astray. But looking to our own point of application from last week, the stuff that we get into because we neglect God's word and we take these things so lightly, the innuendos that we might engage in, the dodgy jokes we might engage in, the offhand insults that we might or the criticisms that we might level at brothers and sisters in Christ.

[7 : 36] All of these things make us vulnerable. And what the New Testament, what the Apostle Paul exhorts us to do in 2 Corinthians 10 is to take every thought captive.

So that these thoughts do not run away with us and do not carry us over the threshold of evil. But that we arrest it. The word used when it says take thought captive has it.

It's a word that's also used for when you spear a fish. Gotcha. You know. You don't let it progress. You spear it.

And with that, and that's the introduction to this morning, which has been a bit garbled, I feel, but I'm not going to get through the rest of it if I don't move on. We've then got the next section.

Now, keep in mind, this next section we have said comes from, first of all, an investigation of Jesus that's going on in the background. They would love to kill him immediately.

[8 : 43] But Jesus is on a timetable and he's not due to be killed until he's ready, which is at Passover on the year of crucifixion. So he doesn't want to encourage a conflict.

It's not that he's afraid, but he doesn't want to encourage a conflict at this point. He wants to bide his time. But there is something else which I will return to again in a moment.

When we look at the passage we're about to read, we will see two threads. And mostly teachers on this subject major on the second thread.

I'm going to major on the first. And that's not just to be awkward. It's that there's a reason for it. But the two threads are what the Jews do in response to this woman that we're going to read about.

And the second thread is what the woman herself does in her prayer. And most teachers major on the prayer. They major on what the woman does.

[9 : 45] But you'll see probably why I'm majoring on what the Jews are up to as we go through it. So we're going to start reading at verse 21. There is a parallel account in Mark's gospel.

Those of you who get my little messages on WhatsApp, I've already flagged that up to you. There's an account in Mark that runs parallel with this and has a few more details that are useful.

Let's read. Jesus went away from there and withdrew into the district of Tyre and Sidon. And a Canaanite woman from that region came out and began to cry out, saying, Have mercy on me, Lord, son of David.

My daughter is cruelly demon possessed. But he did not answer her a word. And his disciples came and implored him, saying, Send her away because she keeps shouting at us.

But he answered and said, I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. But she came and began to bow down before him, saying, Lord, help me. And he answered and said, It is not good to take the children's bread.

[10 : 51] And throw it to the dogs. But she said, Yes, Lord. But even the dogs feed on the crumbs which fall from the master's table. Then Jesus said to her, Oh, woman, your faith is great.

It shall be done for you as you wish. And her daughter was healed at once. So the initial impression from this is that Jesus is almost cruel.

This Canaanite woman crying out for help. And he doesn't even bother to answer her initially. And when he does answer her, he is less.

It would seem less than helpful. But you must remember, he's got the disciples with him. And if you think back to Matthew's gospel, chapter one and verse 21, what we read there is he came to save his people from their sins.

So his primary reason for coming was to save the Jews. If they would be saved. And what we concluded in chapter 12 is that they have resisted his salvation.

[12 : 01] They have resisted him. In fact, they've cast him aside. They've tried to kill him. Even when he went to his hometown of Nazareth, they tried to throw him off a cliff. They've expressed that they want nothing to do with him.

And so Jesus takes himself off to this place, the region of Tyre and Sidon. Jesus has always, God has always expressed a desire to get the Gentiles saved.

And it was in the Old Testament. And I didn't write the verse down, but you can look it up for yourselves. But he says that he wants the Jews to be a light to the Gentiles. So there's always been a desire to save the Gentiles.

Now, if you think right the way back to the calling of Abraham, in you, all the families of the earth shall be blessed. It wasn't just for Jews.

It was for all the families of the earth. It's always been on God's heart that all the families of the earth would have an opportunity for salvation. You've also got to remember that Jesus, as he does this, when he goes to the area of Tyre and Sidon, which is populated by Gentiles, when he goes to that area, he's doing something that they wouldn't do.

[13 : 16] They hated the Gentiles. They wanted nothing to do with them. They wouldn't eat their food. They wouldn't eat with them. Then if a lady, if a Gentile woman was giving birth in the street and was dying giving birth in the street, they would walk around her and walk on.

They would give her no time whatsoever. If a Gentile man needed help, they wouldn't help. It was utter hatred. And Jesus has already stood against these things.

If you remember, earlier in Matthew's gospel, we had the account, I think it's in Matthew 8, the account of the centurion, the Gentile centurion who came to Jesus and asked Jesus to heal his servant.

And Jesus did it. And as a small aside, we note that whenever Gentiles come to him, he doesn't even seem to need to be present. He healed with a word when the servant was 18 miles away. With Jews, he seems to go in person to the person and lay hands on them or pray or deal with them in person. With the centurion servant, he was miles away, but he still got healed.

[14 : 28] And what we're reading here is the girl that needed deliverance wasn't even present. She was in a house somewhere. So in John 10, verse 16, Jesus says, I have another flock.

Just turn there, just so that we get the wording right. John chapter 10. I have this other flock. And what he says about the other flock, now this is another apart from the Jews.

Chapter 10, verse 16. I have other sheep, which are not of this fold. Which fold? Well, the Jews.

So I have another flock that are not of this fold. Another fold. I must bring them also, and they will hear my voice, and they will become one flock with one shepherd.

So the promise there is this other flock will not be neglected. This Gentile flock will be drawn in. They will be saved. And not only that, they, and I'm adding these words, they, unlike you, will listen. [15:42] Because up to now, they haven't been listening to Jesus. They've been rejecting him right, left, and center. So what's the significance about Tyre and Sidon?

Well, I see this as an escalation of Jesus's determination to tell his disciples that they must bring in the Gentiles. And of course, we see a massive influx of Gentiles once the crucifixion and the resurrection is over, and the churches established, and their mission is to Gentile countries. But the area of Tyre and Sidon was approximately 50 miles from Galilee, sort of between 35 and 65 miles. And in terms of the Old Testament connections, if we, I'll deal with the Old Testament connections in a moment, but it was the source of some of the worst examples of godlessness. So for instance, Tyre was where Jezebel came from, and sowed the seeds of Baal worship among God's people. Ahab, the spineless husband of Jezebel, was also from the area of Sidon. So you've got this history of godlessness coming from this Gentile area. In this gospel, this lady is referred to as a Canaanite woman.

[17:13] In Mark's gospel, she's called the Syrophenician woman. Both of those are true, in that if you look at, that's a sort of simplistic map.

And what you have is the area of Galilee, which is where Jesus was going through all this. And then he went up north to the area of Tyre and Sidon.

And the area of Tyre and Sidon, you see that area Sarepta. Well, Sarepta is also, what you'll notice up there, I don't know if you can read it, but top left is the town of Zarephath.

So Sarepta is the same as Zarephath. And Zarephath, you may recall the account of the widow of Zarephath, where the prophet Elijah went.

And if we turn to 1 Kings 17, if you turn there. Now, the reason I'm bringing this out is because Matthew's gospel was written to a Jewish audience, and the Jews would have pounced upon this when Jesus said, right guys, let's go, and led them on a nearly 50 mile walk.

[18:39] And they finished up in the region of Tyre and Sidon, near Zarephath. They would have thought, hang on, there's an account of this area in the Old Testament scriptures, where the prophet of God, who was also a type of Christ, Elijah was taken up to heaven alive.

Miracles of healing happened at his hands, as they did with Jesus. He raised the dead. He multiplied foods. He did a lot of things that Jesus did. He was a type of Christ.

So just let's read verse 8. Then the word of the Lord came to him, sorry, chapter 17, 1 Kings 17, verse 8.

Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying, arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and stay there. Behold, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you.

So we've got a widow in Zarephath, a woman in Zarephath, who's obviously been warned in advance as to who the Lord is.

[19:49] She knows him. Verse 10. So he arose and went to Zarephath, and when he came to the gate of the city, behold, a widow was there gathering sticks, and he called to her and said, please get me a little water in a jar that I may drink.

And she was going to get it. Sorry, as she was going to get it, he called to her and said, please bring me a piece of bread in your hand. But she said, as the Lord your God lives, I have no bread, only a handful of flour in the bowl and a little oil in the jar.

And behold, I am gathering a few sticks that I may go in and prepare for me and my son that we may eat it and die. So this woman is desperate, and she's at the point of death.

There's a famine in the land. She has no provision whatsoever. Once this little bit of food is being used up, she is done for. And then Elijah said to her, do not fear.

Go, do as you have said, but make a little bread cake from it first and bring it out to me. And afterwards, you may take one for yourself and for your son. So you could kind of think there that Elijah is quite happy to have the crumbs.

[21:01] Make me a little cake and then you can have one for yourself. For thus says the Lord God of Israel, the bowl of flour shall not be exhausted, nor shall the jar of oil be empty until the day the Lord sends rain on the face of the earth.

So she went and did according to the word of Elijah and she and he and her household ate for many days. The bowl of flour was not exhausted, nor did the jar of oil become empty according to the word of the Lord, which he spoke through Elijah. And then later on, and I'm not going to go through it now, but he then raises her son from the dead. So Jesus has taken them to the same area that Elijah performed this miracle with bread at the hands or with, in conjunction with, not sure how to phrase it, a Gentile woman. So he takes the disciples there again, hundreds and hundreds of years later, and speaks to a Canaanite woman. Um, the, the Canaanite woman, also called the Syrophenician woman, all three descriptions are correct.

She would not just have been considered a Gentile. She would have been, if you like, a Gentile of Gentiles. You know, Paul said, I'm a Pharisee of Pharisees. She was a Gentile of Gentiles. I mean, talk about intersectionality.

[22 : 19] First of all, she's a woman. And that in itself got you a black mark in that culture. The fact that you just happened to be female was, you were second class. Um, not a view I ascribe to.

Um, secondly, she was a Gentile. Thirdly, she was a Canaanite. She shouldn't even have been allowed to live. The, in the time of Joshua, the Canaanites were supposed to have been completely destroyed.

And it's only because of the disobedience of God's people that any Canaanite survived from the days of Joshua. So she's not just a Gentile. She is a Gentile.

She is. She's the worst Gentile walking. But to Jesus, she was someone he sought out. Like the widow of Zarephath, when the prophet of God sought her out.

Sought her out at the time of her desperation, in both cases, and provided the solution to that desperation, provided the solution to the problem.

[23 : 23] So, that leads me to conclude that this is not just a lesson in what the widow did to get the attention of Jesus. But it's a lesson for the disciples in what Jesus thinks about Gentiles.

Now, you've got to remember, let's go back to Matthew 15, and let's read it rather than me just speak it. She says this to him in verse 22.

Have mercy on me, Lord, son of David. My daughter is cruelly demon-possessed. Now, that little statement, have mercy on me, Lord, son of David, puts her in exactly the same place as the widow of Zarephath, in that God had instructed that widow in advance to expect the prophet of God.

I would say this woman had been instructed in advance to expect Jesus, because she called him the son of David. It doesn't escape my attention that even Peter had not concluded this yet.

He didn't make this conclusion until the next chapter. In chapter 8, when Jesus says, who do you think that I am? It's then that Peter says, you're the Messiah, the son of God.

[24 : 44] So this widow had been prepared. Now, it might have been confusing for her when Jesus then didn't respond to her. I have no idea about that, but I do know this.

She calls out to him as the son of David. She says, you're the son of David. Have mercy on me. She doesn't come with entitlement. You know, you've got to have mercy on me.

Or you've got to heal me. You know, there are whole tranches of what calls itself the Christian church that say that kind of thing to Jesus. You've got to heal me. No, he doesn't have to heal you.

He's God. He can do what he wants. And what this woman gets is she gets who he is, not just that he has this title, the son of David, but that he is God and that he is merciful.

And her only call upon him is on his mercy. He doesn't, he's not entitled to anything. He doesn't make any claim other than, please would you be merciful to me.

[25 : 58] It's a very important aspect of when we pray that we ask him, we don't dictate to him.

And there's an awful lot of dictating to God that goes on in ill-focused prayer sometimes. So what we then read is he carries on with this scenario where he says in verse 24, I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

So he's with some of those lost sheep, his disciples. And he says, these are the ones I was sent to, not for you. It will be wrong for me to give their food to the little dogs.

And by the way, I came across this. I have no idea if it works or not, but there's one translator says that the word for dogs here is a diminutive. In other words, it kind of means puppies.

And so it had a certain amount of endearments to it. Whether that's true, I really didn't get to the bottom of. But in any event, she was deemed as inferior to the chosen children of God who were for the purposes of this passage, the Israelites.

[27 : 17] And what Jesus was saying is, I've got to sort my own kids out first. And her response was, that's fine. I'll just take the crumbs.

And I think this is, what it shows is that she, far better than the disciples, far better than the Jewish nation, far better than the religious Pharisees, she knew who he was.

She knew his power. She knew that the bit that she needed was the equivalent of crumbs off the table. That this was actually nothing to Christ. I don't mean that in the sense of it meant nothing. What I mean was, it was not a difficult thing for him to achieve. He was all-powerful after all. I picture this as the disciples are there, and they're saying, send her away.

She's shouting at us. And some of the commentators try to let Jesus off the hook with this one, or try to let the disciples off the hook by saying what they meant was, heal her and send her away.

[28 : 26] I don't think that's true. You can manipulate the scripture to kind of mean that if you want to. In the end, it doesn't change the fact that they didn't want her around.

And so what Jesus is coming against here is the attitude that says, they're Gentiles. Let's get rid of them. Because their attitude was, we don't want her around.

She's shouting. Send her away. She's inconvenient. She's inconvenient. Do you know, as churches, we can be like that? When people turn up who are a bit raw, they turn up and they smell a bit, or they turn up and they're a bit coarse, or they don't fit with our middle-class values, or they make life difficult for us.

And something in us might want to say, can you go to another church? Perish the thought that we would ever do that. Perish that thought. They wanted rid of her.

And yet she's the one, not Peter, not the disciple, she's the one who had sussed exactly who he was. We read earlier, when the 5,000 had been fed and then Jesus walked on the water, you've then got a little line after that account that says, they had not learned from the feeding of the multitude and their hearts were hardened.

[29 : 58] And so these disciples, despite the fact that in the future they're going to have this commission to take the gospel to the whole of the Gentile world, at this point, they are hard of heart. If you remember, Peter had to go through, I mean, let's just quickly examine the fact that they had been, they'd been castigated by the authorities for eating bread with unwashed hands, which was a dietary rule that had been put in place.

And Jesus squashed that rule and said, that's a rubbish rule. This doesn't defile you at all. Spend your time on something else. Worry about what comes out of your heart, through your mouth, not what goes in.

And as he picks off these various laws, some man-made and some actually part of God's law, as he picks them off and renders them obsolete, it creates a pathway for the Gentiles to come into the church and get saved.

So this was just another occasion when he was taking something that was viewed by the Jews as being anathema. You're going to where?

Tyre and Sidon? Spending time with a Canaanite, for goodness sake. What he was saying was, these are the people I love, these are the people I want to save. He had picked the very worst of ministry fields to take his disciples into to show how much he loved the Gentiles.

[31 : 32] And they should have been, the disciples should have been saying to Jesus when he didn't speak to her, and I do believe, I can't prove this to you, but I do believe that he was kind of giving them the opportunity to show what they were made of.

And when he said, nothing, and then said, yeah, but it wouldn't be right for me to give their food to the dogs, when he said those things, what they should have said was, no, Jesus, save her, sort her out, heal her, embrace her, feed her, give her some bread.

What did they say? Get rid of her. We don't want her around. I think he was revealing their own hearts to them. That's what I believe. This fits in with other things that Jesus said.

If you turn quickly to Luke, Luke chapter 4, verses 23 to 27. And he said to them, no doubt you will quote this proverb to me, physician, heal yourself.

Whatever we heard was done at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well. And he said, truly I say to you, no prophet is welcome in his hometown. But I say to you, in truth, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah when the sky was shut up for three years and six months, when a great famine came over all the land.

[32 : 56] And yet Elijah was sent to none of them, but only to Zarephath in the land of Sidon to a woman who was a widow. In that time when his own people were suffering immense famine as a direct judgment from God, he sent relief to the widow, the Gentile widow of Zarephath.

And he goes on and says this, and there were many lepers in Israel in that time, in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.

Same area, Syria, Syrophenician, Syria, same area, the leper that gets saved from his leprosy and the only recorded, the only recorded healing of a leper, that's not true, the only recorded healing of a leper after the law was given was not a Jew, was a Syrian.

So Jesus has already showed his favour upon Gentiles and expects the word of the Lord to be used to save them.

So most of the teachings that I've heard on this passage major on the woman rather than this. And I think what Jesus was doing here was that he was preparing disciples for ministry by revealing to them the content of their own heart and how appalling it was in contrast to the content of Jesus' own heart, which was to say to this lady, your faith is great, go home, and your daughter has been delivered.

[34 : 42] And she was delivered from the demon that very hour. Now there is an element, and let's move on to the lady herself, there is an element in which this magnified and drew out her faith.

If you think that in order for her to know that she was faced with the son of David, she must have had some knowledge of him. And I don't know how she got it or where she got it from.

Did she read Bible? Did she get visited by angels? I have no clue. But she knew who he was, knew what he could do, and knew what he would do.

In Mark's gospel, there's an interesting take. There's one extra word that if I were that woman would give me hope. If you turn to Mark chapter 7, and that the passage is from verse 24 onwards, but we're interested in verse 27.

And he was saying to her, let the children be satisfied first. So if there's a first, then there's a chance.

[35 : 53] He didn't say, oh, let the children be satisfied. He said, let the children be satisfied first. What he's saying, this is my estimation, I could be wrong, but what he seems to be saying here is, let this lot be satisfied first.

There's a lesson they need to learn. And I'll come to you later. Now that, I might be reading too much into that, so you need to go pray about that. But let the children be satisfied first.

Jesus never said no to her. He said, I've got to sort the kids out first. And then she says, that's fine, I'll have the crumbs. And her attitude was, Lord, whatever you think of me must be right because you are Lord.

If you think I'm a dog, then I'm a dog. But even the dogs get to eat crumbs. You see, she had this right perspective of herself in relation to the seniority, the magnitude, the magnificence of Jesus with whom she was talking.

And I think what happens with this account is that her faith is drawn out because we'll get on to her.

[37 : 13] I've got 14 points. Very, very quick points. Right. The woman came. The woman came. And the first thing we note was she was humble.

Right. She didn't come making demands. She come asking for mercy. Second, she was desperate. Quite often, prayers made in desperation, Jesus warms to and answers because the desperation stops us from putting ourselves on any pedestal.

Thirdly, she was prompt. She didn't procrastinate about it. She got on with it. Jesus is there. She went there and she spoke to him. There was no mucking about. There was no delay. She got in the face of Jesus as quickly as she could.

She didn't make any demands. She asked for mercy. She was persistent. I'd use the word, if it's not too long a word, I'm sure it's not, importunate.

In other words, she wasn't just persistent but she was persistent to the point of annoyance. So much so that she got right up the disciples' nose because they said, take her away.

[38 : 23] She keeps shouting. What she did was she followed the parable in Luke 18 verses 1 to 8 which is the parable of the unjust judge where in the end the unjust judge said, oh for goodness sake I'll give her justice just to get her off my back because she won't shut up.

Now her prayer was like that. It was persistent to the point of annoyance. Not that Jesus would have been annoyed. But that kind of persistence is what I'm referring to. She knew her place.

When we come before Jesus we need to know our place. There's so many so-called ministers of God who adopt a place that seems to be senior to Jesus.

You know, I'm God's anointed one. No you're not. You're a bloke or a woman. probably the equivalent of a dog in this case.

She knew who he was. In Hebrews 11 verse 6 we're told that we must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him.

[39 : 48] We need to know who he is and know that he's a rewarder of those who diligently seek him. Otherwise where is it of faith in your prayer if you don't know those two things?

It's grasping at straws. It's the rough equivalent of hanging crystals in the corner of the room. It has no basis in evidence or fact or anything else. she placed no constraints on what Jesus could do.

She knew what he could do and even though her daughter wasn't even present she knew what he could do. There were no constraints in her heart as to what he might achieve. She was expectant.

She expected that he would be merciful. I think there are quite a lot of people who are quite defeated in their faith because they pray and they think I really don't know whether God's got time for me or not and therefore I don't know whether he'll come up with the goods.

You know God is merciful and when you put yourself before him as this woman did he will always respond. Now there are times when we struggle to get our prayers answered and there could be all sorts of reasons for that but given this plateau of I know who he is and I know he's a rewarder of those who diligently seek him I can expect him to answer my prayers.

[41 : 17] She was submissive she was selfless she was trusting she actually lived in an area where there was a sort of healing temple thing in that area where you know the pagan the pagan place where pagans go to get supposedly healed but it never works but she knew that this local pagan god of healing was useless and she went to Jesus instead and the final thing was that her prayers were rewarded and I think that Jesus draws all that out of this woman during this exchange but I honestly believe the biggest lesson was to the Jews the servants of God supposedly and it could also be the lesson to us because we are servants of the Lord and we are supposed to take the gospel the word of God to people so father

I thank you for this word I thank you for helping me through what I've not found the easiest of studies I do thank you I pray Lord that our hearts will be sensitive to you I pray Lord that you wouldn't have to repeat what you did with those disciples to get us into line to get us to perform to get us to understand your love for everyone and that father when we meet with people who were in need our attitude would not be one of take them away they keep shouting but would be one of wanting to extend the love and the grace of Jesus to people father thank you for your word to us in Jesus name amen