The Gospel of Mark-Christ the Servant

- Lesson 15 -

Mark 7:24-37	Your Personal Notes:
24."And from thence he arose, and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into an house, and would have no man know it: but he could not be hid.	
25.For a certain woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet:	
26. The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation; and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter.	
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.	
28.And she answered and said unto him, Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs.	
29.And he said unto her, For this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter.	
30.And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed.	
31.And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis.	
32. And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him.	
33. And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue;	
34.And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened.	
35.And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain.	
36.And he charged them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it;	
37. And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak."	

Spurgeon's Notes on Mark

7:27-28 - This Syrophoenician was a woman of amazing faith. She could not be put off from pleading for her little daughter because she believed Jesus was able to heal all manner of diseases, and she meant to beg him until he yielded to her importunity. Her faith was not hindered by an exclusive doctrine that appeared to confine the blessing to the children of Israel. She might have thought, "Then he is not sent to me. Vainly do I seek for that which he reserves for the Jews."

Her faith was not even hindered by a sense of admitted unworthiness. Jesus spoke of dogs--he meant that the gentiles were to Israel as dogs--she did not at all dispute it, but yielded the point. She felt she was only worthy to be compared to a dog! She did not expect to win the blessing she sought on any merit of her own--she depended on the goodness of Jesus's heart, not on her goodness.

Her faith was not hindered by the tone of Jesus's reply, which for many would have depressed their hope and restrained their prayer. "It isn't right," said Jesus, "it is not becoming, it is not proper, it is hardly lawful to take children's bread and throw it to dogs." His words were enough to pour cold water on the flames of her hope, yet her faith was not quenched. It was a faith of that immortal kind that nothing can kill.

Further, her faith assented to all Jesus said. He said, "Let the children first be filled," and she does not dispute that. She entered into no argument against its being improper to take the bread from the children, the Jews, and give it to the uncircumcised heathen. She never wished Israel to be robbed for her. Dog as she was, she would not have any purpose of God or any propriety of the divine household shifted and changed for her.

That is the faith that saves the soul, that agrees with the mind of God, even if it seemed adverse to herself--the faith that believes the revealed declarations of God whether they appear to be pleasant or terrible--the faith that assents to God's word, whether it is like a balm to its wounds or like a sword to cut and slay.

Not only did she assent to all Jesus said, but she acknowledged him as "Lord". Further, she does not say, "Put me among the children," but she only asks to be treated as a dog is-- "The dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." This woman's argument was based on Jesus's own premises. She does not proceed to lay down new premises or dispute the old ones. She accepts his statement and uses it to vanquish him. All she needed, all she desired, was the crumbs, not the children's bread, only the dog's crumbs.

Finally, her faith won her cause; she gained her desire. Jesus was so delighted with the wise, prudent, humble, but courageous manner in which she answered that he said, "Go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter."