

# MARK 7:24-37

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## REVIEW...

- **Mark** – the Gospel to the Gentiles – showing Jesus as the servant of all - **Mark 10:45**
- **MARK 1:1 – 6:7 – JESUS MINISTRY IN GALILEE...**
- **MARK 6:1-29... CONCLUSION OF THE MINISTRY IN GALILEE**
- **MARK 6:30-56... FEEDING OF THE 5000**
  - When the Disciples returned from their missions trip in Galilee – Jesus took them aside
    - Multitudes followed them on foot – Jesus had compassion and taught them
    - With only 5 loaves and 2 fish Jesus fed 5000 men – plus women and children!
  - Jesus sent the disciples back over to the east side of the Galilee...
    - Jesus came walking out on the water – would have passed them by – to the other side
    - The moment Jesus came into the boat – the wind and the waves stopped
  - Upon reaching the Gadarenes – the people there brought everyone to Jesus
- **MARK 7:1-23... TRADITIONS OF MEN...**
  - The religious leaders challenged Jesus – why His disciples did not wash their hands
    - Not speaking of hygiene – but their traditions – one of many they had
    - Jesus answered – they taught the commandments of men as Law...
  - The religious leaders had the right words – but their hearts were far from God
    - God commanded to honor your Father and Mother – penalty of death
    - The religious leaders taught you could give your parents ‘money’ as a gift to God
  - To the multitudes - It is not what you eat – but what comes out of you that defiles you...
    - The disciples thought this was a parable – so radical of a statement...
    - Obvious – whatever goes in – goes out again and cannot ‘defile’ you
    - What comes out of your mouth – comes from your heart – that defiles you

## GREAT FAITH... VS. 24-30

- **THE SYRO-PHOENICIAN WOMAN... VS. 24-25**
  - Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon...
    - Tyre and Sidon were to the north of the region of Galilee (*modern day Lebanon*)
    - Jesus challenge of traditions really upset the Scribes and Pharisees – cool down time
    - So He went up into the Region of Phoenicia where the Pharisees had no influence
    - He did not want anyone to know He was there – but He could not remain hidden...
  - A Syro-Phoenician woman came to Jesus asking for help...
    - Syria (*the same as Syria today*) and Phoenicia (*modern Lebanon*)
    - All that just to make sure we understand - she was not in any way a Jew
    - Which makes her greeting to Jesus all the more interesting – **Matthew 15:22**
  - Lord – Son of David – have Mercy...
    - She first submits to Jesus’ authority – she calls him Lord / fell at His feet
    - She then gives Him a Messianic Title – the Son of David
    - She was not a Jew – yet somehow she knew that Jesus was the promised Messiah
    - She recognizes Him as the Savior – and asks for His help...

- o Her daughter was demon possessed...
  - The problem she had – was actually a problem with her daughter - demon possessed...
  - We are not told how this came to be – only that she knew Jesus was the solution!
  - Often we make the mistake of focusing our problems (*how did we get where we are*)
  - But when we focus on the problem – we are not looking at the solution!
  - The solution to a dark room is not to focus on how dark the room is...
  - Turn on the light – that is the only solution to darkness
  - The moment we turn on the light – the darkness is no longer a problem
  - In the same way if we focus on our problems – we find we are still in darkness
  - The moment we look to Jesus – the light comes on – He is the only solution!
  - It does not matter what the problem is – He is the solution to every problem!
- JESUS' GIVES 3 RESPONSES THE WOMAN – (2 RECORDED IN MATTHEW / 1 ONE IN MARK)... vs. 26-28
  - o 1<sup>st</sup> - Jesus did not answer her at all – **Matthew 15:23**
    - It would appear at first that perhaps Jesus did not hear her...
    - Or worse yet that He just was not listening - but as it turns out – neither is the case...
    - Jesus is about to show something remarkable to His disciples... GREAT FAITH
    - The disciples (*Imperfect*) asked Him to send her away (*Imperative*)
      - The woman made such a scene that the Disciples were getting embarrassed
      - They were not asking that Jesus do what she was asking...
      - Just that He would send her away (*they did not get the lesson yet*)
    - But the woman kept asking - not afraid of what others said – Jesus was her only hope!
      - Do we have a tendency to follow Jesus – only when no one is looking...
        - o Do we tend to blend into the crowd when others are around...
        - o We are not called to look like the world – we are called to be a light in it
      - That means that others may not like us around...
        - o If you are in darkness – and someone turns on a light – it hurts your eyes
        - o If you are doing bad things in darkness – how much more you hate the light
        - o We are a light – and those who are in darkness don't like the light of Jesus
        - o They want us (*and Jesus in us*) to go away so the darkness can return
    - The woman knew there was nowhere else to go – Jesus was the only answer...
      - Why is it that we try everything else first – then as a last resort – Jesus
      - Going to the Word – prayer – those seem like the very last option
      - Only once everything else has been tried...
      - Then we go to the only answer that is guaranteed to work!
  - o 2<sup>nd</sup> – I was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel – **Matthew 15:24**
    - The lost sheep - Israel as a nation had lost its way – they had wandered far from God...
      - **Luke 15:4** – “What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?”
      - Jesus had come to find those lost sheep – those whom were scattered
      - It's easy for us to get distracted – to loose our focus on Jesus
      - We see something pretty in the world and wander off after it...
      - Getting carried away by the things in this world – we get lost

- What comfort to think that our Lord never lets us go far
- If we wander off – He is always right behind us looking to bring us back
- Jesus is never farther away than simply turning around (*repentance*)
- No just any lost sheep - the House of Israel...
  - Jesus came to give the message of Salvation to the Jews... first
  - The Bible is a Jewish book – written by all Jewish authors...
  - Every prophet in the Bible was Jewish – as were all the Disciples
  - So it was to the Jews that the Gospel was given first....
  - **Romans 1:16** – “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Gentile.”
  - But the Gospel was not meant for ONLY the Jews... (**John 3:16**)
- The woman’s response – she worships Jesus (*Imperfect*) saying, Lord help me...
  - None of this dissuaded the woman – she continued to worship Jesus
  - She was persistent – she did not give up easily...
  - **Luke 11:9** – “So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.”
  - I fear far too often we give up to easily...
  - God says that we are to ask, seek, and knock – and so we do – once
  - But it really says that we are to be asking, seeking, knocking – constantly
  - We are not to just go to Jesus once – we are to be constantly seeking Him
- o 3<sup>rd</sup> – It is not good to take the children’s bread - toss it to the little dogs “puppies”
  - In Jewish culture it was common to refer to unbelieving gentiles as dogs
    - It was not a compliment – the reference was to wild, untamed savages
    - But this was not the word Jesus was using...
    - He used the word for puppies – it was a gentler comment
    - But it still carried the idea that what was meant for the Jews (*children*)
    - Should not be given first to the puppies (*gentiles*)
  - Even the little dogs...
    - The woman was not insulted by the comment... showing humility
    - Instead she took the comment and used it to her advantage...
    - Even the puppies eat from the scraps of the master’s (*Jews*) table
    - In other words she was not asking for much – she only needed the leftovers
    - It takes a lot of humility to come to Jesus for help
    - It means admitting that we are not the answer – and we need His help
    - It means being honest with ourselves– our inability to handle our problems
    - True humility is coming to the place where we realize that we can not
    - When we have humility we access the limitless riches of God’s grace!
    - **James 4:6** – “But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.”
- o Great is your faith...
  - Jesus answered her – for this saying go your way – and her daughter was healed
  - From the first - I don’t think that Jesus was un-willing to help this woman...
  - He was using this to teach his disciples about GREAT (*megas*) FAITH...
  - So what does GREAT FAITH look like – like the Syro-Phoenician/Gentile woman

- GREAT FAITH – understand that there is no other answer – only Jesus
- GREAT FAITH – does not give up – but consistently – persistently – seeks Jesus
- GREAT FAITH – has humility – knows that we are not the answer
- Do we desire to men and women who of GREAT FAITH
- **Hebrews 11:6** – “So, you see, it is impossible to please God without faith...”
- Let us be those who please God – who like this woman – have GREAT FAITH

## HEALING THE BLIND AND DEAF MAN... VS. 31-37

- Jesus left there and returned to the Sea of Galilee (*to the south*) – to the Decapolis...
  - The same place where Jesus healed the man with ‘legion’
  - A Greek area - likely Jesus was seeking to continue avoiding the religious leaders
- The crowds brought Jesus a man - deaf and mute – begged Jesus to heal him (*5 things*)...
- 1<sup>st</sup> - Jesus took the man aside from the multitude...
  - The people had seen Jesus heal before – **Mark 6:56** – but this was a tough case
  - The crowds might have been ‘testing’ Jesus – or thought of it as entertainment
  - So Jesus took the man aside – to remove all the distractions – get his full attention
  - Many times in life – the reason why we don’t ‘hear’ Jesus – is we are too distracted
  - We are so caught up in family / friends / business of life – we miss what’s important
  - Sometimes Jesus has to get us alone – away from everything else – so we can listen
- 2<sup>nd</sup> - Jesus put His finger in His ear – and spat and touched his tongue...
  - This seems a rather ‘odd’ – and unsanitary - method in which to heal the man...
  - Jesus could have just said the word – and the man would have been made whole
  - It leaves you to ask why would Jesus touch and spit on the man – 2 reasons...
  - 1<sup>st</sup> - The man was deaf & mute – Jesus touched his ear and tongue to show him...
    - Jesus could not tell them man He was there to heal him – he was deaf
    - So He touched the man’s ears to show him that He wanted to heal him!
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> - Jesus does not always do things the same way – He is not bound to ritual...
    - If Jesus always did something the same way – we would think it was the only way
    - We would go around poking our fingers in deaf men’s ears – spitting on mouths
    - Rather than seeing it was not about how – but that Jesus can heal
    - It is easy for us to get caught up in methods – and forget it is all about knowing Jesus
    - If I go to church on Sunday God will bless me – rather than going to learn about God
    - If I give to those in need God will give to me – rather than giving out of love
    - It is not about how we read / pray / worship / give – it is about knowing our Lord
- 3<sup>rd</sup> - Jesus looked up to heaven – sighed...
  - Certainly it was not harder to heal this man than any other – so why look up / sigh...
  - Perhaps it was not the lame man – but the multitudes – that cause the look/sigh
    - The people had brought this man to Jesus – but they also were deaf and mute
    - They couldn’t hear the Words of Jesus – they missed why He had come – the cross
    - They did not open their mouths - share the Gospel – with others who needed to hear
  - We might point others to Jesus – but do we listen to our own advice...
    - It is easy to say to others – go to Jesus – He is the answer to all your problems
    - But when we have problems ourselves – where do we go – who do we look to

- 4<sup>th</sup> - Jesus said – ‘be opened’...
  - o He spoke the words in Aramaic – *Ephphatha* – the common language of the day...
  - o No one else was around – and the man could not hear – so why speak / why Aramaic
  - o Because he would hear – Jesus knew it – and the first words he heard would be Jesus
  - o We may have never ‘heard’ Jesus before – maybe our prayers seem unanswered
  - o When we take the time to get alone with Jesus – listen to Jesus – we will hear Jesus!
- 5<sup>th</sup> – The people were astonished – ‘He makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak’...
  - o Jesus commanded the people not to tell anyone – but the more they proclaimed it!
  - o Because this deaf & mute man was healed – the multitude ‘heard’ and ‘spoke’ too
  - o As we take the time to hear the Lord – others will take notice...
  - o They will also begin to listen to Jesus – and to boldly share about Him with others!