

Faith That Really Stretches

Scripture Reading — Mark 7:24-30

"Yes, Lord ... but even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." Mark 7:28

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Faithful Jews avoided pagan places like Tyre. Faithful Jews avoided Gentile houses completely! Faithful Jews paid attention to religious cleanliness and avoided people with demons-and those whose daughters were demon-possessed too. So no self-respecting Jewish religious leader like Jesus should have been anywhere near a Gentile mother of a demoniac in Tyre!

It seems, at first, that Jesus thought the same way. In fact, he was downright rude to this woman!

But watch him give her the opportunity to reveal her faith. His first response presents her with the Pharisees' misguided theology-the belief that God favors only people who are Jewish by blood and ritually pure. What will she do with this way of thinking? Will she accept it and leave in despair? Or will she refuse to believe that God is stingy with grace and reach out to Jesus with trusting hope?

She humbly stays at Jesus' feet, a living request for help, while acknowledging that she is "beneath" those who are "pure" or "entitled." Then, in response to her extra-ordinary faith, Jesus heals her hurting daughter!

Martin Luther loved this story. It reveals God's love for all who have persistent faith in him and an accompanying disdain for their own "credentials."

Where is your faith today?

Prayer

<p>Many of us are good at dragging our credentials before you and hoping you'll accept them, Lord. But you accept us only in the name of Jesus, in whom we pray. Amen.</p>

Devotion topics: [Christianity](#), [Discipleship](#)

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