

8/16/26

Sermon Title: The Kingdom of God Open to the Gentiles

Preacher: Pastor Kim Soonbae

Scripture Passage: Matthew 15:21-39

The Faith of a Canaanite Woman

²¹ Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon.

²² A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is demon-possessed and suffering terribly.”

²³ Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, “Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us.”

²⁴ He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel.”

²⁵ The woman came and knelt before him. “Lord, help me!” she said.

²⁶ He replied, “It is not right to take the children’s bread and toss it to the dogs.”

²⁷ “Yes it is, Lord,” she said. “Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master’s table.”

²⁸ Then Jesus said to her, “Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted.” And her daughter was healed at that moment.

Jesus Feeds the Four Thousand

²⁹ Jesus left there and went along the Sea of Galilee. Then he went up on a mountainside and sat down.

³⁰ Great crowds came to him, bringing the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute and many others, and laid them at his feet; and he healed them.

³¹ The people were amazed when they saw the mute speaking, the crippled made well, the lame walking and the blind seeing. And they praised the God of Israel.

³² Jesus called his disciples to him and said, “I have compassion for these people; they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away hungry, or they may collapse on the way.”

³³ His disciples answered, “Where could we get enough bread in this remote place to feed such a crowd?”

³⁴ “How many loaves do you have?” Jesus asked.

“Seven,” they replied, “and a few small fish.”

³⁵ He told the crowd to sit down on the ground.

³⁶ Then he took the seven loaves and the fish, and when he had given thanks, he broke them and gave them to the disciples, and they in turn to the people.

³⁷ They all ate and were satisfied. Afterward the disciples picked up seven basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over.

³⁸ The number of those who ate was four thousand men, besides women and children.

³⁹ After Jesus had sent the crowd away, he got into the boat and went to the vicinity of Magadan.

The growing tension with the Pharisees and scribes over the debate concerning God’s commandments and the traditions of the elders led Jesus to leave Galilee and enter Gentile territory.

He turned away from the Jews who rejected the gospel and went toward the Gentiles.

In doing so, Jesus brought His ministry in Galilee to a close and began His ministry in the region of Perea.

Jesus went to the region of Tyre and Sidon, which lay outside the jurisdiction of Herod.

Tyre and Sidon were located along the Mediterranean coast, approximately 50–60 kilometers from the Sea of Galilee.

²¹ Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon.

Tyre and Sidon were cities that were repeatedly condemned in the Old Testament for worshiping Baal and pursuing power and wealth.

While Jesus was there, a Canaanite woman came to Him and cried out, “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me!”

She pleaded with Jesus to heal her daughter, who was demon-possessed.

²² A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is demon-possessed and suffering terribly.”

Jesus said nothing and remained silent.

²³ Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, “Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us.”

The disciples, unable to bear it any longer, came to Jesus and asked Him to send the woman away because she was crying out after them.

Why did Jesus remain silent?

Did Jesus, like the disciples, consider this woman a nuisance and simply want to send her away?

No.

Jesus wanted to save this poor Gentile woman.

In order to do so, He wanted to draw from her a genuine confession of faith.

Although she called Him, “Lord, Son of David,” Jesus wanted to confirm that she was not merely using those words as a desperate appeal to get her daughter healed, but that she truly recognized Him as the Messiah and sincerely believed in Him.

Jesus therefore began a process of testing and revealing the woman’s faith.

Jesus told her that He had been sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

²⁴ He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel.”

“The lost sheep of the house of Israel” refers to the Jewish people.

Jesus’ statement seems to completely exclude the Gentiles from His immediate mission.

Yet the woman worshiped Jesus and pleaded with Him once again for help. She knew that Jesus was the only One who could save her.

²⁵ The woman came and knelt before him. “Lord, help me!” she said.

However, Jesus spoke to the woman in a way that, by the standards of the Jewish people at that time, treated Gentiles as dogs—a deeply humiliating statement that the woman could hardly have endured.

Yet the woman responded with remarkable humility. In contrast to the Jews, she acknowledged that she was among those who were not part of the chosen people and had no claim to the covenant privileges.

²⁶ He replied, “It is not right to take the children’s bread and toss it to the dogs.”

²⁷ “Yes it is, Lord,” she said. “Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master’s table.”

²⁸ Then Jesus said to her, “Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted.” And her daughter was healed at that moment.

She submitted herself to God’s order.

Although this woman understood that, as a Gentile, she had no right to partake of the table of salvation and grace prepared by the Messiah, she firmly believed that she could at least receive a portion of God’s infinite mercy.

She believed that God’s grace was not exclusively reserved for the Jews, but that even Gentiles could receive a portion of that grace.

With this, Jesus’ testing of her faith was complete.

Jesus commended the woman for her faith and granted her request.

She became the second Gentile, after the Roman centurion, to receive Jesus’ commendation for her faith.

After healing the Canaanite woman’s daughter, Jesus left the region of Tyre and Sidon and went toward the Sea of Galilee.

According to the Gospel of Mark, Jesus left the region of Tyre, passed through Sidon and the region of the Decapolis, and came to the Sea of Galilee.

(Mark 7:31) Then Jesus left the vicinity of Tyre and went through Sidon, down to the Sea of Galilee and into the region of the Decapolis.

He had been traveling through Gentile territory in order to avoid the jurisdiction of the wicked Herod Antipas.

There, Jesus healed many people who were sick.

²⁹ Jesus left there and went along the Sea of Galilee. Then he went up on a mountainside and sat down.

³⁰ Great crowds came to him, bringing the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute and many others, and laid them at his feet; and he healed them.

³¹ The people were amazed when they saw the mute speaking, the crippled made well, the lame walking and the blind seeing. And they praised the God of Israel.

This was the fulfillment of the prophecy of the prophet Isaiah:

(Isa 9:1) Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the nations, by the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan—

(Isa 9:2) The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.

As Jesus' ministry continued into its third day, He was concerned that the crowds might become exhausted and faint on their journey home.

Therefore, He provided food for them.

³² Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I have compassion for these people; they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away hungry, or they may collapse on the way."

³³ His disciples answered, “Where could we get enough bread in this remote place to feed such a crowd?”

³⁴ “How many loaves do you have?” Jesus asked.

“Seven,” they replied, “and a few small fish.”

³⁵ He told the crowd to sit down on the ground.

³⁶ Then he took the seven loaves and the fish, and when he had given thanks, he broke them and gave them to the disciples, and they in turn to the people.

³⁷ They all ate and were satisfied. Afterward the disciples picked up seven basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over.

³⁸ The number of those who ate was four thousand men, besides women and children.

Even though the disciples had witnessed Jesus feed more than five thousand people—with women and children not included—using five loaves and two fish, and had seen twelve baskets of leftovers, they still responded with a lack of faith. Nevertheless, Jesus did not rebuke them.

Instead, He asked them how much food they had.

They told Him that they had seven loaves and a few small fish.

Jesus gave thanks, broke the bread, and gave it to the disciples, who distributed it to the crowd.

As a result, about four thousand men, besides women and children, ate until they were satisfied, and the disciples collected seven baskets full of the leftover pieces.

Jesus may have wanted to make it clear that the Gentiles should not misunderstand His earlier words to the Canaanite woman and think that they were entitled to nothing more than crumbs—a limited portion of blessing.

Through this miracle, Jesus demonstrated that Gentiles, too, would be welcomed to participate in the banquet of the kingdom of God.

After sending the crowd home, Jesus went to the region of Magadan.

³⁹ After Jesus had sent the crowd away, he got into the boat and went to the vicinity of Magadan.

It is unclear exactly where Magadan was located, but it was probably a town somewhere south of the Plain of Gennesaret.

Beloved members of Church of Godly Dreams,

Jesus went into the region of Tyre and Sidon and healed the demon-possessed daughter of a Canaanite woman who had come to Him in desperate need.

Then He left the region immediately.

This suggests that one of the purposes of Jesus' journey to Tyre and Sidon was specifically to meet this woman.

Jesus knew the pain of a Gentile woman whom the Jews did not even regard as worthy of their attention.

He personally went to the wicked cities of Tyre and Sidon to set her free from her suffering.

He patiently waited for her to make a sincere confession of faith, even deliberately drawing that confession out of her.

Finally, when the woman expressed her faith, Jesus commended her for her great faith and granted her request.

He healed her demon-possessed daughter.

Jesus is the One who never overlooks the pain of even the lowliest and most insignificant person.

He has compassion on us, comes to us personally, and restores us.

Jesus knows our pain and suffering, and He came personally to seek us in order to deliver and save us from them.

And for this very purpose, He patiently waits for us to make the confession of faith that is necessary for our salvation.

When our faith is weak or uncertain, He may also use trials and suffering to help us become convinced that He truly is the Messiah, opening the way for us to make a genuine confession of faith.

And when we finally confess our faith, He commends that faith and saves us.

We are all people who have received this grace of salvation from Jesus.

Jesus, the Son of God, personally came to this earth to save us, lowly and sinful people, and ultimately accomplished our salvation.

We must recognize this grace and give thanks for it.

And in gratitude for such grace, we should live our lives seeking to honor Him and faithfully respond to His love.

When we live in such faith and gratitude, God will be with us and work through even what seems small and insufficient, just as He did in the miracles of the five loaves and two fish and the seven loaves and a few small fish.

And through these works, all who witness them will glorify God and confess that Jesus truly is the Messiah.