

FEBRUARY 23, 2020

The *unworthy* find worth in Jesus

The Pharisees were a Jewish sect who promoted ritual purity in order to be considered spiritually worthy. In their world, the people of Judea needed to *earn* back God's favor. What they didn't know was that God had sent Jesus to define their worth through new terms; because Jesus was with them, God had sent his favor. As Jesus traveled to more remote villages, such as Tyre and Decapolis, he increasingly encountered people who were not Jewish. These *Gentiles* were foreigners and expected a certain amount of contempt from Israelites. Here, we see Jesus demonstrate God's favor to all people and serve them in his ministry.

- What might have caused Jesus to venture further away from more familiar regions? (vs.7:1-13)
- “*The dogs*” – This defamatory word demonstrated the first century's societal labels of discrimination – and the hostility between Jewish and Gentile neighbors. Jesus *hyperbolically* uses this label to drawing his hearers to the mission of God to save Israel – and *through* Israel – take the good news to the nations. (vs.27-28)
- What reason brought the Syrophenician woman to Jesus? How might she have been thinking and feeling about her situation?
- How might Jesus be testing the woman's faith? Why would he do this?
- How had Jesus been *satisfying* the needs of the “children” of Israel to this point? (v.27)
- In healing the deaf man with a speech impediment, what does Jesus do that is so *personal*? How do these actions prepare the man for what is about to happen? (v.33)
- Why does Jesus look to heaven? What does this show the man about the source of his power? (v.34)
- Apply it. What are the situations in your life you desire Jesus to heal or “open” up? How can you practice the discipline of declaring how “Jesus does all things well”?

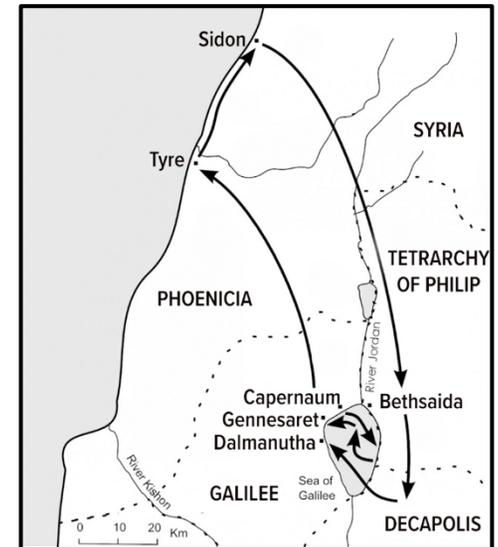
²⁴ Jesus got up and went away from there to the region of Tyre. And when He had entered a house, He wanted no one to know *of it*; yet He could not escape notice. ²⁵ But after hearing of Him, a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately came and fell at His feet. ²⁶ Now the woman was a Gentile, of the Syrophenician race. And she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter.

²⁷ And He said to her, “Let the children be satisfied first, for it is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs.”

²⁸ But she answered and *said* to Him, “Yes, Lord, *but* even the dogs under the table feed on the children's crumbs.”

²⁹ And He said to her, “Because of this answer go; the demon has gone out of your daughter.” ³⁰ And going back to her home, she found the child lying on the bed, the demon having left.

³¹ Again He went out from the region of Tyre, and came through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, within the region of Decapolis. ³² They *brought* to Him one who was deaf and spoke with difficulty, and they *implored* Him to lay His hand on him. ³³ Jesus took him aside from the crowd, by himself, and put His fingers into his ears, and after spitting, He touched his tongue *with the saliva*; ³⁴ and looking up to heaven with a deep sigh, He *said* to him, “Ephphatha!” that is, “Be opened!” ³⁵ And his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue was removed, and he *began* speaking plainly. ³⁶ And He gave them orders not to tell anyone; but the more He ordered them, the more widely they continued to proclaim it. ³⁷ They were utterly astonished, saying, “He has done all things well; He makes even the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.”



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