

*Sunday School Lesson, April 28, 2024*  
*Rev. Mark A. Seals, M.Div., Instructor/Teacher*  
*Mike Moore, Superintendent*

**Lesson—Help For an Outsider<sup>1</sup>**

**Text—Matthew 15:21-28**

**I. Aim for Change/Learning Objectives**

By the end of this lesson, we will...

1. Wrestle with the interaction between Jesus and the Canaanite woman.
2. Persist in faith when there is no assurance of a desired outcome.
3. Extend grace to someone whom they have previously been reluctant to accept.

**Why This Lesson Matters:** there are systemic problems in society that unfairly restrict access to resources for some while giving privilege to others. How did we overcome the prejudice and hatred that denies some people equal access to resources that protect a decent standard of living?

**Key Verse—(Matthew 15:28)** Jesus answered and said unto her, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.(KJV)

**Song of Praise and Worship:** “Where is Your Faith in God,” by Rev. James Cleveland (1981)

**II. Points to be Emphasized**

- a. Throughout the Old Testament, the Israelites were commanded to keep a distance from the Canaanites and other foreign peoples because of their worship of false gods(Leviticus 18:3).
- b. A Canaanite woman had no value to a Jewish man.
- c. The woman names Jesus the son of David, this is significant theologically because Matthew believed that the son of David is the prophesied Messiah.
- d. The exchange between Jesus and the Canaanite woman showed that she understood God's nature and Jesus' identity and mission.

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<sup>1</sup> Outline Content courtesy of the Sunday School Publishing Board Teacher Manual, which should be purchased at [www.sspbnb.com](http://www.sspbnb.com)

### III. *Historical/Biblical Background and Lesson Context*

To represent God's character, Israel was to avoid intimate or social interactions with the Canaanites and other non-Jews who worshipped false gods that might lure them away from their single-minded devotion to the one true God. A growing fear of Jesus' impact led a delegation of Pharisees from Jerusalem to Galilee to dispute Jesus. The Pharisees challenged Jesus on issues such as the source of Jesus' spiritual power and Jesus' practice of eating and communing with sinners, and the lawfulness of praying for the sick on the Sabbath.

Somehow, a Canaanite woman learned of Jesus' presence in the region. She was determined to speak with Jesus and seek help for her demon-possessed daughter. Jesus used this encounter to test the woman's faith and established that Gentiles are included in God's plan of salvation. Jesus' response to the Canaanite woman in Matthew 15 presents 2 vital lessons. *First*, Jesus recognizes and rewards persistent faith. *Second*, Jesus shows that God is no respecter of persons. Jesus' final response to the desperate woman signals the faith community to confront systemic injustices as it proclaims the gospel to all people.

### IV. *Prominent Character(s) in the Lesson*

**Jesus**: also referred to as Jesus of Nazareth or Jesus Christ, was a 1st-century Jewish preacher and religious leader he is the central figure of Christianity, the world's largest religion. The savior in whom all Christians believe.

**Jesus' Disciples**—these companions of Jesus showed themselves again as being not entirely up to the task of carrying on the ministry of Jesus, but they would be in due time.

**The Canaanite Woman** here is a supreme example of a mother's love for her child and the lengths to which she would go to get her help.

### V. *Key Terms in the Lesson (KJV)*

**Crumbs** (v. 27)—*Greek: psichion*: crumbs (of bread); little morsels.

**Dogs** (v.26)—*Greek: kinarion*: little dogs; house dogs; properly, puppies.

**Sidon** (v. 21)—*Greek: Sidon*: a maritime (or great coast ) city of Phoenicia.

**Tyre** (v. 21)—*Greek: an ancient city (the capital) of Phoenicia*.

### VI. *Topical Outline of the Lesson*

1. Introduction
2. Persistent Faith's Request (Matt. 15:21-25)
3. Persistent Faith Rewarded (vv. 26-28)

**Food for thought and question for consideration: (What have we learned Charlie Brown?)** Have you ever grown tired in your faith? Never let anyone or any set of circumstances deter you from trusting, by faith, in the promises of the Lord!!!