

3. Astonishing and Adventurous

Jesus returned to the region of Decapolis by Galilee where a man was brought to him by friends.

*32 There some people brought to him a man who was deaf and could hardly talk, and they begged Jesus to place his hand on him. 33 After he took him aside, away from the crowd, Jesus put his fingers into the man's ears. Then he spit and touched the man's tongue. 34 He looked up to heaven and with a deep sigh said to him, "Ephphatha!" (which means "Be opened!"). 35 At this, the man's ears were opened, his tongue was loosened and he began to speak plainly.- Mark 7:32-35 NIV
5 Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. 6 Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy. Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. - Isaiah 35:5-6 NIV*

In Isaiah 35 we read prophecies describing Israel delivered from all its foes, and happier times succeeding under the Messiah. Seven hundred years would pass between Isaiah's prophecy and Jesus' birth. *Jesus didn't always do things the way people expected. He used saliva to loose this man's speech. If you were in that crowd, how would you feel about Jesus' methods? Do you think it would prevent you from listening to or believing Him? When have you seen Jesus "show up" in unexpected ways? Did it astonish and amaze you or did you struggle to believe something unexpected?*

WRAP-UP

After teaching that true uncleanness comes from the heart, not external things, Jesus journeyed to Tyre—a place considered unclean by Jewish standards. There, He quietly entered a home but was quickly found by a desperate Gentile woman seeking healing for her demon-possessed daughter. Despite cultural barriers and religious expectations, Jesus acknowledged her faith and granted her request, casting out the demon. This encounter revealed Jesus' compassion, willingness to cross cultural lines, in fulfillment of prophecy that His salvation would extend beyond the Jews. Through miracles and unexpected methods, Jesus brought healing, challenged assumptions, and continued to expand His kingdom to all people.

MEMORY VERSE

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. - Romans 1:16 NIV

Challenge –

Find out more about this Sunday's missionary guests and how they are bringing the good news to all the world.

<https://www.josiahventure.com/humerian>

Unclean things and Unclean people Gospel of Mark Ch. 7 - Week 2

INTRODUCTION

After explaining that we are not made unclean by the external things but by the condition of our heart, Jesus moves on to the border of Gentile territory. This was certainly viewed as unclean land occupied by unclean people, yet Jesus quietly made His way to a home there. But word had spread, and Jesus was well-known for many signs and wonders. He was sought out by a woman in desperate need of a miracle. Her daughter was demon-possessed, and she believed that Jesus could drive out the demon. He could, and after the revelation of the woman's faith, the demon was dispatched. Jesus was advancing His kingdom beyond the Jews and out to the Gentiles just as prophecy foretold. And along the way He brought healing and wholeness in unique and miraculous ways.

Ice Breaker

When was the last time you were struck with genuine awe and wonder? A sunset, a newborn, a special time of worship?

Key Passages

People were overwhelmed with amazement. "He has done everything well," they said. "He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak."
- Mark 7:37 NIV

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. No Secret

24 Jesus left that place and went to the vicinity of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know it; yet he could not keep his presence secret. 25 In fact, as soon as she heard about him, a woman whose little daughter was possessed by an impure spirit came and fell at his feet. - Mark 7:24-25 NIV

Jesus' ministry began with signs and wonders and offended the political and religious rulers. Leaving behind the incensed Pharisees along the shores of Galilee, Jesus traveled to Tyre, a Phoenician city where He quietly entered a home. But word spread quickly and immediately upon hearing about Him, a Greek woman appeared desperate for a miracle.

Both the Gospels of Mark and Matthew record only a single incident during this trip to Gentile territory, Jesus' encounter with a woman begging for help. What does this reveal to us about the character of Jesus, that He would take time from His ministry and teaching to meet this individual woman's need?

What are some of the struggles that people in our world may feel desperate to resolve? What do they need to hear about Jesus to compel them to seek Him for their answers? What might they hear instead that would obscure the truth about Jesus?

28 He said to them: "You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with or visit a Gentile. But God has shown me that I should not call anyone impure or unclean. - Acts 10:28 NIV

As if to illustrate His point that being unclean is not external but an internal problem, Jesus went to an "unclean, Gentile woman". Later, in the book of Acts, this truth was revealed to Peter in a vision and he was sent to a Gentile home. How does Peter's explanation of the Jewish law regarding Gentiles help us understand why Jesus' trip to Tyre was so astonishing?

2. Of Bread and Dogs

The exchange between Jesus and the woman may appear harsh and insensitive unless we look at both the cultural context and the definition of the words used.

27 "First let the children eat all they want," he told her, "for it is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs." 28 "Lord," she replied, "even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." - Mark 7:27-28 NIV

Watch out for those dogs, those evildoers, those mutilators of the flesh. - Philippians 3:2 NIV

The Jews did not hold the Gentiles in high regard. In fact, they showed their contempt by calling them dogs in a highly derogatory manner, much like the current use of the term for a female dog in our culture (yeah, the

"B" word). It is disturbing to think Jesus would do such a thing. In fact, He didn't. The derogatory term in Greek for a vicious street dog was *kyōn*. That is the word used in Philippians 3:2 where dogs are identified as evildoers. But in Mark 7:27 the term used is *kynarion*, which means a puppy, or a house pet suggesting a gentler image of household dogs waiting for scraps under the table rather than wild street dogs.

What does the woman's willingness to identify herself as the puppy under the table say about her attitude and expectation concerning Jesus? What are the bread or crumbs she hopes to find?

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." - Matthew 15:22-27 NIV

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. - Romans 1:16 NIV

In Matthew's account of this incident, we discover that Jesus tells the woman He was only sent to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel". This refers to Jesus' role as the Messiah whom the Jews trusted that God would send to save them. But God had also promised that through this Messiah, the whole world would be blessed, or as Paul writes to the Romans, salvation was to the Jew first, then to the Gentile.

18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." - Matthew 28:18-20 NIV

We often forget that Jesus wasn't a Christian, He was The Christ (think about it). And as Gentiles, we are grafted into family of God. How humbling and amazing that God has extended His grace to all people! What are we responsible to do with this good news? What does it mean to you to make a disciple? Who are the people in your sphere of influence that you might disciple?