



Potomac Hills

Presbyterian Church, PCA

By Grace Alone ~ Through Faith Alone ~ In Christ Alone

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Matthew 15:21–28

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English Standard Version

“Results of Kingdom Faith”

The 53rd Sermon in a series on the Gospel of Matthew entitled
“The King and His Kingdom!”

Matthew 15:21-28

²¹ And Jesus went away from there and withdrew to the district of Tyre and Sidon. ²² And behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out and was crying, “Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely oppressed by a demon.” ²³ But He did not answer her a word. And His disciples came and begged Him, saying, “Send her away, for she is crying out after us.” ²⁴ He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” ²⁵ But she came and knelt before Him, saying, “Lord, help me.” ²⁶ And He answered, “It is not right to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs.” ²⁷ She said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table.” ²⁸ Then Jesus answered her, “O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire.” And her daughter was healed instantly.”

Heavenly Father, thank You for giving us the Scriptures and making us Your people. You have brought us to this amazing Gospel to learn more about your Son, Jesus. We ask You this morning to give us the grace to understand Your hard words here. It’s hard because it seems like Jesus is being mean. It sounds like He’s rude and arrogant ... like us. He doesn’t meet our expectations ... and we don’t understand. So by Your Spirit open this Gospel to us and help us to see Jesus, and help us to understand Jesus, and help us to have the faith of the Canaanite woman. And, as always, for this we need Your grace. Give us the desire to learn from You this morning, in the name of Jesus we pray, Amen.

INTRODUCTION: “Life is Good” ¹

Have you ever heard of the company **life is good**? This company makes clothing, towels, bags, pet accessories and so on; originally, all of it came with the tag line “life is good.” Now you can find them with the tag line “keep it simple,” “spread good vibes,” or maybe just a peace sign. My **life is good** t-shirt just has a baseball on it. The **life is good** company was started in 1985 by two brothers, Bert and John Jacobs, when they were college students. They started by selling t-shirts door-to-door in college dorms. From that humble beginning **life is good** has grown to be an 80 million dollar company, they started a charity music festival, and an accredited public charity called “**playmakers**” which works to battle poverty, illness, and violence against children.

Now all this stuff’s great. I’m glad the Jacob’s brothers have been successful. I’m glad they’re trying to use their success to make a difference. I’m glad they care about and are trying to help children in need. But I’m left with a pressing question ... what do Bert and John Jacobs do when life is bad? Where do **they** turn? What do **they** trust in to heal the pain? What gives **them** hope?

The reality that we all experience is that, though often pleasant, life also has a lot of very difficult moments. Moments that require more than a t-shirt with a positive message. So I can’t help but wonder ... where do these guys turn when a loved one dies? What do they hope in when one of them gets cancer? Are they able to share the message “spread good vibes” when they get ripped off? How can they continue to say, “life is good” when so often it seems to be going **badly**?

I’ll probably never know how they would answer those questions. I’ll probably never know where they turn when hard times come. I’ll probably never meet them, talk to them, or get to know them. But these questions aren’t just valid for guys who start t-shirt companies. They’re valid for us too. We live in a fallen and broken world that doesn’t often work the way we want it to.

We have an example of that in our passage for this morning. We have someone with a great need approach Jesus, someone who’s facing a difficult time, someone who can’t say “life is good,” someone who needs more than a message of “spread good vibes.” And so, here in **Matthew 15:21–28**, a hurting woman comes to Jesus. But Jesus doesn’t want to talk to her because He’s trying to get away. However, like earlier in Matthew, we see that ...

v. 21: **BACKGROUND: Jesus Can’t Get Away** ²

Our text today opens up with these words, “*And Jesus went away from there and withdrew to the district of Tyre and Sidon.*” Tyre and Sidon were ancient cities on the coast of

¹ This illustration was first written by one of my RTS students, Peter Grange, and is used with his permission. Information on the life is good company comes from their website, www.lifeisgood.com.

² **The Exposition of the text is adapted from the books**, *The Reformed Expository Commentary: Matthew, Volume 2* by Dr. Dan Doriani, pages 46-56; *The Gospel of Matthew, Volume 1* by Dr. James Montgomery Boice, pages 287–293; and *Preaching the Word – Mark, Volume 1: Jesus, Servant and Savior* by Dr. R. Kent Hughes, pages 171–178. **And the Sermons**, “*The Sympathy of Jesus*” 12/1/96 and “*Goodness and Severity*” 6/4/06, both by Dr. Tim Keller, Redeemer Presbyterian Church, New York, NY, 2/2/97, sermons.redeemer.com; Logos Bible Software 4: *The Timothy Keller Sermon Archive*; “*Shocking Words from the Lips of Jesus*” by Dr. Michael Andrus, First Evangelical Free Church, Wichita, KS, 3/2/08, www.firstfreewichita.org; and “*The Canaanite Woman: Blessed by the Son of David*” by Dr. J. Ligon Duncan, First Presbyterian Church, Jackson, MS, 8/16/98, www.fpcjackson.org.

the Mediterranean in what was then known as Phoenicia (in the area we know as Lebanon today). They are still thriving cities. Several factors caused Jesus to leave Israel on this rather lengthy walk of about 50 miles. One is the mounting pressure from the religious leaders, especially after He offended and embarrassed the heavyweights from Jerusalem, and Jesus wants to avoid a showdown with them before He's ready. He's willing to go to the Cross at the time appointed by the Father, but He won't allow His enemies to set the timetable.

A second factor in His leaving the region is that the people are flocking to Him for all the wrong reasons. They're right in recognizing that His miraculous power marked Him as the Messiah, but they're wrong about the kind of Messiah He's come to be. After the feeding of the 5,000 we read, **John 6:15**, "*Perceiving then that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by Himself.*"

Perhaps even more relevant is the fact that He and His disciples need some rest. Remember that was why they'd gone across the Sea of Galilee some weeks before, but the crowds spotted them and followed on foot, and He ended up multiplying the loaves and the fishes in a miraculous feeding of the multitudes. There was the storm that night, during which Jesus walked on the Sea of Galilee and rescued the disciples. And immediately after reaching the shore near Capernaum people brought all their sick to Him and begged Him to just let them touch the hem of His garment. No rest yet.

Then, at the beginning of Matthew 15, the Pharisees showed up, and Jesus used that as a teachable moment to let both the crowds and the disciples know that moral and spiritual defilement has nothing to do with hand washing — it comes from the heart, as we learned last week.

Finally, Jesus decides to take the disciples and actually leave the country, heading north out of Israel to the region of Tyre and Sidon. Mark tells us, **Mark 7:24**, "*And from there He arose and went away to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And He entered a house and did not want anyone to know, yet He could not be hidden.*" You thought paparazzi were a modern phenomenon ... apparently not. Jesus can't find rest even in a foreign country! Now among those who heard about Jesus' presence in the region of Tyre and Sidon was a certain Canaanite woman. And that's where our text turns, seeing this woman of ...

v. 22–25: PERSISTENT FAITH

²² *And behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out and was crying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely oppressed by a demon."* ²³ *But He did not answer her a word. And His disciples came and begged Him, saying, "Send her away, for she is crying out after us."* ²⁴ *He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."* ²⁵ *But she came and knelt before Him, saying, "Lord, help me."*

It's not unusual for Jesus to show contempt, even anger, toward certain people; for example, the religious leaders who opposed Him. He called them hypocrites, blind guides, and whitewashed tombs. His anger toward them wasn't as much because of their animosity towards Him personally as it was because they hindered others from coming to Him. But the account before us this morning is probably unique in the harshness Jesus seems to demonstrate toward one who comes to Him for help. His attitude is downright shocking at first, but once we understand it, we realize that it reveals some of Jesus' greatest characteristics, particularly His wisdom, compassion, and love.

This woman is called a Canaanite by Matthew, but that apparently refers only to the culture in which she lived. Mark tells us she was actually a Greek woman who was born in

Syrian Phoenicia. The most likely facts are that she was Greek by race, Phoenician by country, and Canaanite by culture.

Despite all these differences, she reveals a certain knowledge of who Jesus is. The woman comes to where Jesus is and cries out, ***“Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David.”*** It’s difficult to discern from this exactly what the woman understands of Jesus’ person and nature, but she certainly recognizes that He’s no ordinary guy. ***“Lord”*** was used of any man who commanded a great deal of respect, but ***“Son of David”*** demonstrates that she believes Him to be a descendant of the great King David. More than that, the terms used together, ***“O Lord, Son of David,”*** was a recognized name for the coming Messiah. Although she probably doesn’t understand the full meaning of His lordship, she comes with a sense of awe and wonder at His power and goodness.

The barrier here was great, and it went both ways. Greek women were socially savaged by their own pagan culture, which made this woman's approach to Jesus even more remarkable. But she had a great need — her daughter was afflicted with a demon. If so, it would have wrought terrible havoc to the girl's body. She was being progressively scarred and possibly even maimed. Think how you would feel if she were your daughter. What would you do? This mother was desperate and at the end of her proverbial rope. She had heard of Jesus, perhaps through the testimony of a merchant who had seen him work miracles.

She now **believed** that Jesus was her only hope — and that He **could** and **would** heal her daughter. She came in faith, and Jesus knew it. She asks for His mercy, verse 22, ***“Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David.”*** People don’t ask for mercy unless they have lost all hope and can do nothing about their situation themselves. This woman knows that Jesus is her only hope.

As Jesus drew her remarkable faith out, the first thing we see is that it was a **persistent** faith. Mark tells us, **Mark 7:25-26**, ***“But immediately a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit heard of Him and came and fell down at His feet.”***²⁶ ***Now the woman was a Gentile, a Syrophenician by birth. And she begged Him to cast the demon out of her daughter.”*** She didn’t beg just once, but kept on begging. She wouldn’t be denied. She was not only persistent, but noisy. Jesus’ Messianic title had come her way, so she kept repeating, ***“Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David.”*** She didn’t have a Jew's knowledge of Christ, but the term sounded good to her and she repeated it over and over.

Knowing the heart of Jesus as we do, His response was amazing, for it was **absolute indifferent silence**, verse 23, ***“But He did not answer her a word.”*** We rightly say that the opposite of love is not hatred but indifference. Indifference says, ***“I don’t care what happens to you. It doesn’t matter. You don’t matter. It’s irrelevant. You’re irrelevant.”*** That’s what Jesus appeared to be communicating to this woman. Can you imagine treating someone who is pleading and begging, fallen at our feet, with **cold indifferent silence**?

Actually, Jesus was not being indifferent. Earlier on the stormy Sea of Galilee, “When Jesus lay silent and asleep in the ship, He was more kind and His arm more near to help and more certain than the anxious cry of the doubting disciples suggests.” Jesus’ silence was the silence of love. By it He would elevate the woman's awareness of her own faith, holding it up for the Church to see for all time. Remarkably, the woman was not silenced by Jesus’ silence, nor by the disciples’ annoyance and their utter lack of compassion, verse 23, ***“Send her away, for she is crying out after us.”*** Peter probably scowled, quick-tempered John got impatient, and Andrew, Philip, and the rest thought her rude and presumptuous. It was total rejection ... “get

rid of her.” But the woman thought about her daughter, and remembered what she knew about the Lord, and she **persisted**.

She even persisted when Jesus Himself seemed to speak words of rejection, verse 24, **“He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”** First His silence, then this. But not even His suggestion of Jewish exclusiveness could stop her, verse 25, **“But she came and knelt before Him, saying, “Lord, help me.”** She simply cried for help again. She wouldn’t give up. Her faith was utterly persistent. What else could she do? Where else could she go? Her daughter was oppressed.

The disciples apparently don’t realize that Jesus does nothing unloving and He does nothing without a divine purpose. He’s testing the woman’s faith. He’s putting up barriers, not to drive her away, but to draw her close. I think He’s also using the occasion to show His disciples the value of persistent faith. He wants them to see the difference between genuine faith and superficial faith.

You see this woman is miserable, and we’re told she comes and falls down at His feet. It says she begged Jesus and she wouldn’t stop begging. She wouldn’t stop talking. She wouldn’t go away. You know mother love, and there it is again. She wouldn’t stop. So He pushes the woman to reveal, not only her persistent faith, but also to reveal her ...

v. 26–28: **HUMBLE FAITH**

Finally, listen to what Jesus says, verse 26, **“And He answered, “It is not right to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs.”** ²⁷ *She said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table.”* ²⁸ *Then Jesus answered her, “O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire.” And her daughter was healed instantly.”*

What’s He saying here? Does this look harsh? Does it surprise you? Is it offensive? I think it is, and there are a lot of ways of coming at this. Let me remind you, first of all, for Him to say this **wouldn’t** have surprised her. The reason it wouldn’t have surprised her is that, in this context, as a Gentile woman, she would’ve known that any Jewish holy man probably wouldn’t even **speak** to her in public. She knew that the Jewish religious leaders felt the Gentiles were **unclean**. They were **defiled**, and to speak to one in public, to touch one, and to deal with one ... well, she knew she was asking a lot.

When He says what He says, she wouldn’t have been too surprised, but no matter how you slice it, Jesus calls this woman **a dog**. He essentially says, “I can’t take the bread I’m feeding to the children of Israel, and throw it to **Gentile dogs**.” She says, “I need something from you,” and He answers, “I’m not going to give it to dogs.” He’s calling her **a dog**.

Now if you’re offended and not puzzled, it’s only because you’re not reading the whole chapter. If you read the whole chapter, you realize that in all of Matthew 15, Jesus is saying Gentiles are not undefiled just by being Gentiles. It’s not what’s on the outside. It’s not the flesh. It’s not the pedigree. It’s **the heart** that makes you clean or unclean. What He’s saying here shouldn’t be offensive. It should be puzzling, because it seems to be contradicting everything else He says.

He’s alluding to the fact that dogs were unclean. As far as the Jews were concerned, it was an unclean animal, but it was also, frankly, unclean to anybody with common sense. You don’t bring your dog and put it up on the table with the children. You’re having a meal. The dog jumps up on the table. What do you say? “Oh, sit here.” **No**, you say, “Get down,” because the dog, of course, is a dog ... it’s unclean. “You can’t be up here. Get down!” The dog’s not

allowed to be on the table and the dog's not allowed to be at the table with the children ... the dog is only allowed **under the table**. He says, "**You're a dog.**"

How does she respond? This is what's so fascinating. First of all, she picks up on the allusion because He's giving her this mental image. In the ancient household, when the family would come to eat, the father would be at the head of the table. The children would come around, and the children would be given food **from the father's table**. If there were dogs around, the dogs might, as she said, eat the scraps from the table. So she says, "Well, wait a minute. The dogs eat the Father's bread too. Sure, we get it later. Sure, we get less, but we do get leftovers. Yes, Lord," she says, "you're right, but there's enough bread for us dogs as well."

Now what in the world's going on? Here's what's going on. This woman is giving you and me a model. This woman is a model. She's not unique. In fact, what she shows us is something about the nature of saving faith, the nature of faith that connects you with God, the nature of faith that brings the power of God into your life. And she shows us this because she says two things.

First of all, she says, "Yes, I am unfit for the Father's table." She doesn't get all upset. She doesn't jump up and down. She doesn't run around. She doesn't say, "How dare you talk to me like that!" In fact, because of her response, almost for sure she recognizes this is not a **racist statement** He's making. It's a **theological statement**. He's not saying, "You're unclean because you're a Gentile." Which is what the Pharisees would say. Rather, what He's saying is, "You're unclean. You're unfit as a human being because **you're a sinner.**"

She understands that. She recognizes He's not making a racist statement but a theological statement. What does she say? She says, "Yes Lord, of course, I don't deserve to be at the table. Of course, I'm unfit for the mercy of God. Of course, I'm unfit for the blessings of God." That's the first thing she does right, but then there's a second thing.

She doesn't hang her head. She doesn't walk away. She says, "Oh, yes. I'm exactly what you say I am, an unworthy sinner. There's no bread for me." She turns around, and she says, "But I know **there's enough mercy on that table for me**. Of course, I'm not fit to sit at the table. I'm not even asking for that, but there's enough mercy for me. I know you have a heart that's big enough. I want it."

When you see these two things together, you have Christianity. Let me show you what I mean. First of all, she's a model when she says, "Yes, Lord." When she says, "Yes, Lord," she says, "Okay, I'm not fit to be there." That's a model for all of us. That's Christianity. Jesus says you're not fit for the table. But, of course, you already know that. You've already agreed with that, at least you have if you're member, but the first membership question is "Do you acknowledge yourself to be a sinner in the sight of God, justly deserving His displeasure, and without hope, save in His sovereign mercy?"

It's not until she says, "I'm a dog under the table," that she's fit to be a child at the table. It's not till she admits she's a dog under the table that she's admitted as a child to the table, because that's what He does. This is the gospel.

If you say, "I see," Jesus says you're blind.

If you say, "I'm blind, Lord," He says, "Finally, you see."

If you say, "I'm all right," He says you're condemned.

If you say, "I'm condemned, Lord," He says, "It's all right, I took your condemnation for you." This follows the principles that Jesus teaches us, **Matthew 23:12**, "*Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.*" And in **Matthew 10:39**,

“Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.” This is the gospel. She comes in and says, “Yes, Lord.” She’s a model for us.

Then the other thing she does is she says, “Yes, Lord, but even **the dogs** get the scraps.” What she’s saying, and this is something that’s very important to realize, a lot of people might say, “Oh, I see. Being a Christian means just to hate yourself and just to look down and say, ‘I’m a sinner. I’m terrible. Hit me again. I’m just not worthy.’” If she walks away ... If she screams because she won’t see the magnitude of her sin, **she’s failed to understand** Jesus as Savior ... but if she walks away because she can’t see the magnitude of His grace, **she’s failed again.**

In other words, **it takes pride to say**, “What do you mean I’m a dog?” but it also takes pride to say, “There’s not enough mercy for me. My sins are too great.” I think there are probably people in this room who walk around feeling very bad about themselves, filled with self-loathing, filled with a sense of inferiority, and you think you’re being spiritual. Let me tell you, repentance is not **just** based on humility. Repentance is also based on confident joy in the greatness of the love of Christ. This woman didn’t just say, “I’m a sinner.” She also said, “But your mercy is deeper than my guilt, wider than my wanderings, stronger than my weakness, greater than all my sin.”

Of course, you know that, at least those of you who are already members. Because that’s the second membership question — “Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and Savior of Sinners, **and do you receive and rest upon Him alone** for salvation as He is offered in the Gospel?”

You don’t know what real repentance is until there’s a fountain of joy underneath it, joyful confidence that **there is bread to spare** up there on the table. She says, “I’m going to eat from the Father’s table. Of course, I’m unworthy, but I know my Father’s mercy is greater than my unworthiness.” That’s the reason Jesus says, “For that answer go home. Your life will come together.” What does it say? She went home, and she found her daughter, her life had been healed.

Do you understand what’s going on? Do you see what’s going on? This is astounding. This is the ultimate. You have to put the two things together. In Isaiah 6, when Isaiah says, “Woe is me ... I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips ...” That’s when the angel flies to him like lightning with healing from the altar.

When the Prodigal Son in Luke 15 has run away from his father and he’s in a far country and he suddenly comes to his senses, he says, “In my father’s house **there is bread to spare.**” On the way back, because he’s willing to say, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight. I am not worthy to sit at your table,” the father runs to him, embraces him, and kisses him.

Its repentance, and real repentance is characterized by both deep humility and by joyful confidence in the mercy of God, and that’s the thing that releases the love and power of God into your life. Nothing else does, nothing else. “For this answer go home. I’m in your life. Your daughter is well.”

The Scriptures record this delighted exclamation from the lips of Jesus, **“O woman, great is your faith!”** and that compliment warrants our closest attention. Thousands of people appear in Scripture, both named and unnamed. Only a few are commended for their faith. We find here the faith of a woman whose name is **unknown**. In our passage, Jesus held the woman's faith up first to the light of His strange silence, and then to His apparent rebuff, so the Church down through the ages could see how beautiful her faith was.

This is the story of a faith that delighted Jesus. As such, it can be of great help for any person who hasn't yet come to faith in Christ. It can be of equally great help to the believer who is struggling with his or her faith in difficult circumstances. When this beautiful encounter is viewed from beginning to end in its context, it's evident it was divinely arranged. Jesus had just come off a huge clash with the religious establishment over the concept of ritual defilement, arguing that externals don't defile a person, but it's what's on the inside that makes a person unclean. The encounter over, Jesus withdrew to get some needed rest, but in doing so He purposely went into Gentile territory, which was considered ritually unclean. There He met an "unclean" woman. Her faith is dramatically contrasted with the hardened hearts of the Pharisees. As such, her faith became a beautiful picture of the gospel of Jesus Christ which would be proclaimed with authority throughout the Gentile world.

CONCLUSION: *You Don't Deserve To Be At The Table*

There's a movie that's been a long time favorite of the women in my house, *Sabrina*, the remake with Harrison Ford and Julia Ormond. *Sabrina* is about a servant girl, the chauffeur's daughter, who has a love affair with a rich tycoon, played by Harrison Ford. At the very end of the movie, Sabrina runs away to Paris, and Harrison Ford, the rich man, comes to her father and says, "Where is she?" The father says, "You don't deserve her." What does Harrison Ford say? "I know, but I need her." Then the father just stares at him and then tells him the address in Paris where she is. He gets there ahead of her and waits for her. When she arrives, she's stunned to find him already there, she just looks at him, not understanding, and he whispers to her, "Save me, Sabrina fair, you're the only one who can."

What if Harrison Ford says, "Where is she?" and the father said, "You don't deserve her," and what if Harrison Ford had said, "What do you mean I don't deserve her? She's just a servant girl. I'm this rich master of the universe. She's lucky to have me"? What would the father have done?

The father would've done what you would have done and what I would've done and we wouldn't have told him where she was ... Common sense says if Harrison Ford thinks he deserves her, he doesn't. If he thinks he doesn't deserve her, he does. Until he finally realizes he doesn't deserve her, their marriage will never work. You can tell that from the whole movie. The only way for him to be fit for Sabrina is to admit he's **not** fit for Sabrina. If he thinks he's fit, he's not. If he thinks he's not, he is.

Right now, for some of you, do you know what the Lord's doing to you? He's doing the same thing to you, just not with words, but with events. He's showing you that you don't belong at the table. He's showing you the hidden dirt in your heart. He's humbling you. He's bringing you down. He's letting events reveal your weakness. He's letting events reveal your selfishness. He's letting you see you don't deserve to be at the table.

What are you doing about it? How are you reacting to that? Are you running around complaining, "I deserve a better life than this. I'm better than most people"? If you say, "I deserve a place at the table," **you'll never have one**. It's the same spiritually. Until Harrison Ford knows he doesn't deserve her, he's not fit for her. It would be bad for them to be married. Until you say, "Yes, Lord, I am **under** the table," you're not fit to **sit** at the table. But when you finally say, "Lord, here I am. I'm **under** the table," then you will **sit** at the table.

What's Matthew saying? He's saying this is the King. This is the King who's to come, but He comes lowly and meek and sighing. He goes up into the land of the Gentiles. He goes and He deals with these Gentile people, these unclean people. Why? He even calls them **dogs** to

show that anybody can sit at the table. It doesn't matter who you are. It doesn't matter what you've done. It doesn't matter whether you've lived for the last 10 years at the gates of Hell. Some of you say, "Oh yeah, I was there." It doesn't matter how messed-up you are. It doesn't matter how broken you are. It doesn't matter.

You need to tell Jesus, "Save me, O Lord, You're the only one who can."

There's a really great sermon written by an old Scottish preacher named Octavius Winslow. He has a whole sermon on this verse where it says Jesus sighed. It's called *The Sigh of Christ*. Do you realize how often He sighs when He heals? Could you sort of hear Him sigh when He healed this woman's daughter? Why? Because whenever He helps somebody else, He sighs not just for them, and not just for us, but for Himself, because He knows what it's going to take in order to really heal us. Don't you see? For the dog to become a son at the table, the Son at the table has to become a dog. For us to **sit** to the table, He has to be thrown **under** the table. For the woman to come and drink the wine of joy at the table of the Father, Jesus is going to have to be cast out, thrown to the ground, beaten and kicked like a dog. For the dog to become a child, the Child of God has to become a dog ... and He sighs. He'll never make you go through that because He has already been through it for you.

Thomas Cranmer wrote one of the great prayers of the English language. It was "***The Prayer of Approach to the Lord's Supper***" in the very first **Book of Common Prayer**. Millions of people have prayed this. It's all based on this story. It goes like this, "We do not presume to come to this thy Table (O merciful Lord) trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We be not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy." Every time anyone has ever prayed that prayer, Thomas Cranmer has been inviting people to step into this woman's shoes **because she got the gospel**. She got it, and she went home. Her daughter **was well**. How are you?

Think about that ... You need to pray.

Take a moment to do that, and then I'll close.

Our Lord and our God, thank You that You have given us a King. In this passage, we see Your Son. Open our eyes that we might see our sin and then see our Savior. Open our eyes that we might see what You had to do in order to make us sons and daughters who can sit at Your table. Change us with the knowledge of what You did so that we can approach You with holy boldness, with persistent faith, and with humble faith knowing that we deserve nothing of Your grace and mercy, and yet You love to lavish us with hope and loving kindness. Help us to know, speak, and live the Gospel. And so, O Lord, if there is anyone among us this day, who comes here not trusting in Christ, we would ask that by Your Spirit that You would draw that person to Yourself — by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone — that they might embrace the beloved Son. Help us to know and believe that the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever. Amen.

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Hebrews 4:14-16

“Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”