

PS's Ponderings



In Matthew 15:21-28 we read of an unusual encounter that Jesus had with a Gentile woman whose daughter was possessed by an evil spirit. At first, Jesus seemed to ignore her pleas for help, but when she persisted, he told her that his mission was to help the people of Israel, not Gentiles.

There is something that is just so compelling to me about this story. I know it's not one of the typical stories about Jesus that we focus on, and it even makes Jesus seem a bit harsh because he stressed that he was sent by God to reach the Jewish people — not Gentile people like her.

The words make him seem so cold and distant, even though that doesn't seem to fit his character at all. After all, this same Jesus reached out to not just the Samaritan woman at the well, but her whole town as well. He healed a Roman centurion's beloved servant — even commended his faith.

Yet here, in this story, he seems intent on ignoring her pleas, Why?

And yet, in spite of that... She worships him... With no promise or indication at all that Jesus was going to meet her need.

I know I am speculating a bit here, but I think that was Jesus' intent all along. Being God, he would know what was in her heart, as well as the hearts of his disciples. What a powerful example that moment must have been to them... A woman that Jesus seemed to ignore and deny, choosing to worship him anyway — in spite of her need or her circumstances.

And it ought to be a powerful example to us as well. Let's face the obvious fact that it is way easier to worship Jesus when everything in life is grand. It can be a bit more challenging when things are stressful and difficult, and even more so when we feel like God is not answering our prayer needs. The most powerful lesson to be learned here, I think, is Jesus ought to be worshipped — No. Matter. What.

In our Matthew 15 story, Jesus actually commends the woman for her great faith and heals her daughter, but don't forget that she worshipped before Jesus acted. May we be people who follow in this unnamed woman's footsteps. Worshippers... No... Matter... What.