

Setting the Compass for 2022

“The people of this district were of the old Canaanite race. They were idolaters, and were despised and hated by the Jews. To this class belonged the woman who now came to Jesus. She was a heathen, and was therefore excluded from the advantages which Jews daily enjoyed. There were many Jews living among the Phoenicians, and the tidings of Christ’s work had penetrated to this region. Some of the people had listened to His words and had witnessed His wonderful works. This woman had heard of the prophet, who, it was reported, healed all manner of diseases. As she heard of His power, hope sprang up in her heart. Inspired by a mother’s love, she determined to present her daughter’s case to Him. It was her resolute purpose to bring her affliction to Jesus He must heal her child. She had sought help from the heathen gods, but had obtained no relief. And at times she was tempted to think, what can this Jewish teacher do for me? But the word had come, He heals all manner of diseases, whether those who come to Him for help are rich or poor. She determined not to lose her only hope.” {DA. P. 399-400}

-The desperate need of her daughter and her radical faith humbled her at Jesus’ feet.

6. How did she learn of Jesus? – Mark 3:7-8

-Perhaps a cousin or a friend of the Syrophenician woman had been in the crowd that had witnessed the power of God in Jesus and came back to Tyre and Sidon with news about the Rabbi from Galilee.

7. Why does Jesus call her a dog? – Mark 7:26-27

-A Greek rather than Aramaic. A Syrophenician in a Hellenized culture.
-The Jews referred to them as dogs. So does Jesus but she demonstrates resilience. However, Jesus uses the word kunarion, puppies, rather than dog.
-Her faith would not be deterred.

8. Jesus offers hope. – Mark 7:28-29

-She broke through the barriers by going to Jesus. Jesus offers hope for her daughter. Jesus is not bound by our human manufactured walls.

9. Was the woman’s faith rewarded? – Mark 7:30, Gen. 3:26

-The **resilient faith of this unassuming**, yet undeterred Syrophenician woman, **allowed the power of God to work on behalf of her household**; healing her daughter from the unclean spirit that had tormented her.

RESILIENT PEOPLE, **Resilient Relationship**

Chambersburg, PA 01/29/2022

Scripture Reading:

James 1:2 – Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

Opening Hymn – #652 – Love at Home

Closing Hymn – #457 – I Love to Tell the Story

Gem of Light:

“Jesus had just departed from His field of labor because the scribes and Pharisees were seeking to take His life. They murmured and complained. They manifested unbelief and bitterness, and refused the salvation so freely offered them. Here Christ meets one of an unfortunate and despised race, that has not been favored with the light of God’s word; yet she yields at once to the divine influence of Christ, and has implicit faith in His ability to grant the favor she asks. She begs for the crumbs that fall from the Master’s table. If she may have the privilege of a dog, she is willing to be regarded as a dog. She has no national or religious prejudice or pride to influence her course, and she immediately acknowledges Jesus as the Redeemer, and as being able to do all she asks of Him.” {**Desire of Ages p. 401**}

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INTRO:

The most sacred symbol in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (in the United States of America) is a tree: a sprawling, shade-bearing, **80-year-old American elm**.

-She endured the **Oklahoma City bombing (Wednesday, April 19, 1995)**.

-**Timothy McVeigh** parked his death-laden truck only yards from her.

-**His malice killed 168 people, wounded 850, destroyed the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building, and buried the tree in rubble.**

-No one expected it to survive. Not only did it survive, but it thrived.

-Like the Survivor Tree, there are families, that need to survive and will thrive.

PRAY – Mark 7:24-30 and Matthew 15:21-28

1. How do we define resilience?

RESILIENT DEFINITION:

Returning to the original form or position after being bent, compressed, or stretched.” Dictionary.com

Like a tennis ball that gets hit at great speeds, yet, readily recovers its shape and is ready to face another menacing tennis racket.

2. What is the setting of the story of the Syrophenician?

The setting for the story in Mark 7:24-30 finds **Jesus coming from having a major conflict with the religious leaders about ceremonial uncleanness when He encounters the Syrophenician woman.**

Jesus illustrates how ridiculous the tradition of the elders was when He takes the time to talk with this gentile woman. **Jesus used this as a lesson for the disciples.** The Good News of Salvation is for everyone.

3. When was Jesus last venture into Gentile territory?

Mark 5:1-20

-The biblical account seems to indicate that **Jesus was looking for a place to rest with His disciples and to escape the persecution of the religious leaders** who were always following Him.

-So you must have a plan for personal devotion.

-**He knew the scribes and Pharisees did not want to defile themselves by going into Gentile territory.**

3. What was Jesus' mission? – Luke 19:10

-It is important to observe how **God's providence works in His mission** to “seek and save the lost” (Luke 19:10), **despite the barriers erected by the social customs of His day.**

-While it is true **Jesus was attempting to get some rest with His disciples after a difficult time with church leaders who had twisted God's plans** to suit their preferences; it should not escape our attention that **the major focus of Jesus was to always alleviate the pain of people and give them access to His life-giving presence.**

-**How graciously he was pleased to manifest himself, notwithstanding. Though he would not carry a harvest of miraculous cures into those parts, yet, it should seem, he came on purpose to drop a handful, to let fall this one which we have here an account of. He could not be hid; for, though a candle may be put under a bushel, the sun cannot.**

Christ was too well known to be long incognito-hid, any where; the oil of gladness which he was anointed with, like ointment of the right hand, would betray itself, and fill the house with its odours. Those that had only heard his fame, could not converse with him, but they would soon say, ‘This must be Jesus.’”

~Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible P. 1793

4. What is the character of the woman vs the religious leaders? – Mark 7:24-26

-Interestingly, **the rules the religious leaders had put in place to separate themselves from other people rather than allowing God to use them as instruments of His grace** to those in great need unquestionably make this story provocative in the Gospels.

-“In the thinking of first-century Palestine this woman had a number of inabilities.

-She was:

- a **Gentile**,
- a **woman (of resilience)**,
- and perhaps a **single parent**.

But none of those factors kept her from approaching Jesus for help, or from engaging in a challenging conversation with Him.”