

**Read: Matthew 15:21-28**

## Table Crumbs and Promises

### **Matthew 15:21-28**

Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. 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." 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." He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel." The woman came and knelt before him. "Lord, help me!" she said. He replied, "It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs." "Yes it is, Lord," she said. "Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table." Then Jesus said to her, "Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted." And her daughter was healed at that moment.

*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

"But you said..."

Kids, have you ever said that to your parents when they promised something and didn't follow through? Moms and Dads, have you ever said that to each other when one of you said you'd do something for the other but then the task went uncompleted? The older we get, the more we deal with broken promises (and the more we find ourselves being the ones who promise and don't come through).

Jesus is God. He never lies. He never breaks his promises. Ever. When he says something, he always means it and he always does it. The promise of God to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden was to send a Savior... for the world. When God chose Abraham to be great-great-(and a whole bunch more greats)-grandfather of the Messiah, he said that his coming would bring blessing... to the whole world. When God sent prophets to his people, they reminded the people that the coming Christ (Anointed One = God's special chosen one) would be the Christ... of all nations. But that's sometimes hard to remember. Did Jesus come even for me?

The woman in Jesus' story helps us see that the answer is yes. She was not a child of Israel. She was born a Canaanite—a Gentile who was not from God's special people. Many told her she was just a dirty street dog when it came to God's family. Even Jesus challenged her request for help! He told her that you shouldn't give the children's food to dogs! But she answered boldly and held Jesus to the promise. "Yes," she said, "you should." Why? Because even the dogs get at least the crumbs from the table. She yearned for the smallest scrap Jesus might give her. She held Jesus to his promise, and he told her that she had great faith. Not because her faith was so big, but because it trusted in the promise of God's mercy. She was holding God to his promises.

“Lord, help me!” she cried. And he did: “Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted.” And her daughter was healed from that very hour. May Jesus richly bless you with the breadcrumbs of his mercy—not because we are worthy, but because he promised you his tender mercy!

*The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.*

### **Questions for the Younger Children**

- What was wrong with the Canaanite woman’s daughter?
- What did she ask Jesus to do for her?

### **Questions for Elementary Age Children**

- Why did Jesus answer the way he did, saying it isn’t right to give the food of children to the dogs?
- How did the woman show her great faith in Jesus’ promises?

### **Questions for Middle School and Above**

- Can you think about times when it is hard to hold onto Jesus’ promises and to remember that all he did was for us too?
- When you have down days and need help, think of something to help you hold Jesus to his promises the way the Canaanite woman did.

### **Closing Prayer:**

Lord Jesus, thank you for your wonderful promises. Thank you for making me part of your Father’s family and for giving me all the blessings that come from his table. Amen.