

## A DETERMINED WOMAN!!

(This sermon was edited, outlined and adapted from a book entitled, "Old Truths in New Robes", Vol. 2, Roberts & Son, Birmingham, Alabama. 1972, pp. 98-100 by **Franklin Camp.**)

**TEXT:** Matthew 15:21-28

### INTRODUCTION:

1. Sensitivity is a wonderful thing as long as it is not misdirected.
  - a) We should be sensitive to the physical and spiritual needs of others.
  - b) We should be sensitive to our personal needs (Rom 12:15-16 "*Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep*").
  - c) It is a wonderful thing to see Christians sensitive to the problems of one another.
2. However, many members of the church are too sensitive.
  - a) Many have left the church because someone hurt their feelings.
  - b) There are others who still attend, but are no longer active in the Lord's work because of hurt feelings.
    - 1) People feel genuinely justified for their actions because their feelings have been wounded.
    - 2) We are being overly sensitive when we allow our wounded feelings place our souls in danger!
    - 3) Those that leave the church or cease to be active just because of hurt their feelings are lost!
3. Our feelings are like WARNING lights.
  - a) When we begin to become sensitive with jealousy, hurt feelings or a feeling of rejection, these are red lights lighting up telling us that we do not have our lives properly focused.
4. Let us look at the story of the Canaanite woman in Matthew 15:21-28.
5. Let us take the test through which the Lord put her and see how she reacted.
  - a) He was not being mean to her.
  - b) He was testing her faith.
  - c) He was teaching a lesson, to her and to the others present.
6. Let us think about how we would have reacted.

### I. THE FIRST TEST:

A. A Canaanite woman cried: (Matt 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-30) "*Then Jesus went out from there and departed to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed." But He answered her not a word.*"

1. Does this seem cruel? Jesus was testing her faith, and teaching her and others a lesson.
    - a) This was a good time, for feelings to get hurt?
    - b) Many of us would have turned away and said
    - c) "*Well, if that is the way you act, I will never ask you for anything else?*"
  2. What would most of us do if we asked the preacher a question and receive no reply? Would our feelings be hurt?
  3. People have left the church, feeling justified in doing so for things similar to this! But are they justified?
  4. This woman did not let the silence of Christ turn her away.
    - a) Was she a woman without feelings?
    - b) No, but she was a woman that needed something, and she knew that Christ was the only one that could supply that need. (Salvation is like that).
    - c) Peter asked in John 6:67 "*Lord to whom would we go, only you have the words of eternal life?*"
    - c) The life of her child was in danger and she thought more of her daughter than she did of her own feelings.
- B. How many of us would have passed this first test through which Jesus put this woman?

### II. THE SECOND TEST:

- A. The silence of Christ was only her first test. Many would not have passed the first test; and, even fewer would have passed the second test.

1. When *Christ* did not answer, his *disciples* struck at her feelings. They said, "*Send her away; for she cries after us.*"
  2. Surely this would have been enough to send her away with wounded feelings.
    - a) But, did she leave? No!
    - b) Her need was too great to let Christ's disciples stand in her way. (Our need is too great too)
    - c) She would not let them rob her of the blessings she needed.
  3. Suppose we came to someone in the church and made a request the response was "Send them away, they're bothering me!". Would we stay or leave?
    - a) This woman knew her needs.
    - b) She didn't lose focus from why she had come.
    - c) She remained, in spite of what they said.
    - d) If she had turned her back because her feelings were hurt, she would be the one to lose?
  4. Of course, God would not be pleased with the actions of any that would try to turn us away, but their actions would not justify your quitting.
- B. If we allowed this to cause us to quit the church, what condition would our souls be in?
1. All that know anything about the Bible know that we would be lost if we left the church.
  2. Is our soul more important than our feelings?
  3. To forsake the church for hurt feelings would mean that we were being too sensitive.
- C. We must desire to know the truth regardless of the obstacles that seem to get in our way (John 8:31-32).
- D. We must remember that our souls are in danger, and Christ and the church are the only places where safety can be found.

### III. THE THIRD TEST:

- A. As if these first two tests were not enough the woman had more tests to face.
1. Jesus said to her, "*I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*"
  2. What would we do if someone told us that the blessings of the Lord are not for us?
  3. Would we get all ruffled up and leave without them? Not this woman!
  4. "*Then she came and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.*"
    - a. How many of us could worship under such circumstances?
    - b. We would get "mad enough to bite rusty nails" and refuse to stay for worship.
    - c. But should we give up? Would that be the proper reaction?
    - b. It is far more important that we obey the gospel and serve the Lord in the church, than to run home with our feelings hurt?
- B. Our successes or failures in passing tests such as these indicate how strong our desire is to do what is right.
1. All that know anything about the Bible, know that they would be lost if they left the church.
  2. Is our soul more important than our feelings?

### IV. THE FOURTH TEST:

- A. She had one more test to pass, would it hurt her feelings and drive her away?
1. Jesus said, "*It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs.*"
  2. Not many of us would have carried the conversation far enough to hear this statement.
    - a. But, what if we had?
    - b. What would we have done if someone should call us a dog?
  3. Most of us would think this would be enough to justify getting to heaven without ever passing by that church again!
  4. But this woman simply said, "*That's true, sir,*" she answered, "*but even the dogs are given the leftovers that fall from their masters' table.*"
  5. That is saying, "*I know how unworthy I am; I'm not asking for anything but the crumbs.*"
  6. She passed every test and obtained the mercy she sought.
  7. Was it worth it? It would have been so easy to let her feelings rob her and her daughter of the healing she desired and needed.

8. When we meet God in judgment, will we have let our feelings rob us of hearing the words, "*Well done?*"
- B. We tell the world that we walk by faith, not by feelings.
  1. But, do we really?
  2. We should never quit just because we have had our feelings hurt!
  3. We walk by faith, even though our feelings *have been* hurt.

#### **V. APPLICATION:**

- A. Sometimes we mistakenly leave the impression that being a member of the church is just about attendance.
- B. Somewhere along the way we stopped telling people that they can't go to Heaven without being added to the Lord's church (Acts 2:47)!
- C. We have also apparently failed in telling them that being a member and being faithful member is not the same thing!
  1. Perhaps in our efforts to fill buildings we have failed to change hearts.
  2. This may be why some members of the church don't see the necessity of changing their lives.
  3. They want to be members but their habits, friends and sinful lives don't change much.
- D. That's why when they get their feelings hurt they leave without a second thought! They do not realize that they are forfeiting their salvation!
- E. Why would Jesus reward with Heaven, a person that is not interested enough to be an active faithful part of His body?! (Eph. 1:22-23)
  - 1) Jesus is the head and the church is His body!
  - 2) If one of the members of the physical walks out, it dies!
  - 3) If we sever the hand from the body and the body doesn't die, the hand does!
- F. The woman in our text knew that if she got mad and left, her daughter would not be healed and she also had faith strong enough to know that if she toughed it out and overlooked hurt feelings her daughter would be healed!

#### **CONCLUSION:**

1. "*So Jesus answered her, "You are a woman of great faith! What you want will be done for you." And at that very moment her daughter was healed.*" (Matthew 15:28)
2. The most important thing we have is our souls!
3. It is more important than our feelings.
4. No one in this congregation wants to harm another in any way.
5. All any of us wish to do is to help each other get to Heaven!
6. But, in reality, being part of the church has little to do with how other people treat us!
7. It has everything to do with our relationship with God!