

## Introduction

- Why does Jesus seem to ignore this woman?
- Why does Jesus call her a dog?
- Is Jesus being racist?

## Different Interpretations

- Some say that Jesus is sinfully racist to non-Jewish people.
- Some say that Jesus has his racial bias confronted, although it is not sinful.
- Some say Jesus was rightfully racist, but was gracious anyway to the undeserving.
- Jesus tests the Canaanite woman's faith to contrast it with the Israelites' faith.

## Context

- Both the gospel of Matthew and Mark have remarkably similar contexts.
- Both quote Isaiah 29:13 **"This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me;"**
- Both are preceded by Jesus clarifying what makes people unclean.
- Both are followed by the disciples' inability to believe Jesus could feed the 4,000.
- Both are followed by the Pharisees demanding a sign.

## Jesus

- Jesus withdraws almost completely from Israel.
- Tyre and Sidon are located in Lebanon, outside of Israel.
- Jesus is intentionally leaving the promised land to seek out this woman.

## Woman

- She is called a Canaanite or Syrophoenician as a generic term for Gentile or pagan.
- She seeks out Jesus, even though no one else does.
- She is seeking Jesus even though she has personally seen no miracles, heard no preaching, never been in a synagogue, and was raised far from the covenant people.
- She is the least likely person to have faith in Jesus.

## First Appeal

- She appeals only for mercy.
- She calls Jesus Lord.
- She calls Jesus the Son of David.
- Jesus completely ignores her, but lets her follow.
- The disciples want Jesus to get rid of her, not help her.

## Christ's Response

- She is not dismayed and continues to follow.
- She is willing to humiliate herself, asking for mercy.
- Jesus clarifies that he has only come for the lost ones of Israel.
- Jesus' mission is for the Jews first, and then the gospel is sent to the Gentiles.
- It is not yet time for the Gentiles to hear the kingdom proclaimed.
- The Gentiles are not the priority, but they have been invited to come.

## Second Appeal

- She continues to appeal by kneeling.
- Jesus calls her a dog.
- This was a common insult for the pagan peoples.
- Those outside the covenant people cannot have the promise and blessing of the covenant.

## Final Appeal

- She does not deny that she is unworthy of grace.
- She simply asks for the crumbs and leftover grace.
- She asks that if God has an abundance, could she have what falls.
- Jesus responds by recognizing the greatness of her faith.
- Jesus says her daughter can be healed if that is her desire.
- Her daughter is instantly healed because of her faith.

## Final Thoughts

- The disciples and Jews would have been offended that Jesus was so kind.
- This unlikely woman shows greater faith than everyone in Israel.
- This story intends to highlight that Jesus' mission will extend to all peoples.