

October 6, 2019

KIBC Sunday Worship Service

Message by Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Testimony: "The Great Faith of a Certain Woman"

—Where is the Source of Grace? —

Text: Matthew 15:21~28

15:21 Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon.

15:22 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."

15:23 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."

15:24 He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel."

15:25 The woman came and knelt before him. "Lord, help me!" she said.

15:26 He replied, "It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs."

15:27 "Yes it is, Lord," she said. "Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table."

15:28 Then Jesus said to her, "Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted." And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

Introduction

Jesus did many works in many parts of Galilee. Galilee is within the Jewish lands, but Jesus went to the region of Tyre for some reason, the land of the Gentiles. It is called Lebanon today. Jewish people and the Gentiles rarely had strong relationships. The reason that Jesus went to Phoenicia, the neighboring land, might have been to avoid imminent danger.

Mark Chapter 7 records as below—

Mark 7:24 Jesus left that place and went to the vicinity of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know it; yet he could not keep his presence secret.

Jesus kept his presence a secret from many people. He avoided not only the Pharisees but other Jewish people. Jesus did a miracle of bread for 5,000 people so they wanted to make Jesus the king of Israel. Probably, He hid Himself to stop that from happening.

However, Jesus' fame had already spread over to the neighbor countries, Tyre and Phoenicia. He couldn't hide Himself. A Gentile woman was there, who desperately sought for the salvation of Christ. She had greater faith than many Jewish people who were God's people. Her faith made Jesus move to do a miracle.

Jesus said to the Gentile women as below—

15:28 Then Jesus said to her, “Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted.” And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

Then, why was the Gentile woman so highly praised by Jesus? What made Jesus pleased with her? Let's study the following two points.

Main Points

1 . Faith of the Phoenician Woman

We are able to learn a lot from the Gentile woman. There are at least two important characteristics.

1) Sincere Faith

15:22 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.”

The next verse records as below—

15:23 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.”

The verse records, **“She keeps crying out after us.”**

My friends, let's imagine a little. She was very persistent; however, she wasn't discouraged.

Now let's look people who were blessed by Jesus.

① The shouting of a blind man, Bartimaeus → Jesus, Son of David!

Mark 10:46 Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (which means “son of Timaeus”), was sitting by the roadside begging.

10:47 When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”

10:48 Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”

10:49 Jesus stopped and said, “Call him.” So they called to the blind man, “Cheer up! On your feet! He is calling you.”

10:50 Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus.

Many people around the blind man, Bartimaeus, rebuked and told him to be quiet, however, he shouted all the more. We see his attitude that he sincerely sought salvation.

② A woman subjected to bleeding → “If I only touch his cloak”

Luke 8:43 And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years, but no one could heal her.

8:44 She came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak, and immediately her bleeding stopped.

8:45 “Who touched me?” Jesus asked. When they all denied it, Peter said, “Master, the people are crowding and pressing against you.”

8:46 But Jesus said, “Someone touched me; I know that power has gone out from me.”

8:47 Then the woman, seeing that she could not go unnoticed, came trembling and fell at his feet. In the presence of all the people, she told why she had touched him and how she had been instantly healed.

A woman who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years (She was regarded unclean in Jewish society) received the word of praise from Jesus.

③ A paralyzed man, carried by four men → Five men had the same one faith.

2:1 A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home.

2:2 They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them.

2:3 Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them.

2:4 Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in

the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on.

2:5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, “Son, your sins are forgiven.”

Verse 5 records that **Jesus saw their faith**. A word that refers to the paralyzed man and the four men who carried him. They had a strong hope (faith) that Jesus could heal him. The original Scripture records that **Jesus saw their same one faith**.

They made an opening in the roof by digging through it and then lowered the mat that the man was lying on. Their deed really lacked practicality; however, Jesus could see their hearts.

We looked the attitudes of these three people.

They all had something in common. They absolutely had a need and they had “the sincere faith” to get help.

My friends, the Pharisees and teachers of the law, who lived in the center-Jerusalem, persisted in the old traditions so their lives were far away from the spirit of the Bible (center teachings).

On the contrary, people who were suffering from incurable diseases, like Bartimaeus the blind man, the paralyzed man and the woman subjected to bleeding were the lowest (were disregarded) in society in those days.

The Phoenician woman was also disregarded by Jewish people as if to say, “You a Gentile, you don’t know God.” However, Jesus found a beautiful faith in her, greater than that of many Jewish people.

We easily understand how Jesus was pleased with her faith. Therefore, it is not surprising that Jesus did a miracle. Jesus responded to **the sincere faith** of the Phoenician woman. **The sincere faith** in Jesus the Son of God brought her God’s blessing.

Jesus said,

Matthew 6:24 No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other.

Another thing made pleased Jesus.

2) Humble Faith

15:25 The woman came and knelt before him. “Lord, help me!” she said.

The Scripture records, she **“knelt before Jesus.”** It was her deed.

Furthermore, she compared herself to dogs.

15:27 “Yes, it is, Lord,” she said. “Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master’s table.”

15:28 Then Jesus said to her, “Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted.” And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

The dogs here refer to the Gentiles and the children to the Israelites and bread does a thing to give life. We see her humble attitude of faith. Jesus said, **“Woman, you have great faith!” (15:28)** In the Bible, Colloquial Japanese, it is recorded, **“I admire your faith!”**

The word **great** is **mega** in original language.

Mega means very big. When they measure the power of an atomic bomb and a hydrogen bomb, they record a yield of some megaton.

Other examples are megaphone, megalopolis and so on. We prefix **mega** to something big.

Jesus was moved by **the great faith** of the woman and healed her daughter at once.

My friends, Jesus once praised **faith as small as a mustard seed**. This time, Jesus praised the woman’s mega (great) faith.

Let’s look an important point here. The woman didn’t ask Jesus to heal her daughter.

15:25 The woman came and knelt before him. “Lord, help me!” she said.

She said, **“Lord, help me.”** The woman’s sincere faith moved Jesus to derive an evil spirit out a child. We see authority of Jesus here.

The humble heart of the Phoenician woman was revealed into words and an action. Now, let’s consider what faith we have?

Let’s look back what we studied.

1) What Pleases Jesus?

① Sincere faith

15:22 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.”

The woman kept crying out, **“Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me!”** And her daughter who

was demon-possessed was healed at once. It is called **Fern Heilung (Far Healing)**. Why did the woman cry out, **“Have mercy on me!”** even though the sick was her daughter, not herself. We understand the blessing of **far healing** here.

We see as below—

- ① She cried “I,” but it meant she and her daughter was one thing. Her daughter’s pain was also her pain. We see her love as mother.
- ② Jesus saw her heart.

We also give intercessional prayers to God by trusting **far healing**.

Let’s consider with how much love we pray with compared to this woman’s sincere prayer.

② **Humble Faith**

15:26 He replied, “It is not right to take the children’s bread and toss it to the dogs.”

15:27 “Yes it is, Lord,” she said. “Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master’s table.”

Her attitude was the humblest one before God the Creator. We should remember this woman who was completely humble before God.

2) Let’s Learn from the Woman’s Faith.

Her Faith moved Jesus to heal the demon-possessed daughter like this.

It depended on her faith. Her attitude in faith brought her daughter great healing. It really was a mega-faith!

My friends, our trust (faith) in God moves things. How happy we are!

{Illustration} Infinite flowing of Grace

The typhoon No.15 in September greatly damaged the Kanto region, especially in Chiba Prefecture more than 440,000 houses had a blackout for a long time. We have very convenient days by using electrical appliances, however, the long-term blackout caused extensive damages to people’s lives.

I have heard a story similar to this. A certain American visited a hydraulic power plant that was newly built. A man guided him to take a down elevator to the lower part of the huge hydraulic power plant. He saw huge spinning turbines that were moved by impellers that were worked by falling water.

At that very time, he realized that the power plant didn't make electricity. He asked, "Why it doesn't make electricity even though it equips a dam, water and turbines?"

The man who guided him answered as below—

"Now the water valves are closed so the water doesn't run. The electricity isn't made unless the valves are opened, and water runs."

My friends, **even if we go to church and listen to God's message earnestly, if valves of our heart are closed, it is useless. God's amazing grace isn't conveyed to our neighbors at all. When we believe in Jesus Christ our great Savior and our lives are changed into joyful ones, we should open the valves of our heart. Then, amazing electricity of Christ is conveyed to people around us.**

Jesus Christ said, **"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation."**

Like this, God's grace flows over all the world.

Conclusion

Title of the Testimony: "The Great Faith of a Certain Woman"

—Where Is the Source of Grace? —

We studied faith of the Phoenician woman who was a Gentile.

Jesus praised her great (mega) faith that was greater than the many of Israelites, God's chosen people.

What was the mega faith like?

1. It was sincere faith.
2. It was humble faith.

The faith of the woman made her daughter free from the evil spirit.

How about today's message? We believe same Jesus and same God, don't we? What faith do we have?

Let's take time to consider and come close to the Lord.

* God bless you!