

THE ANATOMY OF GREAT FAITH – PART TWO

This is your Friend and Minister, Dr. Joshua Uhiara, bringing you healing word from the Master, a program of the Master's Vessel Ministry which lets you know that Jesus loves you as you are, but loves you so much that He will not leave you as you are.

We are back, friends, to conclude what we started last time: "The Anatomy of Great Faith", which we saw from Matthew 15. We read from verses 21 to 28. It was the story of the Woman of Canaan whose daughter was demon-possessed, who out of desperation came to Jesus Christ, seeking help for her daughter.

The Anatomy of Great Faith. We will conclude that discussion this time.

PRAYER:

Father, thank You. Thank You for another time we have now to search the scriptures. Holy Spirit, may You take full control and cause Your Word to come alive to us, in Jesus' Name. Amen!

In the interest of time, I am not going to read the whole text again. But, let me read just a portion of it.

Matthew 15:22

²² *And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region [region of Tyre and Sidon] and cried out to [Jesus], saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed."*

²³ *But He answered her not a word.*

²⁶ *But He answered and said, "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs."*

²⁷ *And she said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table."*

²⁸ *Then Jesus answered and said to her, “O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire.” And her daughter was healed from that very hour.*

We saw, last time, if we were to dissect this great faith of this woman, what do we find? And that is the anatomy of great faith we started with last week.

First of all we tried to see the identity of the woman. And we saw that she was a gentile woman. And as a gentile woman she did not enjoy some of the privileges reserved for the Jews. And that was why when she used that title, *Son of David*, in it, the scriptures says Jesus did not answer her a word.

We also saw that this woman’s faith was motivated by love – love for her daughter. And when Jesus did not answer her a word...that did not discourage her. She continued and pressed on to the extent that the disciples of Jesus Christ were irritated, and appealed to the Master to dismiss her.

We also saw that great faith is never silenced by silence. The silence of Jesus Christ did not end the woman’s persistence. She continued.

So let’s look at another point.

Point number four: concerning the anatomy of great faith,

iv. Great faith includes itself in any apparent attempt at exclusion.

In verse 24 of Matthew 15,

²⁴ *But He answered and said, “I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”*

Whereas Jesus a Son of David speaks of Jewish privilege: Jesus not sent except to the lost sheep of Israel speaks only of Jewish priority. I say that because some people who are not of the Christian faith use this text to say that you would be wasting your time identifying yourself with the Christian faith when it is for the Jews only. That statement speaks of Jewish priority otherwise the scripture would be contradicted that says in

John 3:16:

¹⁶ *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

You see the scripture cannot contradict itself otherwise 1 John 2:2 would be contradicting this passage.

1 John 2:2, Jesus Christ is the propitiation for our sins, that is, the sins of the believers; not only for our sins but that of the whole world. And so when Jesus said, I was not sent only to the lost sheep of the Nation of Israel, it is a matter of priority. The same thing you will find in Acts of the Apostle in Paul's Missionary Journey. When he went into any city: the gentile territory, he would seek out Jewish synagogue first and minister to them before he would turn to the gentiles. It is a matter of priority. That is why Romans 1:16 says: *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation.*

The Jews first priority and to the gentiles, also. So I think you would not buy this attempt by non-Christians to convince you that Christianity is not for you if you are not a Jew. Gentiles and Jews are lost and bound for hell if they don't receive Jesus Christ. And so Jesus came for both. This inclusion in an apparent exclusion is what the grace of God is all about.

v. Great faith worships in the face of discouraging circumstances.

Matthew 15:25

²⁵ *Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, help me!"*

When approaching Jesus as the Son of David failed to facilitate and answer to her prayer the woman decided to use a different approach. She worshipped Jesus. *Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, help me!"* Just three words.

For those who think that their prayer would be heard for the multitude of words they use. Three words. But Peter was sinking, was about to drown in Matthew 14:30. Three words. Lord! Save me. And the Lord answered.

I have come to understand that ‘Lord help’ me is about the most powerful prayer anyone can pray; for it is the admission of helplessness that admits divine omnipotence into the situation, especially when it is mixed with a heartfelt worship.

If you have been praying to God and you are not getting anything try worship, friend.

vi. Great faith would use even disparaging remarks to its own advantage.

In verses 26 and 27

²⁶ *But He answered and said, “It is not good to take the children’s bread and throw it to the little dogs.”*

[Somebody would have been so offended, would have insulted Jesus and walked away in anger – but not this woman]

²⁷ *And she said, “Yes, Lord [I agree], yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters’ table.”*

Great faith is humble. Great faith is forgiving. Of all that has transpired between Jesus and the woman none catches as much attention as what Jesus said which we have just read now in verse 26. *It is not good to take the children’s bread and cast it to the dogs.* But if we knew the kind of person that Jesus was, in His humanity, we would have no reason to be offended, but rather try to understand what He was actually saying. The word for dog that Jesus used here is the better of the two words used in the Greek for dogs. The word that Jesus used is the word for a pet dog as against the lean and mean scavaging dog that roamed the streets.

No wonder the woman responded, *“Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters’ table.”* And that tells you that Jesus was talking about pet dogs. Some of us may still find this offensive if we disregard the manner in which Jesus must have said this. You see we don’t have the privilege now of body language because we didn’t see Jesus as He interacted with this woman.

As He spoke those words both Jews and Gentiles at that time would understand. It would make a difference if we would see the face of the gentle and compassionate Jesus, and not our own faces or the faces of the Pharisees. Jesus must have said that with a smile. But you don't know, because you didn't see Him. Jesus said it with concern.

No matter what you may think, one thing is clear: people who have great faith do not take offence easily. Great faith would readily give people the benefit of doubt. To say the least, great faith tries to understand that which would be easily misunderstood or misconstrued by others with little faith.

vii. Great faith knows no bounds in the accomplishment of its desires.

²⁸ *Then Jesus answered and said to her, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire."*

And her daughter was healed from that very moment Jesus pronounced those words. See the accomplishment of great faith.

Let me quickly conclude as we ask the question:

How can I get this great faith?

We get great faith by:

- Seeing the object of our faith, the Lord, more clearly in His Word, for our faith is as great as its object.
If your god is small your faith will be small. Many at times we place emphasis on the faith but not the object. It is the great God that makes the faith great.
- We will get great faith by loving those God loves and loving them dearly.
- We will get great faith by being persistent, not easily discouraged.
- We will have great faith if we add worship to our prayer of helplessness because God answers prayers, we know. He also answers praise of desperation.
Remember what happened to Paul and Silas in Philippi, in the jail – in the dungeon.
- We will have great faith by forgiving offences readily.
Jesus says if you don't forgive you will not be forgiven – which means your faith is going nowhere.

Great faith is only great because of the object of faith, and that is God.

No amount of human effort can generate, even announce of faith let alone great faith. Some people think that when they sing loud and long great faith will come. Great faith is given by the great God for those who are not only greatly hungry for it but who are holy and greatly dependent upon Him.

PRAYER:

Friend, are you a candidate of this great faith? It starts by giving your life to Christ. Why don't you invite Him now into your life and then you would have the right, you would have the privilege to call Him Father.

Dear Lord, I pray that You would minister this great faith to the hearts of Your people in radioland, especially those who are hungry for this great faith. Release Your faith, O God, for it comes from You and You alone, in Jesus' Name. Amen!