

Persistent Faith in an Unexpected Place

Mark 7:24-30

Another vain attempt to get away from the crowds, 7:24.

- Recent attempts to get away from crowds: 6:31-33, 53-56, 7:36, 9:30.
- Reasons = to get rest plus get away from Herod (Lk. 9:9, 13:32, 33).

Another needy person with a common problem, 7:25-26

- Here = gentile woman w/demonic problem, cf. 1:23, 34, 3:11, 5:1-20.
- This Canaanite recognizes Jesus as messianic, Matt. 15:22-23.

A unique woman with an uncommon faith, 27-29

- Ouch—why say *the dogs*??? Issue not racial as much as timing!
- A dual of wits here--Jesus is resolved not to help her, but she is also resolved not to give up! What does her demeanor / reply reveal? Just contrast her with the disciples (4:40, 7:18) and the Pharisees!
- Why does her answer convince Jesus to give in?
 - What does her ability to move Jesus suggest about divine flexibility?
 - Ex. 32:14, Joel 2:13, Jon. 3:10, 4:2, Gen. 6:6, 18:23ff., Amos 7:3-7, Jer. 18:5-10, 26:3, I Kgs. 21:17-28, II Kgs. 20:1-6, Isa. 38:1-5
 - What does this suggest about prayer? Lk. 11:5-8, 18:1-8, Eph. 6:18

A unique miraculous exorcism done from afar, 7:30

This = only “long-distance miracle” in Mark (cf. Matt. 8:13, Jn. 4:50).



Not all persistent prayers are answered, as later seen with both Jesus and Paul, but it is comforting to know God is flexible and can definitely be moved by our prayers at times (Js. 5:17, 18).

Do you feel tempted to give up too easily if God's answer to your prayer appears to be a “No”?