

Daily Discipleship

Sunday, September 4-10 (B) – Mark 7:24-37

Living in Christ: *Trust*

Focus Question: *How do my actions reflect my trust in Jesus?*

word of life

“She came and bowed down at his feet. Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter.” Mark 7 25-26 (NRSV)

Read Mark 7:24-37

After the feeding of the five thousand and extraordinary acts of healings, Jesus could not travel without being noticed. Wherever he went, people heard about him and made great efforts to find him.

1. *How did Jesus keep going with all the stresses of being a public figure?*
2. *Why didn't Jesus turn people away and rest?*

The story found in Mark 7 describes a Syrophenician woman who left her ill daughter to come and ask for healing. This woman bows down, begging for Jesus to heal her daughter. There is a pause in the action of the story as the Gospel writer points to the Gentile roots of this woman.

3. *What difference might it make to Jesus to heal a Gentile child?*
4. *What difference might it make to those observing?*

Before Jesus heals, he offers a mystifying response. Jesus says, “Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.” (Mark 7:27 NRSV)

5. *Who are the children to be fed first?*
6. *What did Jesus mean by his reference to being “fair”? Fair to whom?*
7. *How do you interpret the reference to dogs?*

This woman is not dissuaded. She continues to beg for healing for her daughter. Her trust is a daunting faith-filled direct response. “Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children’s crumbs.” (Mark 7:28 NRSV) This woman doesn’t need much. She knows even a morsel from the healing powers of Jesus will be sufficient.

8. *What might a crumb from Jesus look like?*
9. *How does one obtain such deep trust in Jesus?*

Jesus is moved by this woman’s faith and heals her daughter. The fact that she is a Gentile makes no difference. Amazingly, this woman returns home to find her daughter lying on the bed, but with the illness gone.

Then Jesus encounters a deaf man who has speech problems. The words are simple, “Be opened.” With those words, the man’s ears are opened and he begins to speak clearly.

10. *What might it mean to be opened by Jesus?*
11. *How does an open spirit relate to trust?*

word among us

The youth in confirmation class were divided into pairs and given blindfolds for a trust walk. Amid giggles and laughter, the blindfolds were placed on the eyes of one person while the partner prepared to guide the blindfolded person around the church lawn. Some of those who were blindfolded walked carefully, unsure of the trustworthiness of their guides. A few were able to walk quickly because they peeked through or under the blindfold.

1. *Have you ever participated in a trust walk where one person is blindfolded and led by another?*
2. *If so, what was that experience like?*
3. *What lessons can be learned from such an activity?*

Trust is a difficult trait. It's one thing to trust a partner while blindfolded, especially when the leader lectures the participants about taking care of the blindfolded person. It is something else when we are called to place our trust in that which dwells outside of ourselves.

4. *How do you define trust?*
5. *What are examples from the last week when you trusted someone?*
6. *What are examples when it is wise not to trust a person?*

The Syrophoenician woman trusted Jesus to heal her daughter. She believed even a small portion of Jesus healing power would be sufficient. She wasn't looking for Jesus to move a mountain or walk on water. She simply wanted Jesus to restore health to her beloved daughter. This woman believed Jesus was so powerful he could heal with the mere "crumbs" of his power.

7. *How much of the healing power of Jesus do you need today?*
8. *At what lengths would you travel or upturn your life to seek that healing power?*

It was the friends of the deaf man who intervened on his behalf. They pleaded his case. Like the Syrophoenician woman, these friends knew Jesus could heal. Jesus responded.

9. *Take a moment to consider friends, family, and acquaintances that are in need of healing.*
10. *How might you serve as their advocate?*

Jesus' response in healing the deaf man was simple. "Be opened." Close your eyes and reflect on your own life.

11. *In what ways are you being called to be opened and to trust in Christ?*
12. *How would your life change?*
13. *What is the central message from this lesson?*

Prayer

Christ, instill an open spirit and teach us to trust in you and you alone. Amen

Dig Deeper

Isaiah 42:5-9

last word

Write the word "trust"
on a piece of paper.
Look at the word and
prayerfully consider ways to
trust Christ more deeply each day.



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