

Church at Home for Abridge

16th August 2020

Activities for the whole family

Matthew 15: 21-28

Jesus said, 'You have great faith'



Introduction

I wonder if you've ever been so tired of people running you down and trying to catch you out, that you just needed to escape and find some peace and quiet? Jesus felt like this sometimes. Before today's Gospel story, Jesus had had a lengthy run in with the ultra-religious group called the Pharisees. They said that to follow God properly involved special rules about who you mixed with, how you washed before services and what you ate. Jesus challenged them about this. 'True religion', he said, 'is about what's going on in your heart, not your stomach or the wash basin!' Jesus was so frustrated over all the extra dos and don'ts the Pharisees wanted to add to faith in God. Even his disciples could see that he had really upset them; so, Jesus just had to get away. In our story we find him in the far north of Galilee, in an area where lots of non-Jews lived. Suddenly someone comes to him a local woman who has a sick daughter. Read what happened next for yourselves from your Bible at home or find it [here](#)

[Here is a film version](#) of the story

[Here is a song](#) linked to this story

Here are **some big questions and thoughts** to talk about together:

- I wonder why Jesus didn't say anything to the mother at first? Maybe he was taken by surprise?
- I wonder why the disciples were so keen to send her away? Did they think that mixing with this outsider (this non-Jew) would perhaps contaminate them and Jesus?
- I wonder why the mother didn't give up? Maybe that surprised Jesus too?
- I wonder whether even Jesus learned something new from this conversation? Or maybe he was deliberately underlining to his disciples that faith can be found in surprising people?
- I wonder why Jesus said her faith was so great? This must have shocked the disciples....and as for the Pharisees he had been arguing with, they would have been furious at what Jesus said and did!
- I wonder what we can learn from this story?



And did you know that the words used by this 'outsider' mum, who came to Jesus, are now used by Christians all over the world when they come to take communion (they say 'we are not worthy to eat even the crumbs from your table')

Maybe the crumbs left over from the feeding of the crowds are somehow linked to this story? What do you think?

Maybe it took this story to show the disciples and us that God's love crosses all boundaries of race, gender, ethnicity and culture.

A picture and a puzzle

This is a mysterious story and there is a lot to think about.

Maybe you could imagine what it would have felt like to eavesdrop on this conversation as you colour the following picture and then have a go at the wordsearch

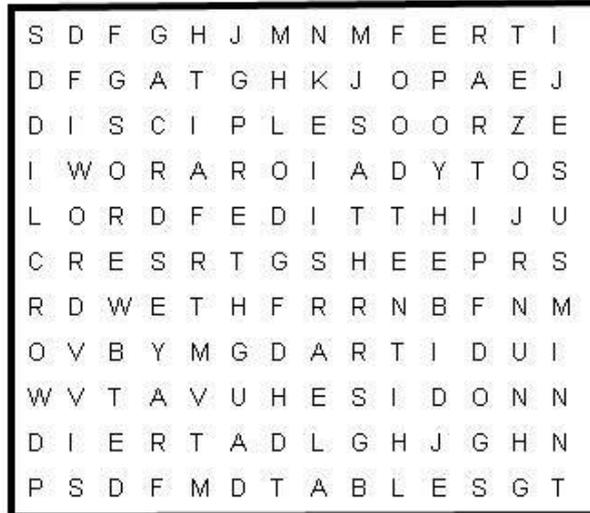


Jesus and Canaanite woman

(Mt 15:21-28)



Find the hidden words



- Jesus
- Tyre
- Sidon
- Pity
- Word
- Daughter
- Disciples
- Sheep
- Israel
- Lord
- Food
- Dogs
- Table
- Faith

