

Title: Great Faith--Is Your Heart Pure?

Text: Matthew 15: 21-28

Date: August 8, 2010

Place: SGBC, New Jersey

Faith is the gift of God (Ephesians 2: 8-10.) When the Lord has truly saved a sinner he creates in them a pure heart. He creates a true willingness to bow to Christ and to his gospel. True faith--unfeigned faith--confesses I am absolutely unable to save myself--I need mercy. True faith comes to Christ trusting the Lord alone who is able to save to the uttermost.

The Lord had been confronted, questioned by the Pharisee's because his disciples did not keep the tradition of men, washing their hands before they ate. When the Lord proclaimed the gospel to them, they would not bow to Christ or submit to his word. Therefore the Lord declared their pretensions of faith, their pretensions of a pure heart, was only hypocrisy.

Matthew 15: 7: Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, 8: This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.

Our Lord told his disciples to leave them alone--they be blind leaders of the blind. The Lord ended with these words, concerning the heart.

Matthew 15: 18: But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.

The Pharisee's questions and disputing was coming from a heart. This is what was proceeding from their heart.

Matthew 15: 19: For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: 20: These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashed hands defileth not a man.

Matthew 15: 21: Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. 22: And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.

Proposition: Now we will see the evidence of one who has truly been given a pure heart which God creates within his vessels of mercy.

Christ Jesus went into these coasts because there was a *certain woman* there.

Mark 7: 25: For a certain woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet: 26: The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation;

Christ drew near to where this woman was for a specific reason.

Isaiah 65:24: And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

Be sure you get this: This is always the case with those to whom our Lord shows mercy. There is no doubt she came to Christ seeking him, but before she ever came, before she ever called, Christ answered. Our Lord answers before the believer calls by:

- Coming to where his children are
- By giving us a dire need
- By working all things in providence to cause his children to hear of him, making us to know only Christ is able to meet our need

John 6: 44: No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. 45: It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

Thus he brings his children to come and fall at his feet

I John 4: 19: We love him, because he first loved us.

Application: Do you have a dire need? Have you heard of him?

I. A PURE HEART OF FAITH COMES TO CHRIST

Matthew 15: 22: And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.

A. She came to Christ seeking mercy.

The gospel of Mark says she "came and fell at his feet." This is the place and posture of a mercy beggar--at the feet of the Savior. Her daughter was grievously vexed with a devil. She is weeping. She is desperate. Her only hope is that Christ Jesus will have mercy on her!

If you truly need mercy it means you can not do one thing to help yourself. When we ask for mercy we ask God to withhold what we deserve--not to deal with me according to my iniquities--the sin we are.

Application: Some of you have had sick children, sick family members. You remember how desperate you were for God to show you mercy.

Many have unbelieving children. Do you sons and daughters have any idea how your fathers and mothers are vexed by your vexation? I woke up Saturday morning very early, mourning at how much time I spend teaching my children--directly and indirectly--things that are of no value and how little time I spend teaching them about Christ. Oh, may we fall at Christ's feet begging, "have mercy on me."

B. Notice how she addresses him--"O Lord, thou Son of David."

She confesses Jesus to be Emmanuel, God with us. God in human flesh. The Christ of God--mercy personified. She is acknowledging that he alone can show mercy.

Vexation, unclean spirit, sickness, vain imaginations, unbelief, death--these are result of sin. Sin is the only power the devil has. These are the works of the devil.

I John 3: 8:...For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

He bore the sin his elect that he might deliver us from the power of the devil and make us one with our God.

Isaiah 53: 4: Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: 5: But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

Christ healed sickness to show he has the power to forgive sin. If you survive a sickness today, you will eventually die. But if Christ forgives you of your sin, you shall never die!

Coming to Christ, begging mercy from him, this woman is declaring she believes the Lord Jesus Christ has all power, dominion, and government, that all persons and things, even sin and diseases are under his command, and control; and that being Lord of all, he could remove them at his pleasure: she believes he is the Christ of God.

Application: Do you believe him? Do you believe Christ to be who God says he is? To save by his grace? Have you come to Christ, acknowledging who he is and what you are and asked mercy of him?

II. A PURE HEART--TRUE FAITH--WILL BE TRIED OF THE LORD.

Matthew 15: 23: But he answered her not a word.

A. If we are truly seeking mercy, we don't come commanding, we come falling at Christ's feet, begging him to show us mercy, in his time, not ours. A pure heart shall.

The Lord has worked everything together from leaving the Pharisee's to coming into the coast to this woman according to his purpose. He is not only teaching her but he is teaching his disciples. She has no idea what he is doing. They have no idea what he is doing. But it is his business and our Lord shall wait to bring his purpose to pass because it is what is best for us. We shall see what he is doing as we go and we will confess in the end that it was the best thing for him not, at this time, to answer her not even a word. Waiting is a trying of our faith. But true faith will patiently endure until the end (James 1: 3, 4, 12.)

III. A PURE HEART OF FAITH RECEIVES, BELIEVES AND SUBMITS TO THE WORD OF GOD'S GRACE CONCERNING WHO CHRIST IS AND WHAT HE HAS FINISHED.

Matthew 15: 23: But he answered her not a word. 23: And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.

When she got no answer from the Lord they say she went to the disciples. They then went to the Lord and asked him to send her away. She is a Cannanite--of the cursed people. They probably imagine that she is worse than the Pharisee's which the Lord just departed from and warned them to flee from. But the Lord tells his disciples to go declare the gospel to her. He is truly telling them to comfort ye, comfort ye my people. If she has a pure heart of faith this will be great comfort to her and in no way a discouragement. The next verse is the gospel we preach.

Matthew 15: 24: But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

A. The Lord declares he was "sent" for a particular purpose

1. Christ came to do the will of God who sent him. The God of heaven and earth sent Christ for a particular purpose.

John 4:34: Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

John 6:38: For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

B. The Lord declares he was sent to save a particular people--I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

1. To seek and to save those who were lost.
2. Those who are God's elect sheep--the house of Israel.

John 17: 2: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

John 10:14: I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. 15: As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. 16: And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

Isaiah 61:3 To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.

A pure heart of faith is made one with God. Therefore a pure heart of faith receives, believes and submits to the gospel of God's grace.

C. What was her response when she heard that God sent Christ to save a particular people who were lost unless he perform this work? Was this gospel a comfort to her? Was she a chosen child of God with a God given heart of faith?

Matthew 15: 25: Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.

Application: True faith does not rebel against God's word,

- The gospel of sovereign electing grace
- The gospel of his predestinating grace
- The gospel that he redeemed a particular people
- The gospel that he must quicken and irresistibly draw his people unto himself
- The gospel that he must keep us and preserve us

Is no longer an offense to the believer but the doctrine of our God is what gives us boldness to approach him and bow at his feet and worship him. She submitted to his word!

D. Her response to the gospel was altogether different than the Pharisees who looked willing on the outside. Christ Jesus declared why their response was the way it was.

John 10: 25: Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. 26: But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. 27: My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28: And I give unto them eternal life;

Application: This gospel is the discernor of who Christ's sheep are. When the Spirit of God has made Christ All to you, the word of God's sovereign grace is the gospel by which we are made willing--made the more earnest--to come to Christ and worship him, saying, "Lord, help me." She is saying, "Lord, if you are sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, then I fit the bill, Lord, help me."

IV. A PURE HEART OF FAITH CONFESSES THERE IS NO GOOD IN THE SINNER.

Now she has come back to him, he says this directly to her.

Matthew 15: 26: But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.

Every child of God confesses that it was not because of anything in me that made me a child of God.

- Not my will
- Not any foreseen merit in me
- Not by works of righteousness which we have done
- True faith makes a sinner honest about what we are in ourselves.

He calls her a dog rather than a child of God. But she does not defend herself. She does not say, "But I have done many wonderful works." She does not even make a boast of her faith.

Matthew 15: 27: And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.

Again, she bowed to the truth of God. She declared herself a dog. But she declared Christ to be her Master, and that she was totally dependent upon him to feed her, even if it be but a crumb from his table. She really was seeking, not a debt she felt he owed her, but pure mercy!

Note: Do you see what a great contrast there is between this woman in whom God had given a pure heart and those Pharisee's who disputed with the Lord over his word? He said of them, "They be blind leaders of the blind!" He said, what they have spoken came forth out of a defiled, hypocritical heart. He said, they draw near with the mouth but their heart is far from me--hypocrites!" But what does he say of this Caananite, Syrophencian woman?

Matthew 15: 28: Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith:

1. Great faith comes to Christ seeking mercy owning him to be God with us.
2. Great faith waits on Christ and can not be driven away
3. Great faith bows to the gospel of Christ as he is revealed in his word
4. Great faith repents from any pretended goodness in us and takes our place as dogs at the Master's table

V. GREAT FAITH ALAWYS GETS WHAT IT ASKS FOR, 'MERCY'

Matthew 15: 28:...be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

Amen!