

The Pagan Woman and her Demonized Daughter

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[0 : 00] Father, we think we know our hearts, but we don't really. We keep surprising ourselves. And Father, we don't always know how we have unworthy thoughts of you. And we don't always realize how proud and self-centered we are. We don't always realize, Father, how easy it is for us to think that we are your judge and that you do not measure up to our standards.

So, Father, we ask that your Holy Spirit would do a wonderful work in us this morning, that your Holy Spirit would use your word to reveal our true hearts to ourselves.

And as you revealed our true hearts to ourself, Father, may you bring Jesus close to us, ever closer. May you bring his word close to us, that he might form our hearts, heal our hearts, so that we might perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name.

[1 : 13] And this we ask in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. Amen. Please be seated. So, we have a text that seems to talk about demons.

Not seems to, does in fact talk about demons. And it seems as if to Canadian, and I think I know we have at least one person from the great United States of America with us.

I think for most Americans, most Canadians, probably anybody from any of the Western world, it seems in this story as if Jesus is rude, ill-mannered, unfeeling, and it's very troublesome to us. If you think about it for a second, if I was to give you as an assignment that you had to share this text with your next-door neighbors, or your co-workers, or some of the people you go to school with, it would be something that you wouldn't actually look forward to doing, because it's a text of the Bible that doesn't seem to put Jesus in a very good light, and it would put us sort of on the wrong foot.

So, we're going to look at the text. But just before we look at the text, there's a couple of things that we need to sort of clear out of the way. And the first one is, so it's in Matthew chapter 15.

[2 : 29] It'd be good if you could find it in your Bibles. It's the very first book in the New Testament, Matthew chapter 15, verse 21. Matthew 15, 21. And the first thing to remember about this is that what we're reading here is it looks all fancy like it's a Bible, but it's an eyewitness biography of Jesus.

That's what this is. It's an eyewitness biography of Jesus. If you could put up the first point, Andrew, that would be very helpful. Matthew was a very, very bad man.

He would be, if you could just imagine that you found out, basically what he did is the Romans had invaded and taken over the Jewish people, and they needed some Jewish people who knew how Jewish people thought and how they hid money and who had money and who didn't and how to know if somebody had money and how to know if they didn't.

And so they would get Jewish people who could figure that stuff out and they would hire them to help them collect taxes from people. And the Jewish people that they put in this position to collect taxes for the Romans, the Romans basically knew that they'd be very greedy.

And so what they basically said is, listen, you have this territory, let's say it's Jerusalem, and let's say we need a million dollars in taxation from Jerusalem this year, but all we care about is a million dollars.

[3 : 54] If you collect 1.5 million or 2 million or 3 million, the rest of it's yours as long as we get our million dollars. And that's what the tax collectors would do. They would figure out who had the money, they would use the force of the state to collect the money, but they'd always collect more money than the Romans asked for and they would pocket it themselves.

So they were basically making money for their oppressors and pocketing lots of money for themselves. And that's who Matthew was. Matthew was a person who had done that for his living

for quite a few years until one day he met Jesus and his life was completely and utterly turned around.

And what we're reading here is an ancient biography written by an eyewitness while eyewitnesses were still alive. And so Matthew in his claim, there's some people in our culture, I can think of many people that I have conversations with.

If I was to look at this text, beyond the apparent rudeness of Jesus, their eyes would roll up like this about demons. And I'm going to talk about that in a moment. But the main thing we have to understand is that what Matthew was claiming is that he is writing a true story about Jesus and a real miracle.

That's the very first thing we have to understand. We might think he's wrong, we might think he wrote it because he was smoking drugs or something like that, but his claim is that he is writing a true story about Jesus and a real miracle.

[5 : 16] And just as a bit of an aside, if you go back, if you go online to look at Dig and Delve, the webpage, and you go to the very first year, there's a man by the name of Craig Evans. And one of the things that he shared with us, this isn't actually very well known.

When you see things in the newspaper, on CBC, or in blogs or whatever about how the Bible is just so stupid and the New Testament's all wrong and it's all not history, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.

One of the things that he shares is he gives a list of the important Jewish archaeologists who use the New Testament to make archaeological discoveries in Israel.

Not Christian archaeologists, Jewish archaeologists, because the Jewish archaeologists have found how accurate the New Testament is. So they'll read the New Testament not to learn about Jesus, but to look to see where a gate should have been or where this might have been or something.

And they use it to actually make archaeological discoveries. And it's one of the many reasons that from a scientific and historical point of view, we can believe that this is actually an eyewitness testimony of Jesus and what went on.

[6 : 23] Now, we'll start to read. Actually, no, we won't start to read. If you could put up the next image, Andrew, that would be very, very helpful. One of the things we have to understand, that's a picture by Caravaggio.

I don't know if I'm pronouncing this correctly. Another thing that helped us to understand the importance of the fact that Matthew here is claiming to write an eyewitness testimony that he'd been a very bad man whose life was changed, is that to the extent that we know anything about what happened to Matthew, Matthew was not only an eyewitness of these different miracles that happened, he was also an eyewitness of Jesus' death, so to speak.

He knew that Jesus was crucified. He was an eyewitness of the resurrection. He was an eyewitness of the ascension. And that was all part of the thing which completely and utterly changed his life.

And Christian tradition, which goes back very, very long, said that Matthew died celebrating communion in Ethiopia, that he actually was so concerned to tell people about who Jesus is and what he'd accomplished, he took the gospel all the way to Ethiopia and while he was in Ethiopia at the order of the king of Ethiopia, he was stabbed to death while he was presiding at the Lord's Supper, something that we'll be doing in a few moments.

And this, of course, this isn't an actual depiction of it, it's an artist's rendering from around the year 1600. Just a little aside, the painter who painted this painted himself as the one who's doing the murder of St. Matthew.

[7 : 58] Well, let's look at the story and if you turn in your Bibles to Matthew 15, verse 21, here's how the story goes. And Jesus went away from there and withdrew to the district of Tyre and Sidon and behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out and was crying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David, my daughter is severely oppressed by a demon.

Now there's a couple of things here, just pause in the reading of the story. So one of the things I'm not going to do today, I'm not going to give you an argument as to why you should believe that demons exist. We know that this is an eyewitness, Matthew is writing an eyewitness biography, a woman came and said that her daughter was oppressed by a demon and we're going to see what Jesus does about that.

So just a couple of things though, I'm going to be preaching on the story of Jesus and the Gadarene demoniac in a couple of weeks time and at that point in time I'm going to say more about demons.

But what I want you to understand is this, the Bible believes that demons are real, Jesus taught that demons are real. When I talk to people who say that science and medicine has proven that demons don't exist, I always tell them that's completely and utterly not true.

It's completely and utterly not true. They get very offended. I say, no, no, they assume that demons don't exist. They've actually never tried to prove that they don't exist. In fact, they couldn't prove that they don't exist.

[9 : 24] But they just assume that they don't exist. To assume they don't exist is a very different thing than to prove that they don't exist. And the fact of the matter is that there are scientists and doctors who do believe, like most Hindus, most Muslims, most Buddhists, most people who practice traditional religion, most Canadians, that in fact demons are real.

And so we have here a story about a demon. All I'll say is that it's only in the Bible that we really understand who demons are. The Bible claims that demons are in a sense pure spiritual beings that are evil, that at different times interact with us human beings to harm us.

And so most of the depictions in movies and television about demons are wrong because they try to connect them with forms of energy and matter and that's just not, doesn't actually make any sense if you really think about it.

But that's what's being portrayed here, that there is in fact an entity like a demon that can in fact interact with human beings and they only interact with us human beings in a way that's going to harm us.

But they're pure spirit. And what's happened is that this young woman has, is being oppressed by a demon and her mother comes to Jesus.

[10 : 43] She's not going to one of the shamans or the local priests or to heal the daughter. She comes to Jesus. Now there's a couple of other things here which are very important.

We're just very used to when we watch a movie or read a book that there's certain things that a movie director will do to help us to understand the character.

They might use it to play with us a little bit. Often in movies they'll either use a visual cue or some type of music. They'll use music to understand that as you're walking towards that door there's something evil at that door.

The music, they use the camera angle for the slow motion, maybe something a little bit out of whack. The music comes and as soon as we hear the music emotionally and imaginatively we know that there's something evil which is going to be going on there or something wrong which is going to go on there.

And that's not just a modern invention, it's gone on throughout as long as there's been people writing there have been things like that. And so one of the things that Matthew does here which doesn't do anything to us but would have been very important to his early readers is he says that she's a Canaanite and he says where she is.

[11 : 53] And for the Jewish readers who would have been reading this for the first time what they would have instantly gone is a Canaanite, the ancient enemies of the Jews. So Jesus has gone to the land of the ancient enemies of the Jews and he's having an interaction with a person who is one of the ancient enemies of the Jews.

It doesn't necessarily mean she is but that's what it would be like. It would be as if you were watching a movie set in the 1940s or 1930s or 1950s and you see a black man or a black woman and they leave Detroit or they leave New York City or they leave Chicago and they go to Alabama into an area which is all white.

And all of a sudden you see the black man and you see a group of white men coming towards him and if you're watching that movie you start to feel tension immediately. And Matthew is trying to communicate that to us.

We've lost the sense of imagery but that's what the original readers they would have tensed Jesus is being approached by a Canaanite woman and he's in Canaanite territory.

In fact, one of the things that would be going on in the Jewish person's mind just as if we're watching a movie of somebody leaving a safe area in a big northern city to go to Birmingham, Alabama which had the highest number of lynchings and unsolved black murders of any of the southern states and cities.

[13 : 23] Huge, racist stronghold. And we would wonder why are they even going there? And the readers are wondering why is Jesus going there?

A Canaanite, woo, they get worried. And she makes this call and I'm not going to, we've already said much I'm going to say about demons. So what goes on? What happens? How does Jesus respond? Does he run away?

Does, well what happens? Verse 23 and 24 tells us what happens next. So she's calling out my, and the original language call out means, I tried to imitate it when I was reading it earlier that she calls out really loudly.

You know, she's in a sense yelling, have mercy on me, O Lord, son of David, my daughter, severely oppressed by demon. Verse 23, but Jesus did not answer her a word and his disciples came and begged him saying, send her away for she is crying out after us.

And then this next little bit's very puzzling because it's actually not clear who he's speaking to, but what we see is that Jesus speaks and what he says is, I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

[14:28] Now this is, for us Canadians, a very disappointing answer. In fact, if you read the scholarly literature on this subject, believe it or not, many of you will maybe easily believe it, there's a whole range of scholarly opinion that believes that this woman is confronting the racism of Jesus.

And that's completely wrong, by the way. As you'll hear the rest of the thing, they're misreading the text. In fact, they're actually failing to read the text and see what's actually going on here.

But we see this very, very disappointing answer. I mean, on one level, all of a sudden, I mean, we're basically sympathetic with this woman whose daughter is in trouble. And we expect, I mean, let's just be honest, we expect that when somebody comes to Jesus crying out for their daughter, that Jesus will at least answer her, that he'll at least speak to her.

And then it's very troublesome that the disciples just want her to go away. And then, when Jesus finally starts to speak, we think, okay, well, here's going to be something good, but instead, he seems to say something which completely and utterly dashes her hopes and crushes her.

This statement, I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. On one hand, this is a very powerful story for all of us because every single one of us here, maybe not right now, but at some time in our life, those of us who are Christians, we have puzzled over the silence of Jesus in our prayers.

[16:03] Like, it's a very common Christian experience, often not talked about, why the way it is that we call out to Jesus and call out to Jesus and call out to Jesus and he just seems to be completely and utterly silent.

And in a sense, you see that being acted out right here. Jesus is silent. And even when he answers, he doesn't say something like, well, demons don't exist, it's just a type of mental illness or he just makes this cryptic comment that doesn't really satisfy his disciples and you'd think would be very, very crushing and insensitive to the pagan woman.

Now, one of the things which I didn't mention earlier but it's very, very significant in this whole text, it's a puzzling thing about this text. I mean, not only is it puzzling that she's come to Jesus not to one of the priests of her own religion or not to one of the shaman of her own religion, not to a doctor of her own religion but to Jesus, but one of the things which is also very puzzling about this is that she gives Jesus the title of the Messiah of the Jewish people which is the significance of her calling him Son of David.

In our language, we would say that she's affirming or acknowledging or addressing him as if he is the Messiah of the Jewish people and he responds this way.

So how does she respond? How does she respond? You know, it's very interesting in a lot of the ways that we try to talk about how this, what goes on in the dynamics of this, we project things from our culture onto her and in our culture, we get in his face and say, how come you're talking to me like that?

[17:56] You can't talk to me like that. You're in my country. Why are you talking to me like that? You know, she'd be assertive. She'd be direct. She'd be clever or she'd be cunning or whatever it is that we'd try to put something where, into it where she's going to respond to Jesus.

We're uncomfortable with the apparent rudeness of it and some way we want to sort of say, go for it, girl. You go. You get it. And she does something almost to get something over on Jesus and that's sort of what emotionally we want to have happen but what actually happens is once again very, very disappointing to us.

Look what happens in verse 25. But she came and knelt before him saying, Lord, help me.

And his response is unbelievably puzzling to most Canadians, most Americans. He answered, it is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs.

rather than being a feminist hero, she falls on her knees at Jesus' feet and she calls out for mercy and he looks at her and said, it's not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs.

[19 : 25] And for almost every Canadian, we would want to say, time out, Jesus, can we do a, like, can we do a do-over for that? Like, that's not the way you handle this situation.

If we're honest, emotionally, that's how we react to his response. By the way, the word for knelt in the original language in almost all of the New Testament is usually used as a reference to a way of humbly bending the knee to pray to God.

And that's the word that's used for knelt. And there is something else in this, in the original language which isn't captured in the English. There's basically two words that are used for dogs in the ancient language which this was written in.

And generally speaking, the most common word for dog was the word for, like, mongrels, scavengers, wild dogs. Dogs, I guess, had escaped and they just roamed in cities and in the countryside and they would often have rabies and be diseased in other types of ways and they would steal food and they were a bother and they were a hindrance.

And, of course, to call somebody that type of dog was a great insult. But the word for dog which is used here throughout the story is a different word for dog. It can sometimes be translated as little dog, sometimes it can be translated as house dog, but fundamentally it's a pet.

[20 : 55] So what Jesus is saying to her is it is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the pets, which still has a great deal of a sting to it.

How does she respond? But, actually, before we read anything, I was talking about this sermon with somebody just last night. We had some company over and they asked me what I was preaching on today and I told them and they said, oh, that's a very interesting story and they began to give me, one of them began to tell me how they interpreted the story which actually had a lot of the fact that the woman was able to sort of do something to Jesus and be assertive and she really liked how she was really assertive and I didn't tell her that's actually not what the Bible text actually says that she falls on her knees at his feet.

But, you know, the thing I said about it is it's really hard for us. I mean, here we were at our house and if you know my wife at all, when my wife invites people over for supper, she needs to always make at least enough for twice the number of people who come that actually come.

So we'd had potato chips, we'd had carrots, we'd had hummus, we'd had wine, there was pop, then there was barbecue, we had lots of hamburgers left over, there was piles of salad that didn't get eaten and after that there was blueberry pie and vanilla ice cream and there was enough for seconds and half the ice cream went back in the freezer and I just said, you know, when we read a story like this, when Jesus says it's not right to give the bread to the children and we're sitting here at a meal like this, like every single one of us could have had another hamburger and we couldn't have all had another piece of blueberry pie but if we divided it we would have all been satisfied.

In fact, one of the people did have a second piece of pie. We could have all had at least a second scooping of ice cream and I said, when we read a story like this, we don't really understand but for most of the world that's not what a meal time is like.

[22 : 51] For most of the world at the time of Jesus, in fact, the entire world at the time of Jesus, they were one bad harvest away from starving to death. One bad harvest away from dying.

That's, and throughout most of the world, even today, you don't have three or four or five meals and you don't have a choice as to whether you're going to have a paleo diet or this diet or that diet.

You're just hoping there's enough food to eat and if you are in a world where there's enough food, see, at our supper table last night, Louise, in fact, Louise did feed the dogs before she fed us but not only do we have all that food, I mean, the fact is we have freezers full of food.

We could have just kept cooking and cooking for quite a while just with the stuff that we have in our house but for much of the world, that's not what life is like. And if you are in a situation where there's very little in the cupboard and you hope you get paid, you hope that the landowner that you're working for doesn't stiff you and not pay you and you hope that there's enough grain and there's going to be enough food but you have enough bread for today, if you're in that type of world, you definitely want to make sure that everybody in the family gets fed before you start giving it to the animals.

We emotionally, because we are so ungratefully wealthy that we can't read the Bible text and understand the reasonableness on one level of what, I mean, still an insult to many of us about dogs but still the reasonableness of what he said, just normal wisdom.

[24 : 36] How does the woman respond to it? Well, let's look. that's verses 27 and 28. It's the end of the story. She said, look, she agrees, right? Just as I said, we can understand that if you have so much blueberry pie that people can have seconds and half the tub of the vanilla ice cream went in the freezer.

But she says, yes, Lord, yet even the dogs, even the pets, eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table.

And Jesus answered her, oh woman, remember she's a Canaanite. she's the person the scary music is about. His response is, oh woman, great is your faith.

The only person in the book of Matthew who's told that they have great faith is this woman. Only person. Only person. Read it, go back and read it from Matthew 1 to the end.

She's the only one that he says this about. Great is your faith. Be it done for you as you desire. And her daughter was healed instantly.

[25 : 44] Just as a bit of an aside, just to start to try to change the mood of this story, just ask yourself right now. Some of you have been going through a very hard time. Some of you are going through a hard time right now.

Can you just imagine right now if Jesus was to show up and in front of all of us say to you, oh woman, great is your faith. How would you view your suffering?

If right now in front of all of us Jesus showed up and said, great is your faith. Your faith is so great. See, critics who talk about the racism of Jesus, all they show is they don't know how to actually read a story.

Ten PhDs, I mean, they don't, but lots, and they can't read a story. They just can't. So let's sort of bring this even more home to us.

See, the importance of this is you read a story and you read the whole story to understand what's actually going on in it. You see, one of the things, remember, some of you were here when we were talking about Jonah 3 just a couple of weeks ago, the story of Jonah.

[26 : 53] And in the story of Jonah, and this is a very, very common thing in the Bible, it seems as if Jonah goes into Nineveh and says, in 40 days, God is going to destroy this city just like he destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.

And he goes and he proclaims this and proclaims this and it sounds as if there's no hope for the people, but the king orders that everybody fasts and he says, we're just going to throw ourselves on the mercy of God.

We're going to humble ourselves, we're going to stop the evil and the injustice and the violence and we're just going to throw ourselves on the mercy of God and God in his mercy sees their repentance and they are not destroyed like Sodom and Gomorrah was.

And in this story, this woman who hears this statement about Israel and there's a little chink in it, but she throws herself on the mercy of the Lord and her faith is great.

If you could put up the next point, here's some of the things which is going on in the story. Salvation is from God through the Jews for the world. Salvation is from God through the Jews for the world.

[28 : 15] That's what this, one of the many, many things that this story powerfully brings home to us in the shock. If you go back and you read Genesis chapter 12, which is the beginning of God choosing a people for himself and him choosing Abraham, Abraham, who was a worshiper of the moon god, that's who Abraham is.

He worships the moon god and God chooses this unlikely person and says to him, I'm going to make a great nation out of you and you are going to be a blessing to the entire earth.

And if you go back and read the Old Testament time and time and time and time and time again, you see that God is calling a people for himself, but he's not calling a people for himself just for himself, but that through him, through these people, the entire world will know.

And so one of the things that John, you know how if you watch something, I was just watching something, a series the other day and I was saying to my wife, you know, I sure hope that, like why is this in it?

Why is this in it? Why is this in it? I sure hope that this is a good series that's going to tie all of these things up. And then when the series was over, as it's coming to the final chapter, you go, oh, that's

why it prepared us with this.

[29 : 28] Oh, that's why it prepared us with this. And so if you go back and you read the entire gospel of Matthew, how does the gospel of Matthew end? For evangelicals like us, it's one of the most important parts of the Bible.

The message of the Matthew ends, the final words are, Jesus appears after he has died, he's resurrected, he appears to all of the disciples and he says, go into all the nations and make disciples, teach in them to obey all that I have commanded you.

And lo, I am with you to the end of the age. And he, and they're going to go, Jesus went to the Canaanite land. He commended the Canaanite woman as being a woman of unbelievable faith. He was preparing us for this remarkable claim that we are to go even to our historic enemies and tell them about Jesus. And that some of them are going to respond and believe and we are going to have to get over the fact that they are our historic enemies.

Jesus, in this little statement to the Canaanite woman embedded in a story which we miss because we're so concerned about the rudeness, which I'm going to talk about in a moment, he is helping us as all stories to enter emotionally and imaginatively in to not only summarizing the entire Old Testament, but he's prefiguring and preparing us for Matthew 28 and the book of Acts and all of the epistles.

[31 : 04] And the fact is this, at a political level, yes, we should be worried about North Korea and Iran. We should be. But you know, as Christians, we're not just Canadians. You know what we should also be praying?

That the gospel will go to Iran and North Korea. That's what we should be praying. That should be our heart. The world will have enemies and divide the world and we are to view an enemy group would be as wise as a serpent and his innocence but our heart is to break.

I think it is a great, wonderful thing of the humor of God that he would put our office and our ministry space in the gay village.

Every day I walk down Bank Street, I am reminded all the signs. I go into the stores, the rainbow. I am to pray that many people who identify in such a way will come to know Jesus as Savior and Lord.

They're not my enemy. They're not the other. I'm not to be afraid of them. I am to pray that they will come to know Jesus and so are you. Salvation is from God through the Jews for the world.

[32 : 26] One of the things which is very interesting about the Jewish people is that if you were to go back to the time of Jesus, all the smart people, you go to the Oxford of the day, you go to the University of Toronto today, you go to the Yale and Princeton of the day and what do all the smart people know?

There are gods that exist. That's what all the smart people know and not just the smart people, the dumb people know that. Everybody knows that. There's only one people on the entire planet who are so stupid that they don't know what all the smart people know.

There's one people that God has provided through the prophets and through the Old Testament, what we call the Old Testament, through the law and through the history and through the prophets. They've come to disbelieve in the existence of gods to understand that there is only one God.

And in a sense, all of the gods of the ancient world were like superheroes today. It's a very, very interesting thing. You know, we have all these superhero movies. They make billions and billions of dollars and then, of course, there's a small subcategory of superhero movies that try to imagine what it would be like if there really were superheroes and in most of those ones, people actually don't like superheroes.

Why? They keep wrecking all the buildings. They wreck the road. They call all sorts of, they cause endless collateral damage and if we actually lived in a world where all of a sudden there's a superhero and wham, all of a sudden they take the roof off of this place and some of us are all captured with the rocks falling on us.

[34 : 02] We're all beat up and banged up. We'd say, you know, maybe there shouldn't be superheroes. Like, maybe we want to make Ottawa a superhero-free zone. So most, you know, when you actually look at it, so here's the thing. You have this people who are trained to understand that there are no superheroes.

They're the only people group who understand that superheroes are an invention of the imagination and now you have a man who comes and walks among them and he can be standing there and if

you were there you might see the flakes of pita bread in Jesus' beard and you might see that there's a little bit of humus right over here that he didn't take away and none of the other guys said, by the way, Jesus, you got humus, right?

Right here. Some tabouli in his teeth like he's human and by a mere act of his will he casts a demon out and banishes it and gives her peace just by a mere act of his will.

See, the story is teaching deep theology. If you could put up the next point, Andrew, what this story is teaching us is only one far greater than a demon can merely will the demon's banishment and bestow peace.

That's what happens in the story. It's done and it's gone. Who is this guy? They of all people would get what we don't get because we just think it's just religious, it's just spiritual.

[35 : 40] But remember, that's why I went on at the beginning of this thing about what Matthew is claiming is that he's writing an eyewitness biography of what really happened with Jesus and if this really happened to Jesus, if Jesus merely by willing it can banish a demon and bestow peace, who on earth is he?

And what on earth does it mean? And it also brings out to us something a little bit about our emotional response to the things that he says.

Bob Dylan had two Christian albums. I mean, some people just can't stand Bob Dylan. If you can get over his voice or if you like his voice, you should go listen to his two Christian albums, Saved and Slow Train coming, it's amazing how good the theology is in it.

And in one of the songs, he has a line that God is not the errand boy for our wandering desires.

God is not the errand boy for our wandering desires.

You see, why are we bothered with Jesus? She wants to speak to Jesus. Jesus isn't speaking to her. We want him to deal with the woman right away.

[37 : 02] He's not dealing with her right away. We want him to say certain things. He doesn't say those certain things. We want him to not say certain things and he doesn't say those certain things. And we just think it's all appropriate for us to have that response to him.

But just think for a second if you saw me treat Louise this way. Louise? Whoa, I spoke to you.

Come back here right now and speak to me. Whoa. You'd all be shocked. You'd all be shocked.

And then if Louise said something and I said, whoa, whoa, whoa, Louise, you're not allowed to say that.

And I did that in front of you. How would you react? You all know how you'd react. So why is it that I'm not allowed to speak like that to Louise but it's all right for us to treat Jesus that way?

You see, in our heart, the God that we want to have exist is the errand boy for our wandering desires.

[38 : 09] Jesus, right now, I'm snapping my fingers. Hurry up! You can do it! But the fact of the matter is, such a God, why would we ever worship?

On one hand, we want God to be the errand boy for our wandering desires, yet at the same time, we would despise such a God. So what we see in this story is one far greater than a demon can merely, only person, only one far greater than a demon can merely will its banishment and bestow peace.

And what we see, if you could put up the next point, Andrew, is what we're prepared for is through the series of stories and through these series of miracles which are revealing not only our heart, and how we treat God and how we think of God, that we are over him, that we are his judge, that we want him to be our errand boy.

And Jesus keeps being revealed in ways that we can, like in Colossians and in Hebrews, it gives you abstract philosophical statements of the truth, but this story is communicating through story at an imaginative and emotional level who Jesus is.

And what it's revealing is that the Lord has invaded his demon-infested creation to begin to put things right and deliver his fallen image bearers.

[39 : 40] The world has been invaded, but not by, in a hostile takeover, but to restore order, to bring back healing and deliverance.

And with all of these things, you know what, if Jesus is revealed as invading his demon-infested creation to put things right, then how shall you or I live but secure in the gospel to begin to try to do the same thing?

to our Muslim and Hindu and Buddhist and secular and spiritual friends who've gotten entrapped with spiritual forces that are hostile to them and they don't know what to do, we are to pray for them. I have a friend who shared with me, I kept mistaking that he was some type of a person who didn't believe in spiritual things, and I discovered that he in fact believed the demons are real and it came up in conversation that he was experiencing demonic oppression.

So I prayed, get away. Not because I have any powers. I have no powers. Neither do you.

[41 : 04] You and I are all hopeless. But we have a great God. We have a Lord who has invaded his demon-infested creation to begin to set things right.

And in his name, we can pray into those situations and should. If you are here and you believe that you have any type of demonic presence in your life that needs to be dealt with, you should speak to us and we will pray for you.

And you see, the fact of the matter is, is if one far greater than a demon can merely will its banishment and bestow peace, then how on earth, how on earth could someone like that die on the cross?

And that's why every miracle story points to the fact that the only thing that can account for Jesus dying on the cross is love. His love for you.

His love for that Canaanite woman. If you could put up the next point, Andrew, in the death and resurrection of Jesus, he disarmed and defeated all demons and he defeated death to deliver you.

[42 : 21] In the death and resurrection of Jesus, he disarmed and defeated all demons and he defeated death to deliver you. just in closing, one of the things I tried to talk about last week is how we in our culture get faith all wrong.

And Christians, we get caught up in all the time. We think about how weak our faith is, how impure our faith is, how intermittent our faith is, but the thing about the Bible is that the Bible is acting as a corrective to help us to understand that what matters isn't the purity of our faith, the constancy of the faith, the power of our faith.

What matters is what we put our faith in or who we put our faith in. We have Matt here in the congregation who does climbing of rocks and all that type of stuff.

I'm afraid of heights. But if I finally ever agreed with him to go and actually try to climb a rock face and he sets up all the ropes and hooks me into things and helps me to get up, the fact of the matter is it doesn't matter if the entire time I am so terrified I'm hoping I don't pee my pants in front of him. I have virtually no faith. What matters is the strength of the rope and the strength of the connection. I know people who can hardly fly. They have a huge fear of flying.

[43 : 46] It doesn't matter how much faith they have in flying. What matters is that the plane works and the pilot is good. It's the object of faith not the amount that we have and that's what's seen here in the story.

That's her great faith. If you could put up the final point and this is the wonderful thing about the gospel. This is the thing about this is why reading the gospel and reading these things like this and remembering Jesus and who he is is so important because we might have only the tiniest bit of faith.

Like when I became a Christian I didn't become a Christian really because I understood how Jesus was Lord of all of the earth and how I was going to have a resurrected body and I didn't understand everything about the atonement and I didn't understand I was stupid.

I knew virtually nothing. What I knew is that my life was messed up and I needed peace and I think he would give it to me and I was willing to surrender to him.

That's all I knew. If theology test I would get 2% out of 100. But what matters is that it was Jesus. And here's the wonderful thing about Jesus and here's the wonderful thing about the gospel.

[44 : 54] Who Jesus is and what he accomplished for you is always higher, deeper, broader, bigger, stronger, greater, and more glorious than you can ever imagine or believe. and you touch the beginning of the hem of his garment and it's huge.

We'll spend all eternity just all eternity trying to get and we'll never get to the bottom of the depth and the glory and the height and the riches and the wonder.

And it's and yeah, my faith is impure and yes, my faith is intermittent and yes, it's often not strong but it's in Jesus. It's in Jesus.

Please stand. If you have not given your life to Jesus, if you are here this morning, whatever pressure you feel in your heart, that pressure is to call out to Jesus and touch him and ask him to be

your Savior and your Lord and you just stop listening to my prayers and you just do that business with Jesus right now.

That's the Holy Spirit pressing in on you. It's Jesus knocking on the door of your heart that you would open the door of your heart and say, Jesus, come in and be my Savior and my Lord and have the run of my life.

[46 : 14] Let's pray. Father, we thank you so much for Jesus. We thank you, Father, that we thank you that he would come into our world and that he would take upon himself the doom that we deserve and the death that we deserve, that he would take that upon himself and that in his death upon the cross he would bear the doom that we deserved and die the death that we deserved and he would take that and give to us the destiny and the glory that only he deserved.

Father, we thank you that we have a great Savior, that he is worthy of all our trust and all our faith and all our hope and all of our service. And we ask that you would make us like this Canaanite woman and that you would grow our faith in Jesus.

That you would grow our prayer to Jesus and our persistence and our faith. Father, we ask that you would grow that within us and all God's people said, Amen.