

18:14; 1Pe 5:5-6)

## b. She persisted in asking

- 1) She said, "*yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs.*" She reminded Jesus that the little dogs under the table eat the crumbs that fall when the children are eating. All she was asking for is that He let some crumbs fall for her by healing her daughter.
- 2) She was determined not to give up. She had a desperate need that only God could cure. She knew that Jesus could cast out the demon and she was determined not to give up until he agreed to do it.
- 3) On another occasion, Jesus commanded that we do the same. (Luke 18:1) "*And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;*" The word "faint" means to get weary or exhausted. When we know we have a situation that only the Lord can fix and we believe wholeheartedly that He can fix it, we ought to keep on asking without getting exhausted.

📖 *If we will remain humble and persist in asking for things that we know God is the only one who can supply, in His good time He will answer our prayers. Occasionally, His answer may be "NO" but until we know that, we should keep praying.*

**Conclusion:** Our text has revealed 3 keys to successful prayer. 1) How is your faith this morning? Do you go to God in faith when you pray? 2) Can you truly say that you worship the Lord when you pray? Do you often kneel in prayer and bow before Him? 3) When God does not answer right away, do you humbly persist? Do you truly yield your will to His will?

Assuming that there is nothing hindering your prayers, by following these three keys, you may receive answers from God.

**Song:** Teach Me to Pray – 346

# 3 Keys to Successful Prayer

8 October 2017 AM – Mark 7:24-30 – Mr17 – Scott Childs

**Introduction:** Why is it that some Christians seem to get their prayers answered and other do not? Well there may be many reasons for that. For example, the Bible lists many hindrances to prayer like **wavering faith, praying amiss, sin in the heart, unforgiveness, living in sin, refusing to obey the Bible, discord in the home, robbing from God, pride, idols in the heart, etc.** But assuming that none of these are hindering your communion with God, what are some of the key things you must do to get your prayers answered? The Bible mentions several, but I find three in our passage this morning.

**Transition:** This morning I want us to examine the request of the Syrophenician woman that we might learn 3 keys to successful prayer.

*The first key to her successful prayer was to ...*

## 1. Go to God in Faith

### a. She had heard and believed (v.24-25)

- 1) Remember, Jesus is outside of Israel. Most people in the borders of Tyre and Sidon had not seen Jesus do any miracles. They had only heard rumours of the miracle man of Galilee.
- 2) This woman, who had a demon possessed daughter, must have researched Jesus with a passion to have her daughter healed. She heard and believed that Jesus could truly cast the demon from her afflicted daughter.
- 3) Matthew records more information about her belief in Jesus. (Matt 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.*" She called Jesus the "Son of David". Thomas Constable states, "**However by calling Him the Son of David she clearly expressed belief that He was Israel's promised Messiah who would heal His people.**"

### b. She came in faith (v.24-25)

- 1) Not only had she heard and believed about Jesus, but she took action and came to Jesus in faith.

- 2) Jesus was trying to hide from the people to get some peace, but somehow this woman found out and came to Him. **Perhaps** that burdened (Gentile) mother had been praying for some time that somehow she would be able to meet Jesus and have Him heal her daughter.
- 3) We note that when she came to Jesus, she did not bring her daughter with her. She believed that Jesus could heal her without being present (v.26).

☞ *The first key to successful prayer is to go to God in faith. We must believe that He is able to answer our prayer. We must put our belief into action and actually go to God in prayer. Many times we do not receive from God because we fail to go to Him with our request. (Jas 4:2) "... ye have not, because ye ask not."*

*The second key to her successful prayer was to ...*

## 2. Worshipfully Ask

### a. She fell at Jesus' feet in worship (v.25)

- 1) Again, Matthew gives more details. We saw in Matthew 15:22 that she asked Jesus for mercy. Note what he then adds, (Matt 15:23-25) "*But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.*"
  - a) Jesus ignored her first request.
  - b) The disciples asked Jesus to send her away. We might think, "Where was there compassion?" But what would we have done? She was disturbing their holiday. She was a foreigner.
  - c) Jesus said that He was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. She was a Gentile. The Jewish nation despised the Gentiles, treating them as dogs and the Gentiles knew this. Jesus was not being rude, but He was reminding her of her unworthiness.
  - d) She then worshipped Him and begged for help.
- 2) Yes, she fell at Jesus' feet and worshipped Him. She either fell prostrate (i.e., flat) before Him or she knelt and

bowed her face to the ground reverently before Him. The word literally means to kiss like a dog licking his master's hand. She respectfully requested His help.

☞ *We do not deserve all that God does for us either. Yet the Lord deserves our worship when we pray. Sadly, many times we forget to worship Him as we unload our many requests almost as demands. (Ps 29:2) "Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness."*

### b. She asked specifically (v.26)

- 1) She did not say, "Jesus, help my daughter," or "heal my daughter" or "bless my child", she clearly stated her desire.
- 2) She requested that Jesus would cast forth the devil out of her daughter.

☞ *I believe the Lord desires for us to pray specifically.*

*The third key to her successful prayer was to ...*

## 3. Humbly Persist

### a. She humbly admitted she was undeserving

- 1) Jesus' statement seems harsh, but He was testing her faith and humility (v.27). He said that it was not meet or fitting to cast the children's bread or food to the dogs (i.e., little dogs).
- 2) The Jews were God's chosen channel through which God would reach the Gentiles with the Gospel. Paul spoke of preaching the Gospel to the Jews first and also to the Greeks (i.e., Gentiles). (Rom 1:16) "*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*"
- 3) Notice how this woman responded. She humbly said *Yes, Lord*. Another way of translating this is **Even so, Lord**. She did not get angry. She did not let her pride get in the way. She humbled herself and did not deny what the Lord said. Instead, she used it to her advantage.
- 4) Several times in scripture God tells us that if we humble ourselves He will lift us up. One of those times is found in (Jas 4:10) "*Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.*" (cf., Jas 4:6; Mt 23:12; Lu 14:11;