

# THEME FOR SUNDAY, AUGUST 14, 2011

## THE NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

### “HIS CRUMBS ARE MORE THAN A FEAST!”

MATTHEW 15: 21 – 28

Have you ever asked yourself, “Why am I here in worship this morning?” What do you believe about Christ – who is the center of our worship – that prompts you to come into His presence? What prompts you to approach this same Lord Jesus on a daily basis, especially during challenging times in your life?

This morning we will discover the ingredients of a faith behavior that prompted Jesus to say to (of all people) a Canaanite woman, “Great is your faith!” May even the “crumbs” that Jesus graciously offers us be our source of strength and blessing in our daily journey of faith.

#### Introit

#### Selected Verses from Psalm 67

- L: May God be gracious to us and bless us  
C: **And make His face to shine upon us,**  
L: That Your way may be known on earth,  
C: **Your saving power among all nations.**  
L: Let the peoples praise You, O God;  
C: **Let all the peoples praise You!**  
L: Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,  
C: **For You judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations upon earth.**  
L: Let the peoples praise You, O God;  
C: **Let all the peoples praise You!**  
L: The earth has yielded its increase;  
C: **God, our God, shall bless us.**  
L: God shall bless us;  
C: **Let all the ends of the earth fear Him!**  
ALL: **Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

#### Old Testament Lesson

#### Isaiah 56: 1, 6 – 8

(God promises to reveal His salvation according to His timing. God promises that His salvation will move beyond His chosen people to “yet others”.)

<sup>1</sup>Thus says the LORD: “Keep justice, and do righteousness, for soon my salvation will come, and my deliverance be revealed.

<sup>6</sup>“And the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD, to minister to him, to love the name of the LORD, and to be his servants, everyone who keeps the Sabbath and does not profane it, and holds fast my covenant – <sup>7</sup>these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.”

<sup>8</sup>The Lord GOD, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, declares, “I will gather yet others to him besides those already gathered.”

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### Epistle Lesson

Romans 11: 1 – 2a, 13 – 15, 28 – 32

(God uses every means to restore all of His called ones – whether Jew or Gentile – to believe in Him and receive His awesome salvation.)

<sup>1</sup>I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! For I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. <sup>2</sup>God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. Do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he appeals to God against Israel?

<sup>13</sup>Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry <sup>14</sup>in order somehow to make my fellow Jews jealous, and thus save some of them. <sup>15</sup>For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead?

<sup>28</sup>As regards the gospel, they are enemies of God for your sake. But as regards election, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers. <sup>29</sup>For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. <sup>30</sup>Just as you were at one time disobedient to God but now have received mercy because of their disobedience,

<sup>31</sup>So they too have now been disobedient in order that by the mercy shown to you they also may now receive mercy.

<sup>32</sup>For God has consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all.

### The Gospel Lesson

Matthew 15: 21 – 28

(Jesus commends a Canaanite woman whose persistent faith prompted her to accept even the smallest blessing from Jesus as the Messiah.)

<sup>21</sup>Jesus went away from there and withdrew to the district of Tyre and Sidon.

<sup>22</sup>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.” <sup>23</sup>But he did not answer her a word. And his disciples came and begged him, saying, “Send her away, for she is crying out after us.” <sup>24</sup>He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” <sup>25</sup>But she came and knelt before him, saying, “Lord, help me.” <sup>26</sup>And he answered, “It is not right to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs.” <sup>27</sup>She said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table.” <sup>28</sup>Then Jesus answered her, “O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire.” And her daughter was healed instantly.

## CONNECTING POINTS: OUR VISION IN ACTION

The Canaanite woman’s willingness to receive mere “crumbs” from the Lord prompted Him to commend her for her faith and perform a miracle on her behalf. Make a list of the blessings God has given you in the last week and ask Him to help you be aware of all the “little things” He gives you every day.

The disciples were urging Jesus to send this woman away because she was being a distraction. What was the lesson Jesus taught them? Is there a person in your life that seems to be a “distraction” to you? Prayerfully consider what the Lord might be prompting you to do on behalf of that person in need.

*CONNECTING PEOPLE TO CHRIST NOW AND FOREVER*