

Scripture

Mark 7:24-30 (NLT)

The Faith of a Gentile Woman

24. Then Jesus left Galilee and went north to the region of Tyre. He didn't want anyone to know which house he was staying in, but he couldn't keep it a secret. Right away a woman who had heard about him came and fell at his feet. Her little girl was possessed by an evil spirit, and she begged him to cast out the demon from her daughter.

26b. Since she was a Gentile, born in Syrian Phoenicia, Jesus told her, “First I should feed the children—my own family, the Jews. It isn’t right to take food from the children and throw it to the dogs.”

28. She replied, “That’s true, Lord, but even the dogs under the table are allowed to eat the scraps from the children’s plates.”

29. **“Good answer!”** he said. **“Now go home, for the demon has left your daughter.”** And when she arrived home, she found her little girl lying quietly in bed, and the demon was gone.

Call to Worship

Leader: What are you thinking, Jesus? First you insult a woman who really needs you just because she was an outsider, and she gave you back as good as she got. Then you went around touching sick people without gloves and gowns.

Jesus, you know what you were thinking.

What did you want us to think? Help Us!

**People: The Lord watches over the strangers;
he upholds the orphan and the widow,
but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.**

Prayer of Confession:

Loving God, we have wrapped ourselves in protective layers to keep the world at bay.

We have hidden behind stereotypes to excuse our hardness of heart, and believed the worst of people to escape from ministry.

We have allowed anecdotes to replace hard scientific fact, listened to talking heads instead of the word spoken aloud in our worship.

Strip away our notions, leave us bare to infection by the needs of this world, drench us in the sorrows of your people that we might be made whole and healthy at last.

Amen.