

NEWS AND VIEWS
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*“Southern Baptists with the Full
Gospel for the Whole World”*

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But He did not answer her a word. (Matthew 15:23)

The Silent Treatment. Have you ever received it? Maybe your best friend stopped talking to you. Maybe your husband retreats to his man-cave. (Some call it a pout house!) Or perhaps your parents just stared at you when you asked if you could stay out all night with your friends. The silent treatment is louder when it is God. This verse is stunning to me. I remember when I first began to seriously study the character of Jesus with a voracious appetite for the way He is portrayed in the Gospels. Then I came upon this passage. The Canaanite woman with a daughter who was cruelly demon-possessed. She came to Jesus for help. And she got the silent treatment.

I have heard it said that two types of people come to God for help. The bargainers and the beggars. And we see God move even when we pray with a promise that we will commit more of our life to Him. God seems to be gracious even when we don't keep the bargain. At least He was with me. The Canaanite woman had no delusion about her relationship with God. She came begging. She had nothing with which to bargain. She had no favored position. She just needed His favor. And Jesus did not answer her a word. What can we make of that?

She must have heard that Jesus was powerful. And merciful. And despite her separation from being one of God's covenant people, she must have believed that the Lord could help desperate people who came as beggars. And she persevered through the silence. Then she persevered when she could have been offended at the Lord's allusion to dogs that could not eat what was given to the children. Then this woman spoke something to the Lord that got His attention. Even the dogs fed on crumbs that fall from the master's table. That's all she wanted. And that was all she needed. And she was speaking to the master.

I have seen the Lord respond to me when I have bargained like a salesman...like I really had something to offer Him other than my obedience. Then I have seen how He responds to the beggar in me. When I am absolutely empty and desperate and humbled. He told the woman that her faith was great. That shows me that she had faith...and faith comes by hearing the Word of God.

I believe the key to building our faith is doing what we hear from God...putting it in practice. The woman believed she could trust Jesus with a hopeless situation. The mercy of God came with the miracle of God. When Jesus heard her. Are you hearing from God...or more importantly is He hearing from you?

Blessings to you,
Pastor Sam