

A True Heart

By Steve Pruitt

...let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our heart sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Hebrews 10:22 ESV

There is a story recorded in Matthew 15:21-28 and Mark 7:24-30 about a Greek woman, Syro-Phoenician by birth, who approached Jesus after he had entered the region of Tyre and Sidon.

The woman followed Jesus and his disciples begging him to heal her daughter who had an unclean spirit. *O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed, she cried.* Jesus did not answer the woman immediately and was urged by his disciples to send her away. Jesus replied, *I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.* The woman then came and fell at Jesus feet, worshiped him and said, *Lord, help me!* Jesus answered her, *It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs.* To which the woman replied, *True Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their master's table.* Jesus healed the woman's daughter that very hour.

This woman must have heard the stories about people who had received healing by referring to Jesus as the Son of David; blind Bartimeus for one example. She knew that being a Gentile she had no claims on Jesus as the Son of David, but she was desperate to see her daughter healed. To get Jesus' attention she pretended to have a relationship with him that did not exist. After the woman came to worship Jesus, he exposed her hypocrisy by calling her a dog. (It is interesting to note that the Greek word for worship used in this passage means to kiss the hand or lick like a dog.) This woman had now approached Jesus from the true position of her status and presented her plea. That was the approach which got Jesus' attention.

In the book of Amos we read where God says to Israel that he hates and despises their feast days and sacred assemblies. He said that he did not accept their offerings and told them to remove the noise of their music and songs because he wasn't listening. True worship flows from a true relationship with God. One can use the expressions of worship used by others, but if their relationship with God is not based on truth, it will not be true worship.

God is not impressed with our methods of worship if those methods express someone other than who we really are. God desires truth in the inward parts.

Do you have a true intimate relationship with the Father? Are your expressions of worship based on someone else's relationship? Ask the Father to give you truth in the inward parts.

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Scriptures for meditation:

Psalm 15:1-2

Isaiah 29:13

Psalm 51:6