

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

It's easy to see the discomfort of the Apostles of Jesus in this Gospel text. It's because of that woman. That woman who is shouting out loud about Jesus being the Son of David.

But, why should a woman shouting about Jesus being the Son of David cause anyone discomfort? Shouldn't the Apostles be embracing her? Shouldn't they be forming a praise choir with her?

Here are some of the other facts connected with this reading. The Apostles had just come from the old land of Naphtali, around the Sea of Galilee. There they had been confronted by attack dogs, the Pharisees and scribes, who had come all the way from Jerusalem. These Jewish scholars had asked Jesus why His followers didn't follow the traditions of the elders. Even though Jesus handled the softball question, it still made the Apostles uncomfortable that the practices of the Man they were following were being questioned. Away from the land of Naphtali, the Apostles were looking for some peace and quiet. The text says Jesus withdrew with them to the area of Tyre and Sidon. North. Further away from Jerusalem. Old Asher. The territory allotted to that son of Jacob. Before Asher, the land was occupied by the Phoenicians. Maybe here Jesus and his followers could get some rest, some r and r, away from the Jewish hound dogs.

But there's this woman. This woman provides no rest. Instead, she is attracting attention. Her shouting. Her crying. Her

begging. It might attract the notice of others hostile to Jesus. There might be more questions asked and more defense of why we do what we do.

If the woman would just be quiet and go away. The Apostles beg Jesus, "Send her away!" Finally Jesus speaks, seemingly on the Apostles' side. *I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*

But that answer doesn't stop the woman. She begs all the more. And look, now she genuflects. On her knee she begs. By now, the Apostles have to be looking over their shoulders. Who is this strange woman? Why does she have to bother us? Why does she act so pious out in the middle of nowhere? We don't want any trouble here. We're on vacation. Can't we just have a peaceful rest?

Jesus on the other hand is tickled with delight that this woman has come a-begging! She is teaching His Twelve men a lesson. They are weak. She is strong. They are afraid. She is fearless. They are looking for no controversy, no wall to scale, no briars to step through. She will not be denied, no matter what obstacle is in her way.

After more conversation, the answer of the Lord Jesus to this loud-mouthed, pathetic woman again seems to support the Apostles. *It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs.* Ah-ha! At last! Jesus is shooing her away! Go woman! Leave! The Twelve are probably praying that

Jesus' response works and that this weepy woman begone. But no. She has an answer. *Yes, Lord, but even the dogs feed on the crumbs which fall from their masters' tables.*

This woman refused to leave Jesus. Her begging was unstoppable. She was not ashamed of her gender. She was not ashamed of her nationalistic background. She was not ashamed to beg on her knees. Her faith cried out. Yes, she was nothing but a little puppy, and yes, she had little significance within the master's house. But, she did have a place!

How inwardly gleeful Jesus must be that this woman has confronted Him and His disciples, for she is an example of great faith in Israel.

The woman of our text shows her lost condition in her first address to Jesus. She cries out "Kyrie Eleison." Lord, have mercy. We sang the same words only moments ago. Our words were her words. Her lostness is our lostness. Even though it was her daughter who was demon-possessed, the woman begs for help. She stood before God condemned. The woman, for mercy's sake, knew her sin!

For mercy's sake, what are we here for today, but to receive mercy for our sinful condition. We too stand before God condemned. We too are great sinners. We too have need to beg God on bended knee, "Lord be merciful to me, a sinner."

The Law of God always reveals our sin, calling us sinners. Preachers still have to preach law, even when hearers don't like it. Sin, living in you, will try to excuse you, get you off the hook. But the commandments of God pulverize; they crush hard hearts.

No one likes to be told to repent or to stop sinning. Quit coveting your father's land. Quit loving yourself more than your neighbor. Quit finding excuses for staying away from Sunday worship. Quit hurting your family with your drinking or your drugging. Quit thinking that all religions teach of the same God.

The Law of God leaves no escape clauses. We are doomed. We are just as disobedient to the 10 Commandments as were the 12 Apostles, as was this Samaritan woman, as are all the prisoners in El Dorado Prison.

Because of sin, we must learn to be beggars. Our daily begging must be, Kyrie Eleison. Lord have mercy. We want but a crumb. We are like the beggar Lazarus, who longed to be fed with crumbs from the rich man's table. All we desire is a crumb and that will be enough. We want the mercy of Jesus where He offers it. We want His forgiveness because of our sin.

Jesus says to you, "Come, I will not turn you away." Let your repentant heart find true peace and rest. You don't have to make a pilgrimage to some far off country or shrine. You don't

have to ascend into the clouds and descend into the rock of the earth. His Word is near you. It is in your heart. It is in your ear. It is in your mouth. Where the heart believes from what the ear hears from the preaching mouth, there is salvation.

Do you think that if you confess your sins, God will plug His ears? Never. If you confess your sins, He is faithful and just to forgive you your sins and to cleanse you from all unrighteousness. If you say that you have not sinned, you make Him a liar, and His Word is not in you.

When you kneel at this altar, you are begging. You are begging for the mercy of God. You are begging for His forgiveness. And there, in just a few crumbs of bread and in that one swallow from the chalice you receive exactly what you beg for.....mercy, forgiveness, healing. Since the Word of Christ says it, it is true! Take, eat and drink all for the forgiveness of sin. Jesus drops into your mouth the children's bread, the wholesome loaves that all men need.

This unnamed woman lived in the fact that every Word of God was true. She was like the Virgin Mary who said to the angel, "Let it be done for me as Your Word has said." This unnamed woman shows Jesus' Apostles and us, what proper begging is like: Confession of sin; confession of Jesus as Son of David; confession that I need what Jesus gives. IJN. Amen.