

Welcome to Worship at  
Trinity Lutheran Church, Osceola, WI  
Pentecost 13 - August 30, 2020

P: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer. Amen.

**Hymn #232 - "Lord of My Life, Whose Tender Care"**

**Lord of my life, whose tender care  
Has led me on till now,  
Here lowly, at the hour of prayer,  
Before your throne I bow.  
I bless your gracious hand and pray  
Forgiveness for another day.**

**Oh, may I daily, hourly, strive  
In heav'nly grace to grow,  
To you and to your glory live,  
Dead to all else below!  
Tread in the path my Savior trod  
Though thorny, yet the path of God.**

**To you my humble praise I bring  
For mercies day by day.  
Lord, teach my heart your love to sing;  
Lord, teach me how to pray.  
All that I have and e'er can do  
I'll use to serve and honor you.**

**Confession of Sins:**

P: Beloved in the Lord, let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, asking Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

**C: Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess to You that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against You in our thoughts, words, and actions. Therefore we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Your grace and**

**forgiveness for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. O Lord, have mercy on us!**

**P:** Upon this your confession, I as a called servant of Christ and His Word announce to you the grace of God, and in the place of and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

**First Lesson: Isaiah 56:1, 6-8**

This is what the Lord says. Protect justice, and carry out righteousness, because my salvation is coming very soon. My righteousness is ready to be revealed. Then the foreigners who join themselves to the Lord, to minister to him and to love the name of the Lord and to become his servants, every one of them who keeps the Sabbath and does not profane it, those who take hold of my covenant - I will bring them to my holy mountain, and I will make them glad in my house of prayer. Their whole burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be acceptable on my altar. For my house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples of the world. This is the declaration of God the Lord, who gathers Israel's dispersed people: "I will gather still more people to my house besides the ones already gathered." (EHV)

**Psalm 133-134:**

**Refrain: Happy the people the Lord has chosen to be his own.**

**How good and pleas'ant it is  
When brothers live together in 'unity!**

**For there the LORD bestows his 'blessing,  
Even life for'evermore.**

**Refrain: Happy the people the Lord has chosen to be his own.**

**Praise the LORD, all you servants 'of the LORD  
Who minister in the house 'of the LORD.**

**Lift up your hands in the sanctu'ary  
And 'praise the LORD.**

**May the LORD, the maker of heav'en and earth,  
Bless you from 'Zion.**

**Glory be to the Father and 'to the Son  
And to the Holy 'Spirit,  
As it was in the be'ginning,  
Is now, and will be forever. 'Amen.**

**Refrain: Happy the people the Lord has chosen to be his own.**

**Second Lesson: Romans 11:13-15, 28-32**

I am speaking to you Gentiles. For as long as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I am going to speak highly of my ministry. Perhaps I may make my own people jealous, and so save some of them. For if their rejection meant the reconciliation of the world, what does their acceptance mean other than the dead coming to life? In regard to the gospel, they are enemies for your sake. But, in regard to election, they are especially dear for the sake of the patriarchs, because God's gracious gifts and call are not regretted. For just as you were once disobedient to God, but now have been shown mercy due to their disobedience, so also now they have become disobedient, so that by the mercy shown to you they may be shown mercy too. For God imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may show mercy to all. (EHV)

**Verse of the Day:** Alleluia. The Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. Alleluia.

**Gospel: Matthew 15:21-28**

Jesus left that place and withdrew into the region of Tyre and Sidon. There a Canaanite woman from that territory came and kept crying out, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David! A demon is severely tormenting my daughter!" But he did not answer her a word. His disciples came and pleaded, "Send her away, because she keeps crying out after us." He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But she came and knelt in front of him, saying, "Lord, help me." He answered her, "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to their little dogs." "Yes, Lord," she said, "yet their little dogs also eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, your faith is great! It will be done for you, just as you desire." And her daughter was healed at that very hour. (EHV)

**The Apostles' Creed:**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**Hymn #404 - *“Faith Is a Living Power from Heaven”***

**Faith is a living pow’r from heav’n  
That grasps the promise God has giv’n,  
A trust that cannot be o’erthrown,  
Fixed heartily on Christ alone.**

**Faith finds in Christ whate’er we need  
To save or strengthen us indeed,  
Receiving grace from heaven’s throne  
And humbly sharing cross and crown.**

**Faith in the Savior brings us peace  
And bids the mourner’s weeping cease;  
By faith the children’s place we claim  
And give all honor to one name.**

**We thank you, then, O God of heav’n,  
That you to us this faith have giv’n  
Through mighty Word and sacrament  
To trust the one whom you have sent.**

**As you have promised, grant each soul  
Its holy faith’s true end and goal:  
The blessedness no foes destroy,  
Eternal love and light and joy.**

**The Sermon:       Matthew 15:21-28  
                          “A Test For The Faithful”**

**School** has started once again here in **Osceola**, as well as in many **other** places around the United States - either face-to-face, or online. So, it probably won't be very long before the students start having to take some **tests**. Many **children**, and probably many **adults** as well, don't **like** to take tests. We have to study extra hard for them, we don't know what the teacher is going to ask on them, and they put us under a lot of pressure. And even from the **teacher's** perspective on the **other** side of the desk, tests take a lot of time to **make**, and a lot of time to **correct**. So, why do we even **have** tests if they cause so many problems? Well, tests are a **measure** - a measure of our **growth** - and since everybody is capable of **growing**, capable of learning something **new**, nobody is **exempt** from taking a test to **measure** that growth. In fact, even **Jesus** gives us tests - not **written** tests, but **verbal**, or sometimes even **psychological** tests. Jesus tests our **faith**. He wants to see how much we **trust** Him - how much we **rely** on Him - how long we will **stick with** Him. And so also in our text for today, Jesus gives a test - **A Test For The Faithful**.

In speaking about testing the **faithful**, we would probably assume that Jesus would be testing one or all of His **disciples** - and that is **partially** true. Jesus was very concerned that His disciples were growing in their understanding of His **teachings**, His **mission**, and the eventual **scope** of that mission - namely, the **salvation** of all people, both Jew and Gentile. Now although Jesus' disciples were present and involved in our text today, our text doesn't really focus on **them** and their faith. Instead, it focuses on a **Gentile** woman and how Jesus tested **her** faith. Let's take a look at how she approached this test.

First of all, notice the **reverence** this woman had toward Jesus. She came to Him crying out, "*Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David!*" She called Him Lord - **Master** - the **Ruler** of her life. She recognized that Jesus was someone far **superior** to herself - that He had the ability to **help**, where others had **no** control at all. She recognized that Jesus was the **Messiah**, calling Him the Son of **David** - that one descendant who would rise again as a new **shoot** from the ancient **stump** of Jesse, in order to bring **salvation** to His people. That's quite a difference when compared to the **unbelieving** Jewish leaders, who were constantly **questioning** Jesus and His authority. **They** should have been the ones to **revere** Him, but this **Canaanite** woman was able to **see**, where they were **blind**. She didn't put forth **her merits** in coming to Jesus either, but rather, she sought **His mercy**.

Notice also her severe **agony**. She pleaded, "*A demon is severely tormenting my daughter!*" Those of you who have seen the movie The Exorcist (Part 1, 2, or 3), or any similar movie, know the kind of **horrors** that this woman and her

daughter experienced. We're not talking here about the problems associated with clinical **depression**, or **insanity**, or even a split or multiple **personality** disorder. We're talking about an individual whose body has been **invaded** and completely **taken over** by one or more of the evil beings who serve Satan himself. There are only a few select instances of this found in the Bible, and they are **not** cured by **medication**, or **shock** treatments, or any **other** human invention. They are cured **only** by the power of the **Word of Christ** - and then they are cured **immediately!** This woman was in great **agony**, but she chose the right person to approach for help.

And she approached Him out of **love** - love for her **daughter**. The woman said, "*Have mercy on me, Lord*" but she wasn't really asking Him to help **her** - the help was for her **daughter**. This woman loved her daughter so **deeply** that she actually **felt** the pains her daughter was going through, as if they were here **own**. When her **daughter** suffered, **she** suffered.

Yet, even though she was in severe **anguish**, this woman didn't attempt to **demand** help from Jesus, as though she had it coming. She was very **humble** in her request, even submitting herself to being compared to a **dog**. Jesus said to her, "*It is not good to take the **children's** bread and throw it to their little **dogs**.*" The implication was **clear**. The **Israelites** were the **children** - those who had been chosen to receive the blessings of the Savior from their heavenly Father. Taking those blessings and giving them to **others** would have been **robbing** the children. The woman was quick to recognize the divine **truth** of Jesus' statement. She said, "*Yes, Lord, yet their little dogs also eat the **crumbs** that fall from their masters' table.*" Incredible! The woman was saying, "If I am only a little **dog**, then give me only a little dog's **portion**. I don't **want** to take the bread away from the children. Help me with only some of the tiny, leftover **crumbs** which are of no **use** to Your children. But nevertheless, **help** me!" Truly, here was a **real** Israelite - an Israelite not through her **bloodline**, but a child of Abraham through her God-given **faith**.

And what an **amazing** faith it was - a faith which caused her to persevere regardless of the circumstances. She was just like **Jacob**. Do you remember Jacob at a place called **Peniel**? It was there that Jacob had wrestled with **God** as he prepared to meet his brother Esau, from whom he had been running in **fear** for the past 20 years. And even though during that wrestling match the LORD crippled Jacob's hip, so that he **limped** from that time on, Jacob refused to give up the struggle. He said, "*I will not let you go unless you **bless** me.*" The LORD **rewarded** his perseverance, and Jacob **received** a blessing - his **name** was changed from Jacob to **Israel**. Just like Jacob, this Canaanite woman was

**persistent** in seeking a blessing from the LORD.

How would **we** match up in comparison to **her**? When we come to the LORD with our prayers and requests, do we approach Him with the proper **reverence**? Do we **agonize** over our prayers, going to God with the same requests **again** and **again**, or do we **give up** after the first few tries? Do we pray for **others**, putting **their** wants and needs on the same plane as our **own**, or are we pretty much **self-centered** in our prayers? We can learn a **lot** from the example of this woman in our text. She **sought** a blessing from the LORD, and she **received** a blessing - but **not** right away.

The **test** which the LORD had laid upon her was a test of **endurance**. In fact, when she **first** asked Jesus for help, He didn't even **answer** her. He didn't give any indication that she was even **there**! Can you **imagine** that? This was the man whom she rightfully believed to be the great **Healer** - the **Salvation** of all who put their trust in Him - but He wouldn't even give her the time of day. Yet, this only **seemed** to be indifference on the part of Jesus. While the disciples felt this woman was a **nuisance** and should be sent **away**, Jesus allowed her to stay and **continue** her plea, even though He didn't respond to her at first. Then things seemed to go from **bad** to **worse**. As she continued to bring her request to Him, Jesus' silence turned to **harshness**. He told her first of all, that He was sent only to the lost sheep of **Israel**, and that it was not proper to give **their** bread to **dogs**. We would hardly think of those answers as being **encouraging**, but this remarkable woman **did**. She only saw that Jesus' **silence** had been **broken**. Although there may have been a **frown** on His **face**, there was **love** in His **heart**, as He continued to lead that woman through her test.

Why did Jesus wait so **long** to help her? Perhaps we can gain some insight by looking at a couple of **other** instances where Jesus **delayed**. The first one which comes to mind is in the **Old** Testament, where **Abraham** had to wait until he was 100 years old and his wife Sarah was 90 years old, before God blessed them with the child, **Isaac**, whom He had promised to them so many years earlier. Another example is found in the **New** Testament. When Jesus heard that His friend **Lazarus** was sick, we hear that He waited **two more days** before going to see him. During the delay, Lazarus **died**, and when Jesus finally **arrived**, Lazarus had actually been dead for **four days**! In both instances there was a **delay**, so that God would receive even **greater glory**. The same thing is true with this **Canaanite** woman. If Jesus had granted her request **immediately**, then **we** would probably never have even **known** about her exceptionally strong **faith**. But as it is, we can **learn** from her, and grow in our **own** faith - with all the **glory** going to our **God**.

God tests **our** faith too. And when He **does**, we need to turn back to God's **Word** for comfort and strength. When we do, our faith will grow **stronger**. Now, we might think that's the **end** of it. We've **passed** the test, and now God will leave us **alone**. But instead, as our faith gets **stronger**, God will **continue** to test us with even **greater** challenges. So, don't be **discouraged** by that - don't be **frustrated** - don't **give up** - don't **turn away** from God in despair. He has helped us through our tests in the **past**, and He won't let us down in any of our **future** trials either. **God Tests The Faithful**, but the tests aren't meant to be a **burden** for us - because even though we are being tested, God gives us the great **comfort** of knowing that we are going into every test clinging to the one person who has all the right **answers** - Jesus - the one who gave **Himself** for us. May God continue to **bless** us in **all** our trials, as He did this Canaanite woman and her daughter, and may He always bring us **through** them all with a stronger and healthier **faith**. Amen.

### **Prayers:**

Heavenly Father, if it were not for Your **mercies**, by which You guard, guide, and strengthen us; we would long ago have returned to a life of **sin** and **unbelief**. Our enemies are **many**, as well as **powerful**. Satan **attacks** our faith, trying to crowd You **out** of our hearts, and to sow the seeds of **doubt** and **confusion** in our minds by false doctrine. With deadly persistence he strives to turn us **away** from the way of righteousness, and lead us down the paths of **sin**. Father, through Your Holy Spirit, daily **increase** our faith in Jesus, our Savior. Make it a strong **shield** with which we are able to **extinguish** all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

We know by bitter experience that the **world** is no friend either. It continually beckons us with its lustful **pleasures**, its earthly **treasures**, and its many **temptations**. Through the Holy Spirit, strengthen our love for **Christ**, so that the world will not be able to gain **control** of our hearts, and fill us with a love for **material** and **sinful** things.

But evil temptations also attack us from **within**, for we have our sinful **flesh** in which dwells **no** good thing, and which continually strives **against** our **new** man. Give us such a rich measure of the Holy Spirit, that through His grace we will become **wiser**, more **moderate** in our living, and more **thankful** to You in all things, as we strive to win the **victory** over sin.

O Father, do not permit any temptation to **endanger** our faith, or turn our footsteps toward the paths of **sin**. In every temptation provide us with a way to

**escape**, and the wisdom and courage to **use** it to **flee** from sin and lust. Keep us from being filled with **pride** and a **false** sense of security, lest **we** think we are never in **danger** of falling. Through Your Spirit strengthen our faith against **all** temptations. Direct us to live our lives to **You**. Amen.

**The Lord's Prayer:**

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be Thy name;  
Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses  
    as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation;  
But deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever.  
Amen.**

**Hymn #413 - "*When in the Hour of Utmost Need*"**

**When in the hour of utmost need  
We know not where to look for aid,  
When days and nights of anxious thought  
Nor help nor counsel yet have brought,**

**Then is our comfort this alone  
That we may meet before your throne;  
To you, O faithful God, we cry  
For rescue in our misery.**

**For you have promised, Lord, to heed  
Your children's cries in time of need  
Through him whose name alone is great,  
Our Savior and our advocate.**

**And so we come, O God, today  
And all our woes before you lay.  
Be with us in our anguish still;  
Free us at last from ev'ry ill,**

**So that with all our heart we may  
To you our glad thanksgiving pay,  
Then walk obedient to your Word  
And now and ever praise you, Lord.**

P: Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your Word, for my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Your people Israel. 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.

**The Blessing:**

P: The Lord bless you and keep you,  
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

C: Amen.

**Hymn #424 - "O God, Forsake Me Not"**

**O God, forsake me not!  
Your gracious presence lend me;  
Lord, lead your helpless child;  
Your Holy Spirit send me  
That I my course may run.  
Oh, be my light, my lot,  
My staff, my rock, my shield -  
O God, forsake me not!**

**O God, forsake me not!  
Take not your Spirit from me;  
Do not permit the might  
Of sin to overcome me.  
Increase my feeble faith,  
Which you alone have wrought.  
Oh, be my strength and pow'r -  
O God, forsake me not!**

**O God, forsake me not!  
Lord, hear my supplication!  
In ev'ry evil hour**

**Help me o'ercome temptation;  
And when the prince of hell  
My conscience seeks to blot,  
Be then not far from me -  
O God, forsake me not!**

**O God, forsake me not!  
Lord, I am yours forever.  
Oh, keep me strong in faith  
That I may leave you never.  
Grant me a blessed end  
When my good fight is fought;  
Help me in life and death -  
O God, forsake me not!**