

## THE AVAILABILITY OF CHRIST TO HEAL

“And Jesus, going forth from thence, went away into the parts of Tyre and Sidon; and lo, a Canaanitish woman, coming out from those borders, cried to Him saying, Have pity on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is miserably possessed by a demon. But He did not answer her a word. And His disciples came to Him and asked Him, saying, Dismiss her, for she cries after us. But He answering said, I have not been sent save to the lost sheep of Israel’s house. But she came and did Him homage, saying, Lord, help me. But He answering said, It is not well to take the bread of the children and cast it to the dogs. But she said, Yea, Lord; for even the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from the table of their masters. Then Jesus answering said to her, O woman, thy faith is great. Be it to thee as thou desirest. And her daughter was healed from *that* hour.” – Matthew 15: 21-28

“And Jesus went with them. But already, when He was not far from the house, the centurion sent to Him friends, saying to Him, Lord, do not trouble Thyself, for I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof. Wherefore neither did I count myself worthy to come to Thee. But say by a word and my servant shall be healed. For *I* also am a man placed under authority, having under myself soldiers, and I say to this one, Go, and he goes; and to another, Come, and he comes; and to my bondman, Do this, and he does it. And Jesus hearing this wondered at him, and turning to the crowd following Him said, I say to you, Not even in Israel have I found so great faith. And they who had been sent returning to the house found the bondman, who was ill, in good health.” – Luke 7: 6-10

I was thinking of the availability of Christ in the glad tidings. It’s a very wonderful matter to get into the area of help. That’s where we are today, we’re in the area of immediate help. How to find it is the test. How to get help, how to get it in your own soul, so that your soul is brought in touch with God through Christ. How we need it. How we need it in view of a settlement. How we need to take advantage of the death of Jesus, take advantage of the great work of atonement, the work of redemption, and all that Christ has accomplished in all its infinite glory and greatness. It surpasses everything in this world. The glory of the world might, at times, come on to your view, but then to see the greatness of what’s been worked out at the cross. Everything in this world, you might say, has a shadow on it cast by the cross of Christ. Is that how it appears to you, young person? How do you see the world? How are you influenced by the world? Come in touch with Jesus, get your view changed, get a different view on everything, through a divine intervention in your life, in your soul; what a favour it is to receive it.

This woman got hold of it. I thought of these two cases, they were both outside Israel—this woman was a special case. How could we get in her company, that’s what I was thinking, how could we get into this woman’s company? She had a daughter miserably possessed by a demon. She was crying out to Christ, Have pity on me Lord, Son of David. She knew who He was, she knew who Jesus was; she was crying out, you know, for compassion. See, she knew who Jesus was. She had heard about Him no doubt. She had no claim on Him as Son of David; she was speaking, you might say, in honour of Him, in some sense recognising the glory of His Person. The Lord tested her out. It says, He did not answer her a word. Have you ever felt like that? Ever felt like that, that you are crying out for help and you are not getting an answer? Jesus is close, He is available, He is accessible. How are you going to get a word from Christ to settle you? How are you going to get a word to heal you, so you don’t go away unhealed? There are cases in this room that need healing, and there is healing power available. If you are going on in your sins, you need to be pulled up, you need to be healed, you need the source and the power of sin to be stopped. This woman was persistent. The Lord answers her, He says, I have not been sent save to the lost sheep of Israel’s house. Then she came and did Him homage. Very attractive.

See, she was getting closer to Christ, remarkable thing that she wasn't put off. How many of us have been put off at times, at the point of greatest crisis and greatest need, we've been put off? Not by Christ, not by the Lord. He wouldn't repel anyone. If you feel repelled at all it's not Christ that's doing it, it's not God that's doing it. It's the inability to take the place that you have to take to get help.

This woman did—she persevered. Finally she says, Yea, Lord; for even the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from the table of their masters. I thought it was very attractive. It's His position as Son of man. Everyone has got a claim on Him, it's not related to Israel, it's not related to anything on natural lines or family lines. That's how we come in, we can only really come in through putting our claim in on the Son of man. But do you believe it? Do you believe it? This woman believed, believed in Jesus. She says, Yea, Lord. The note is very interesting, not that I could open it up, but she is saying, You can do it, You can do it, You must do it! You think of that. Think of the, you might say, the extremity, in the extremity of this woman's soul she was speaking to Christ, and she says, You must do it—You can do it, You are equal to it, nothing is impossible, but You must do it, You must do it for me, and for my daughter. How urgent do we get in our need? How many years do we go on at a distance from Christ? And yet you can get close to Him today. This woman got very close. She says, Yea, Lord—I think if you read the note it means, You must do it for me, You are able to do it, and You will do it, You must do it—and at that point He comes in. It's very attractive. Jesus answering says, O woman, thy faith is great. It's as though the compassions of Christ were freshly drawn out. It drew out, you might say, the lowliness of Jesus. Think of the lowliness of His manhood, here as Son of man, come in on man's side to take up man's case, and He says, O woman—O woman, thy faith is great. Be it to thee as thou desirest. Her daughter was healed from *that* hour. See, healing came in immediately.

That's how quickly help could come in. Someone having a struggle, some young person having a struggle, and liable to go back on what they have come to a judgment of, get into the presence of Christ. He is able to heal you, the power is there, the Person, the glorious Person of Jesus is available. Find that you've got a claim on Him. Find the way to get to Him. See, she took low ground, she took the place of a dog. It was of no consequence to this woman taking low ground, it was of no consequence. How proud we are, how lifted up we get. What about? What for? For nothing, absolutely nothing! And this woman was brought to the lowest point, and she took it, she willingly took it, and He says, thy faith is great. Think of the Lord standing, you might say, in awe of this woman's faith to get healing.

It's like this man in Luke, I thought it was attractive. He's a centurion, and he understands authority. He wants to bring help into his house for his bondman, and he finds a way of getting the Lord's attention. He says he is not worthy; I am not worthy Thou shouldest enter under my roof. Say by a word. And the Lord came in for him. Just a word, a word from Christ. Can you get it today, can you get a touch from Christ? Will you avail yourself of a word, a word in power? One word from Christ is enough. How we struggle on, struggle on for years, toing and froing with the flesh, and with the world, and yet one word from Christ can undo the whole thing and heal it. It says, the Lord hearing this wondered at him, and turning to the crowd He says, Not even in Israel have I found so great faith. Think of the pleasure Christ had, taking account of unlikely persons. See, you might feel unlikely, might not feel you are worth anything—have you ever got to that point?—not feel that you're worthy of anything, not worth anything, absolutely worthless. And they are the cases the Lord is taking up. He is taking them up in His grace and in His compassion and He has got

the right to do it, He has got the power to do it. Have you proved it? Have you found it? Do you really know it? Do you know it in your own soul? How many of us know it? How many of us really know it, that we've got a claim on Jesus as the Son of man, and that He has got the right and power to heal us? And what's required is faith. It says He wondered: Not even in Israel have I found so great faith.

That's the point to get to, complete faith in Jesus. That's what we need; some of these questions we get asked, the answer to them is faith in Christ, faith in God, put your faith in Jesus. Faith in Jesus can take you all the way through. Think of what took Him all the way to the cross, that's Luke's gospel, His feet taking Him all the way to the cross for you, for me, went all the way to Calvary, all the ignominy and shame of Calvary. He bore it all in His holy perfection, and you can find your faith today strengthened. May it be strengthened today so that cases get cured, that there is healing come in, healing, healing! You don't have to keep coming back, exactly, get healed, get an answer, get an answer for your need, and make progress. For His name's sake.

*Preaching at Gloucester, October 19, 2003*