

# Don't Miss Jesus' Friendly Wink! (Matthew 15:21-28)

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**Guidelines:** Protect confidentiality and follow the leader's prompts

## **Lectio Divina Rhythms/Process (Repeat three times):**

- (a) Read the Scripture passage ("Lectio")
- (b) Reflect on the focus question below ("Meditatio")
- (c) Respond in quiet prayer/journaling ("Oratio")
- (d) Rest in God's invitation for you then pray/share out loud if you want ("Contemplatio")

**Introduction:** A Greek woman's daughter is desperately ill and hears about Jesus' power to heal. Even though in Israel she's been scorned as a Gentile and a woman, she sneaks into a house where the great rabbi Jesus is surrounded by his Jewish male disciples sitting at his feet. She interrupts them, pleading incessantly for Jesus to deliver her daughter. Jesus seems to ignore her plea and call her a "dog", as if she's a dirty pest! But actually he's testing his disciples' love for Gentile outsiders by verbalizing *their* judgment that she's a "bother" and should "go away". *Probably Jesus is winking at her with a smile!* She realizes he's not calling her a "dog" but a *beloved pet puppy* (which is how that Greek work can be translated). In fact, Jesus tells her she's "*dear*" to him and *he heals her afflicted daughter!*

**Opening Prayer:** Jesus says, "I no longer call you slaves... you are my friends" (John 15:15, NLT).

## **Read Scripture: Matthew 15 (NLT)**

21 Then Jesus left Galilee and went north to the region of Tyre and Sidon. 22 A Gentile woman who lived there came to him, pleading, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! For my daughter is possessed by a demon that torments her severely."

23 But Jesus gave her no reply, not even a word. Then his disciples urged him to send her away. "Tell her to go away," they said. "She is bothering us with all her begging."

24 Then Jesus said to the woman, "I was sent only to help God's lost sheep—the people of Israel."

25 But she came and worshiped him, pleading again, "Lord, help me!"

26 Jesus responded, "It isn't right to take food from the children and throw it to the dogs."

27 She replied, "That's true, Lord, but even dogs are allowed to eat the scraps that fall beneath their masters' table."

28 "Dear woman," Jesus said to her, "your faith is great. Your request is granted." And her daughter was instantly healed.

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading:** What is one word or phrase the Holy Spirit impresses on you? Meditate on that.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading:** Enter into the Scripture passage. What do you feel? What specific situation in your life today relates? Write down a prayer or pray quietly.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Reading:** What is God's personal invitation for you from the Scripture? You can write down what God may be saying to you or a prayer of thanks. Or rest quietly in God.