

Sermon Notes
February 26, 2017

“A Crumb of Mercy”
Matthew 15:21-28
Pastor Bill Hoffman

Why might it have seemed unusual for Jesus to be in this area and interacting with this particular woman? Scholars observe that Matthew is the most Jewish of the gospels, yet it could also be argued that Matthew shows Jesus' openness to Gentiles more than the others. Besides this Canaanite woman, what might be some other examples of this?

Jesus first ignores this desperate woman, then explains that helping her is not part of his mission; then he cites a Jewish slur toward Gentiles by comparing her to a dog. Have you heard explanations that attempt to soften Jesus' words and behavior toward her?

- Suppose none of those explanations are valid, and that Jesus is intentionally highlighting that she is completely undeserving of help from him. Do you find this offensive? How about the notion that you are undeserving of anything good from the Lord?

What strikes you about the woman's response to Jesus and her faith? What does Jesus' response to her in verse 28 show about his character, and about his regard for the woman – and for other “dogs”?