

When someone you love is hurting, you don't think about them as just another person who needs help.

- You think about them—your daughter, your friend, someone whose pain matters to you. You want help, and you want someone to see them, not just the need they carry.
- That is part of what makes these scenes in Mark 7 so moving. A mother comes to Jesus because her daughter is suffering. Then some people bring a deaf man who struggles to speak. Two different needs, two different encounters—and in both, Jesus responds to people personally (Mark 7:24–35).

But Mark also makes sure we notice *where* these encounters happen.

- Jesus is in Gentile territory, beyond the familiar boundaries of Israel. The Lord's care is personal, but his mission is not small. From the beginning, God's purpose was to bring blessing to the nations (Genesis 12:1–3); and Jesus later sends his followers to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:18–20).

Jesus meets people personally, and his mission reaches globally.

So as we walk through this passage, hold those two truths together: here is what I want you to notice... **Jesus ministry is personal in its care...**

Mark 7:24-37 – From there He arose and went to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And He entered a house and wanted no one to know *it*, but He could not be hidden. ²⁵ For a woman whose young daughter had an unclean spirit heard about Him, and she came and fell at His feet. ²⁶ The woman was a Greek, a Syro-Phoenician by birth, and she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter. ²⁷ But Jesus said to her, "Let the children be filled first, for it is not good to take the children's bread and throw *it* to the little dogs."

Mark 7:28 – ²⁸ And she answered and said to Him, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs under the table eat from the children's crumbs." ²⁹ Then He said to her, "For this saying go your way; the demon has gone out of your daughter." ³⁰ And when she had come to her house, she found the demon gone out, and her daughter lying on the bed.

Mark 7:31 – ³¹ Again, departing from the region of Tyre and Sidon, He came through the midst of the region of Decapolis to the Sea of Galilee. ³² Then they brought to Him one who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech, and they begged Him to put His hand on him. ³³ And He took him aside from the multitude, and put His fingers in his ears, and He spat and touched his tongue. ³⁴ Then, looking up to heaven, He sighed, and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened."

Mark 7:35 – ³⁵ Immediately his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke plainly. ³⁶ Then He commanded them that they should tell no one; but the more He commanded them, the more widely they proclaimed *it*. ³⁷ And they were astonished beyond

measure, saying, "He has done all things well. He makes both the deaf to hear and the mute to speak."

"Before we get to the two main points, I want to make 3 observations about these stories:

- there is a real spiritual battle;
- people bring others to Jesus; and
- Jesus is ministering in Gentile territory.

And in both encounters, he shows his authority over the need before him."

First, the spiritual battle is real.

- The Bible tells us plainly that this young girl was suffering under an unclean spirit
- We don't know how long she had been dealing with this, or even how she encountered this evil spirit, but let this be a reminder that the **Spiritual Battle is Real!**
- We are to stay alert – **1 Peter 5:8** - Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.
- **John 10:10** - The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly.
- **Ephesians 6:12-13** - For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Because the Battle is Real, don't give a foothold to the enemy

- **Ephesians 4:27** - nor give place to the devil.
 - How do we do that? How do we keep from doing that?
 - When you sin, you let them in.
 - Don't give the devil a foothold, He will build a stronghold
- **2 Corinthians 10:4-5** - For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, ⁵ casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,
- That doesn't mean every sickness or hardship is caused by demonic activity—and Mark doesn't tell us what led to this girl's condition. But it does remind us that evil is real, and we need to take seriously the importance of turning from sin and standing firm in the Lord.

Second, people in need are often brought to Jesus by someone else.

"Here's another thing to notice: in both of these stories, someone comes to Jesus carrying another person's need.

- The mother comes to Jesus because her daughter is suffering. The daughter isn't there in the story, but her mother brings her need to Jesus and keeps pleading for help (Mark 7:25–30).

Then, in the next scene, some people bring a deaf man who struggles to speak. They beg Jesus to lay his hand on him (Mark 7:32).

- We see the same kind of care in Mark 2. Four people carry a paralyzed man to Jesus. When they can't get through the crowd, they open the roof and lower him down in front of Jesus (Mark 2:3–5). We sometimes call people like that **mat carriers**. They see someone in need and do what they can to bring that person to Jesus.
- You are going to be on the mat, physically, financially, relationally, emotionally, or spiritually.
- Most Dangerous Man is the one who says, "I've Got this!"
- We can't heal people or save them ourselves.
 - Jesus alone has that authority. But we can carry people to him—by praying for them, showing up for them, helping with practical needs, and speaking honestly about the hope we have in Christ.
 - Sometimes a person who feels too weak, ashamed, or overwhelmed to come to Jesus needs someone who will stand beside them and help them take that next step.
- So let's ask ourselves: **Who is carrying a burden near us—and how can we help bring that person to Jesus?** That's why Groups Matter!

Lastly Jesus is ministering in Gentile territory.

- **We will unpack this a bit more in just a moment, but don't miss this...**
- Jesus is in Gentile territory, a place filled with unclean people according to the standard Jewish view. Many Jews would have felt compelled to send this Canaanite woman away, and ignore the needs; yet this whole story, and the story that comes after this, is intended to be a reflection of the reality that Jesus' plan involved much more than Israel.
- His salvation would spread far beyond Israel to the ends of the earth, an idea that may have been shocking to these 12 Jewish disciples. Through His words and demeanor, Jesus was subverting the standard Jewish view of the Gentiles. According to Jews, the Gentiles had no right to the children's bread, for they were "dogs." Jesus aimed to change this mind-set. (Platt, *Exalting Jesus: Mt*, 3893)
- **Jesus came to seek and to save the Lost**

Jesus' Ministry is Personal in its Care

Let's look back at verse 26 – I want you to see Jesus Personal Care – Hard Passage

Mark 7:26 - ²⁶ The woman was a Greek, a Syro-Phoenician by birth, and she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter. ²⁷ But Jesus said to her, "Let the children be filled first, for it is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs."

Jesus' response can sound severe to us.

- The woman is desperate; her daughter is suffering, and Jesus speaks about his mission to Israel. We shouldn't pretend those words are easy. But we need to hear them in the flow of the story.

- God had made promises to Israel, and Jesus came as Israel's Messiah, fulfilling those promises. The gospel would go 'to the Jew first'—not because Gentiles were unimportant, but because God's promised rescue was coming through Israel's Messiah

Romans 1:16 - For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

- From the beginning, though, God's purpose was for the nations to be blessed through Abraham's family ... God said to Abraham, Through you I will bless all families of the earth. (Genesis 12:1–3).

Notice Mark's wording: 'Let the children be fed first' (**Mark 7:27**).

First does not mean only.

- Jesus is describing the order of his mission, not saying this woman is worthless or that Gentiles are beyond God's mercy. And the woman seems to understand the image: she doesn't demand that the children lose their bread; she trusts that there is enough at the table for even the dogs beneath it. She is saying, in effect, 'Lord, I believe your mercy is abundant enough to reach even me.'

Jesus honors her response and heals her daughter.

- He doesn't send her away. He meets her need—and in doing so, Mark gives us a glimpse of the kingdom's reach beyond Israel (Mark 7:28–30)."

"So Jesus' words are not a declaration that this woman doesn't matter.

- They show that God's promised salvation comes through Israel's Messiah—and that this mercy will reach the nations. Jesus' care is personal: he hears this mother, responds to her faith, and brings healing to her daughter.
- And this encounter also prepares us to see the global reach of his mission."
 - In the Matthew's Gospel, Jesus states that He is "...sent only to the lost sheep of Israel" (Mt 15:24); Mark records Jesus saying the children must be fed "first" (Mark 7:27).
 - When you put these two together, the Global Priority and Purpose becomes clear.

His Care is PERSONAL

Throughout the Gospels, Jesus notices people others might overlook.

- He stopped for a blind beggar crying out by the roadside (Mark 10:46–52).
- He saw Zacchaeus and called him by name (Luke 19:1–10).
- He welcomed people who came to him in grief, sickness, and shame.
- His compassion was not distant or general; he met people in the middle of their particular need.

Jesus still cares for those who trust him.

- He is the Good Shepherd who knows his sheep and holds them securely (John 10:14, 27–29).
- He understands our weakness and invites us to come to him for mercy and help (Hebrews 4:15–16).
- We can bring our anxieties to God because he cares for us (1 Peter 5:7).

- That does not mean every hardship will disappear when we pray, but it does mean we are never forgotten or abandoned by Christ (Romans 8:35–39).

“And if you are here today and you have not trusted Jesus, his care is not a reason to stay away. Jesus said he came ‘to seek and to save the lost’ (Luke 19:10).

- The woman in this passage came to him with nothing to offer except her need—and she found mercy. Come to Jesus, turn from sin, and trust him. He is able to save all who come to God through him (Hebrews 7:25).
- “So whether you are trusting Christ today or still considering him, hear this: Jesus sees you. Bring your need to him.”

Mark 7:34 - Then, looking up to heaven, He sighed, and said to him, “Ephphatha (eFatha),” that is, “Be opened.”

- “Mark tells us that Jesus sighed. We aren’t told exactly what was behind that sigh, so we shouldn’t claim more than the text says. But as Jesus looks at this man’s suffering, we glimpse his compassion. He does not stand at a distance from human brokenness.
- He enters the moment, attends to the man personally, and speaks the word that opens his ears. The Bible says creation groans under the effects of sin and waits for renewal (Romans 8:20–23). Here, Jesus gives us a small but powerful glimpse of the restoration he brings.”

Jesus’ Ministry is Global in its Reach

Remember where this takes place...

- This is Gentile Territory – Jesus is no longer in Galilee, or Judea, Jerusalem.
- He is completely outside of Israel
- This land was inhabited by Pagan Gentiles – Unlike the conversation with the Samaritan woman.
 - The Samaritans at least had some semblance of Judaism and the worship of Jehovah

The region was not only known for its pagan idolatry;

- it had a long history of opposing Israel
- James Edwards wrote in his commentary, “Tyre probably represented the most extreme expression of paganism, both actually and symbolically that a Jew could expect to encounter...”
 - Yet this is exactly where Jesus went. Jesus goes there and graciously expands the scope and reach of the Messiah beyond what Israel expected.
 - “From a socialreligious perspective, Jesus’ visit to Tyer universalizes the concept of Messiah in terms of geography, ethnicity, gender and religion in a way entirely unprecedented in Judaism.” (Edwards, *Mark*, 217)

Notice Who He talks to...

- This place was considered *unclean* to most Jesus; He encounters people who were considered unclean.

Think about who this woman is...

- (*Mark 7:26*) Jesus talks with a Greek-speaking Gentile, Syrian, Phoenician, Canaanite woman.

- She has been described as a *Gentile of the Gentiles*
- If ever someone was a Gentile in the flesh—the uncircumcision, separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, a stranger to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in this world—it is this woman.
- If Paul was a Hebrew of Hebrews, she was a Gentile's Gentile.
- This Pagan Gentile Woman could not have been further from the "citizenship of Israel."
 - She literally had not right to even approach a Jewish Rabbi...but to come persistently.
 - We'll talk about this in a moment, but Scripture records that she "kept asking".

Ephesians 2:12-13 - that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

We are all unworthy in need of the same grace that Jesus gave these individuals

- Grace has been defined as "...God's free and unmerited favor shown to guilty sinners who deserve only judgement. It is the love of God shown to the unlovely. It is God reaching downward to people who are in rebellion against Him." (Jerry Bridges, *Transforming Grace*, p. 2)
- Danny Akin, wrote, "Contrary to religious and racial bigots, no one is so unclean that they cannot receive the blessing and the touch of Jesus Christ—the God who astonishes (v. 37)." (Akin, *Exalting Jesus: Mark*)

Jesus was a Man on a Mission. In Parallel account in Matthew 15:24, Jesus said: "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

I don't want to get bogged down here, but it's important to understand what Jesus meant by this statement.

Jesus' Mission to Israel Was for the World

- Jesus came first to Israel to fulfill God's promises and His plan of salvation.
- **Romans 1:16** - For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.
- **Romans 15:8-9** - Now I say that Jesus Christ has become a servant to the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises *made* to the fathers, ⁹ and that the Gentiles might glorify God for *His* mercy
- **Psalms 67:1-2** - God be merciful to us and bless us, *And* cause His face to shine upon us, *Selah* ² That Your way may be known on earth, Your salvation among all nations.
- God had chosen Israel to be a blessing to all nations. Jesus fulfilled that mission as the promised Messiah.
- Jesus ministered to the Jews so that God's blessing of salvation could reach the Gentiles and the whole world.

The Bottom Line: Jesus focused His earthly ministry on Israel, not to exclude the nations, but to fulfill God's plan to bring salvation to the entire world through Him.

His Reach is Global – Our Mission is Clear!

Transition to TFBC – Bring Hope and Renewal to Every Person and Every Place

Our Identity in Christ

- Ambassadors – 2 Cor. 5 - Witness – Acts 1:8 - Fishers of Men – Mark 1:17

Our Mission:

- Mark 16:15 – Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature
- Acts 1:8 – You will be witness unto me in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, Uttermost part of the earth
- Matthew 28:19-20 – Make Disciples of all the nations.

Our church's mission is to relentlessly pursue God's design so that we can bring Hope and Renewal to every person and every place. Mark 7 reminds us that Jesus' care is personal, and his mercy reaches beyond familiar boundaries.

Story – Rodney Hatch

- Come to TFBC, Jesus has radically transformed his life
- He had connections with Shelby Co Jail.
- This past week he spent an hour and half with about 15-18 inmates sharing his story of brokenness to life change... using the 3 Circles

So what can we do in response?"

1. Identify Your FRAN

- Think of a friend, relative, associate, or neighbor who needs the hope of Jesus.
- Pray for them by name, and ask God to show you one practical way to care for them this week (Matthew 9:37–38).

2. Be a mat carrier.

- Don't wait for someone to find their way to Jesus alone. Listen, serve, invite them to church or an upcoming event, and look for a natural opportunity to share the gospel.
- We can't save anyone, but we can help bring people to the Savior (Mark 2:3–5; Romans 10:14–15).

3. Take one step beyond what feels familiar.

- That may mean welcoming someone who feels like an outsider, building a relationship across a cultural or social boundary, or helping our church support gospel work in another place.
- Jesus sends his people to make disciples among all nations (Matthew 28:18–20).

4. Follow through.

- After you invite someone or share the gospel, keep walking with them.

- Answer their questions, read Scripture together, and help them take their next step toward Christ and Christian community (Matthew 28:19–20).

Closing words:

"Church, let's not let 'every person and every place' remain words on a page. Ask God to put one person on your heart. Carry that person to Jesus in prayer, care, and gospel witness. And as a church, let's keep taking the good news beyond our familiar circles—because Jesus' mission reaches the nations, and he sends his people into the harvest." (Matthew 9:37–38; Acts 1:8)