

2023



BRIDGE AHEAD

THE SIGNS OF LIFE SERMON SERIES

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

A bridge is used to connect some places. You cannot get from one location to the next without crossing a bridge. So much goes into building a bridge because it's built over something.

You are that bridge. God is pointing to you and warning others that there is a *bridge ahead*. Some people have to come through you as the middle person to bring about the connection. If you are going to be that bridge, you're going to have to be strong. Let's learn from the Canaanite Woman as we continue with the sermon series, “The Signs of Life.”

THIS WILL BE A RECORD BREAKING YEAR.

EXAMPLES OF BRIDGES

- The Seven Mile Bridge (Florida Keys, Florida)
- Sunshine Skyway Bridge (Tampa, Florida)
- The Golden Gate Bridge (San Francisco, California)
- The Brooklyn Bridge (Brooklyn, New York)

EXAMPLES OF BRIDGES IN THE BIBLE

- **Joseph** was the **Bridge that God** used to **connect the world during a famine.**
- **Rahab** was the **Bridge** to **hide the spies** to **connect Israel to their first victory.**
- **John the Baptist** was the **Bridge** to **connect the world to Jesus.**
- **Jesus** was the **Bridge** to **connect us to God.**

Can God trust you to be on your post?

YOU'RE THE BRIDGE.

*Matthew 15:21-28 NIV - [21] Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. [22] A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, **crying out, “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me!** My daughter is demon-possessed and suffering terribly.” [23] **Jesus did not answer a word.** So **his disciples came to him and urged him, “Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us.”** [24] He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel.” [25] The woman came and knelt before him. “Lord, help me!” she said. [26] He replied, “It is not right to take the children’s bread and toss it to the dogs.” [27] “Yes it is, Lord,” she said. “Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master’s table.” [28] Then Jesus said to*

her, “Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted.” And her daughter was healed at that moment.

BRIDGES CONNECT THE SOUND OF AN INTERCESSOR

Matthew 15:22a NIV - A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out.

- The enemy hates when you open your mouth.
- Certain things won't come together until it crosses you.
- You are an intercessor - you get between them and God.

THE PETITION OF AN INTERCESSOR

Matthew 15:22c NIV - My daughter is demon-possessed and suffering terribly.”

- Because God knows your voice, He is willing to do you a favor.
- The petition isn't personal, it's for someone else.

THE POSTURE OF AN INTERCESSOR

Matthew 15:25 NIV - The woman came and knelt before him.

- You cannot leave your post as an intercessor. You must remain because you are the connection.
- What you love you will fight for (in prayer).

PRAYER GIVES YOU POWER TO CREATE.

BRIDGES NEED REPAIRING

Matthew 15:22b NIV - “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me!

Matthew 15:25b NIV - “Lord, help me!” she said.

- What you're standing in the gap for can affect you and you have to know when you need help.
- You need God to deal with what you are going through. Be honest with Him.
- You need mercy and help to stay in your position.
- Don't abandon your bridge just because things aren't falling into place the way you think they should.

What are some signs that tell you that you need repairing? What prevents you from being honest with God about what you need?

YOU'RE THE CONNECTOR THAT NEEDS MERCY AND HELP.

BRIDGES MUST BE ABLE TO ENDURE ELEMENTS

Ephesians 4:7 NIV - But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.

- Your history with God will allow you to encourage yourself.
- The enemy is fighting you because he knows you are the connection.
- Bridges sometimes get blamed for things outside of their control.
- God graces you for warfare.

If you get off your post, who will be stuck? What are some ways you encourage yourself?

YOU'RE EQUIPPED FOR THIS.

GRACED TO DEAL WITH SILENCE

Matthew 15:23a NIV - Jesus did not answer a word.

- You have to know how to position yourself when God doesn't answer right away.
- You don't need to seek other gods or idols when God does not respond to you.
- Silence is really not silence; it's a test to see if you have a spirit of entitlement.

What do you do when you are waiting for an answer from God?

GRACED TO DEAL WITH PEOPLE

Matthew 15:23b NIV - So his disciples came to him and urged him, "Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us."

- The people she wasn't talking to tried to get in her business. Don't allow people to get you off focus.

How do you handle difficult people?

GRACED TO BE MISUNDERSTOOD

Matthew 15:26-27 NIV - [26] He replied, "It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs." [27] "Yes it is, Lord," she said. "Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table."

- People will not always understand you.
- You can talk yourself out of your position because of insecurity.

How do the opinions of others affect you?

PULL ON YOUR GRACE.

THE CONNECTION IS MADE!

Matthew 15:28 NIV - Then Jesus said to her, “Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted.” And her daughter was healed at that moment.

- God put you in this position and your help is on the way.

What results have you seen from maintaining your position as a bridge?

YOU’RE BUILT FOR THIS.

QUESTION

Who has God made you the bridge for?

DECLARATION

I am the bridge, I make connections, and I will not leave my post!

PRAYER

Father God, You have chosen me to be the bridge. You have graced me to sit in this seat and fulfill Your will. As I assume my responsibility as the bridge, please have mercy on me. Strengthen me in my moments of weakness. Help me to not abandon my post. Always allow me to remember what you have already done. Let my mind be in You as I serve as the connection to someone else’s next, in Jesus’ name, Amen!