



Welcome!

FORWARD: MOVING INTO CHAPTER 23
Today's Message: Moving Forward in Faith
Dr. Lance D. Watson, Senior Pastor

PRAYER: Merciful God, we praise you for hearing us when we pray. You know what we need, and you are more than able to supply what's required. Thank you for your grace that keeps us moving forward. Obstacles bring us opportunity, storms bring us strength, pain gives us power because you are in charge. Open our eyes to see you at work, be encouraged and persist. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

ICEBREAKER: Take a moment to check in with your group. What's a holiday "high" and "low?"

MESSAGE RECAP: Today we hear the cry of a mother's heart for her child. We meet a lady who literally "cries out" to Jesus until He will hear her request. Her child is suffering, and her only hope is Jesus. Initially, she appears rejected. The disciples of Jesus find her a bother, but because of her great faith that continues to move her forward, Jesus rewards her despite the fact that His blessings (according to Matthew's telling of the story) were to first fall upon Israel and then upon those outside of their nation.

SCRIPTURE: Read Matthew 15:21-28 (NKJV)

DISCUSSION:

1. **What was your biggest takeaway from the message?** What's one thing you learned? What questions came to mind as you listened to the message today? What points did you find most insightful? How did the message challenge you?
2. If you were a casual observer, what would you have thought about Jesus's initial responses in this scripture? What do you think was his mindset and thought process behind those responses?
3. If you were the Canaanite woman, what do you think would have been your thoughts, hopes, and fears before approaching Jesus? What would have been your possible reactions to his responses?
4. Have you ever felt that God was ignoring or callous towards your requests, needs, and prayers? What are the possible pathways (both good and bad) you can pursue if/when you feel that way? How can we move forward in faith in these circumstances?
5. Have you ever struggled with the question of why God does not prevent or stop more evil or suffering? What do you think about the many occasions where Jesus seemingly could "easily" heal or relieve suffering but does not choose to?

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6. How do you feel about the idea that it is often **entitlement**, and not disappointment, that is the “faith killer” for wounded idealists? And that humility is the “bridge” that helps us to cross from idealist or wounded idealist to faithful realist (and escape the troubled waters of cynicism)? Do you see this played out (her humility helping her avoid being cynical) in the account of the Canaanite woman? If so, how?

CHALLENGE: What is one “a-ha” moment you had in our group discussion today. Note it and write it down. If you applied your learning from this week’s message, how would the next week be different for you?

SERVE: How is God calling us to live out this message this week? As individuals? As a group?

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Take this time to share group announcements. Church wide and campus specific announcements can be found at www.myspbc.org. You can also “find, follow and like” our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/myspbc. Turn on your notifications.

CELEBRATIONS: Take this time to share praise reports (e.g., answered prayers, birthdays, anniversaries, promotions).

PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAYER: Take this time to share prayer requests. Close with prayer.

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We Care!

A large, solid red heart is positioned behind the text 'We Care!', with the heart's center overlapping the letter 'e'.

NOTICE: PLEASE BE PATIENT AS WE GRADUALLY REOPEN OUR CAMPUSES IN THE SAFEST MANNER POSSIBLE. As a small group leader, we depend on you to show members that we care. Here's a list of resources to help you.

FOR PRAYER:

CALL: 804.463.2472
EMAIL: prayer@myspbc.org.

TO REQUEST A HOSPITAL VISIT:

CALL: 804.304.3890 (For Emergencies)
EMAIL: ecare@myspbc.org.

TO FIND A SUPPORT GROUP:

CALL: 804.643.6177
EMAIL: Barnabas@myspbc.org.

TO CONTACT MY LIFE STAGE PASTOR:

CALL: 804.643.4000 and Press 1 for the Dial By Name Directory

EMAIL:

- Imagination (0-10): Vernita Williams: Vernita.Williams@myspbc.org
- SMB (11-19): Martina Jones-Smith: Martina.Jones-Smith@myspbc.org
- Dreamchasers (20-29): Juan Shackelford: juan.shackelford@myspbc.org
- Aspire (30-39): Lance Watson, Jr.: lance.watsonjr@myspbc.org
- Fusion (40-49): Michelle Townsend: michelle.townsend@myspbc.org
- Encore (50-59): Jamie Duncan: Jamie.Duncan@myspbc.org
- Prime Time (60-69): Maceo Freeman: maceo.freeman@myspbc.org
- Refiners (70+): Roscoe Jones: roscoe.jones@myspbc.org

FOR COUNSELING:

CALL: 804.643.6177
EMAIL: Barnabas@myspbc.org

TO REQUEST FUNERAL SUPPORT:

CALL: 804.304.3890 (Pastor On Call)
EMAIL: ecare@myspbc.org.

TO REQUEST EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE:

CALL: 804.643.4000
EMAIL: emergencyassistance@myspbc.org.

GPS is a study guide based on the weekend message. The purpose of this guide is to assist small groups in study. Previous GPS Guides are available online at www.myspbc.org.