

How often you get frustrated when someone's not listening to you, a fellow worker, a boss, your child, a spouse- 'you aren't listening to me! And how frustrating when it seems God is not there for you, not listening, seemingly ignoring you.

Like the time that women approach Him. At the end, Jesus praises the woman for her faith. She is only one of two in the Gospels to get such praise. That is significant.

At the beginning, she had faith. She rightly confessed Jesus, the Christ, title Son of David, whose mercy endures forever, whose mission to deliver us from demons, from sin, from death. But despite her faith -Jesus did not answer her. Perhaps, there was some bravado; perhaps she's too confident in thinking that she knew the mind of God or was proud of her intercession being selfless. In any case, what she needed, what her faith needed, what the disciples needed, was for her to be ignored. In a way that even a parent ignored you for your good. So she was ignored. She is not in control. Her daughter's fate was in His hands. She needed to learn to trust Him.

The disciples become embarrassed by His inaction. She's making a scene. They asked: send her away. He did not. They aren't in control either; but she does seem to need a bit of humility and the disciples need an object lesson.

So she humbles herself. God be praised. She drops all pretense. She accepts her place, face down, now only says **Lord, help me**. He tests her faith, best translated, **it is not proper to take the children's bread and give it to the little dogs**. She's likened to a beloved pet at His feet who lives in His house.

She seizes upon it. If she's a pet then she's at His pet, at His table. She has a Master. She belongs to Him. She doesn't want the children's bread. She wants His bread, the bread that masters give to their dogs.

That faith is worthy of the Lord's praise. She has held Him to His Word. Exactly where our Lord wants to be. That you, the gentile dog, pets you are, unworthy, underserving as she, would dare hold Him to His word. Learn to drop all claims and pretenses and learn to pray, **Lord help me**.

That's the real question for you. Can you trust Christ to be good, all-wise when He seems to ignore you. When you endure all manner of trials and sorrow? Can you trust God when the wicked prosper, when evil seems to win-out; when we're overrun with fake news, when prayers seem to go unanswered, even when our loved ones die too early? How do you trust Him when He doesn't do what you ask, even what you cry out to Him? Can you trust God when life now has new challenges? Do you think for a moment something can harm you?

That is the definition of faith. It waits on Him. It trusts in God, His Word even if it is contrary to our understanding or experience. The greatness of the woman's faith wasn't in her confidence or certainty. It was in its weakness. It was great then because it only wanted what He gave, His bread, at His table, in His house, and nothing more. Her faith was great because it rested in what He gave according to His Word. May God do the same for us and give us His Body in His bread at His table this day that we too might have great faith and be freed of demons, freed of sinful burdens, freed of your past, faith that says Amen to what you have from His table today.

We must trust His Word, dare to hold God to His promise for you -because outward appearances often give the impression God is not pleased with us or ignoring us. God often tests, chastises His children. He makes a confessor from a murderer, a chief apostle from an extreme persecutor, an evangelist from a tax collector. Who knows what He will do with you? You are baptized. You belong to Him. Say your prayers. Read the Bible. Come to the Sacrament. He can make sons for Abraham from stones. Weeds into wheat. He turns useless dogs into Israelite sheep. He, who calls you by name, counts every hair on your head.

Imitate this woman's faith and virtues. Learn to intercede for others; also for yourself with perseverance and patience. Learn to be fully content with God's Word and Sacraments. They are not ineffective crumbs but a great banquet that gives your most critical need: the forgiveness of sins, His life, uniting you to your Lord, strengthening faith. Learn to be emptied of yourself, trust His workings, His will for you and pray **Lord help me.**

