



EVEN THE DOGS UNDER THE TABLE EAT THE CHILDREN'S CRUMBS, PART 2

MATTHEW 15:21-28, MARK 7:24-30

MATTHEW 15:21-28

²¹ And Jesus went away from there and withdrew to the district of Tyre and Sidon. ²² And behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out and was crying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely oppressed by a demon." ²³ But he did not answer her a word. And his disciples came and begged him, saying, "Send her away, for she is crying out after us." ²⁴ He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." ²⁵ But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." ²⁶ And he answered, "It is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." ²⁷ She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." ²⁸ Then Jesus answered her, "O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire." And her daughter was healed instantly.

The great, compassionate purpose of God in her affliction was to bring forth that which would never have been born in life of ease and comfort.

This Caananitish mother no doubt had been severely tried. She had seen her darling child vexed with a devil, and been unable to relieve her. But yet that trouble brought her to Christ, and taught her to pray. *Without it she might have lived and died in careless ignorance, and never seen Jesus at all. Surely it was good for her that she was afflicted.*

Let us mark this well. There is nothing which shows our ignorance so much as our impatience under trouble. We forget that every cross is a message from God, and intended to do us good in the end. Trials are intended to make us think—to wean us from the world, to send us to the Bible, to drive us to our knees. *Health is a good thing; but sickness is far better, if it leads us to God. Prosperity is a great mercy, but adversity is a greater one, if it brings us to Christ. Anything, anything is better than living in carelessness, and dying in sin.* Better a thousand times be afflicted, like the Canaanitish mother, and like her flee to Christ, than live at ease, like the rich "fool," and die at last without Christ and without hope.

-Expository Thoughts on Matthew, JC Ryle

PHILIPPIANS 3:7-8

⁷ But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸ Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ

"If God's love for His children is to be measured by our health, wealth, and comfort in this life, then God hated the Apostle Paul."

-John Piper

Sin/Satan's use of affliction;

PSALM 34:21

²¹ Affliction will slay the wicked, and those who hate the righteous will be condemned.

God's purpose in affliction

God brings calamity;

ISAIAH 45:7

⁷ "I form light and create darkness; *I make well-being and create calamity; I am the LORD, who does all these things.*"

If calamity comes from His hand, then by necessity, it is good;

JAMES 1:17 (See also Romans 8:28)

¹⁷ *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.*

PHILIPPIANS 1:29

²⁹ For it has *been granted* (ἐχαρίσθη) to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but *also suffer for his sake...*

JOB 36:15

¹⁵ *He delivers the afflicted by their affliction and opens their ear by adversity.*

Desperation is a powerful and often necessary tool in the hands of a loving and gracious God.

To deliver us from spiritual indifference;

LUKE 16:25

²⁵ But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things...

MATTHEW 19:23-24

²³ And Jesus said to his disciples, "*Truly, I say to you, only with difficulty will a rich person enter the kingdom of heaven...*"

ACTS 14:22

²² ...through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.

The greatest condemnation to the Church;

REVELATION 3:15-17

¹⁵ "I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! ¹⁶ So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. ¹⁷ *For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.*"

Affliction sharpens our spiritual perception;

ISAIAH 30:20-21

²⁰ And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your Teacher will not hide himself anymore, *but your eyes shall see your Teacher.* ²¹ *And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left.*

JOB 36:15

¹⁵ He delivers the afflicted by their affliction and opens their ear by adversity.

PSALM 119:67

⁶⁷ Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep your word.

PSALM 119:71

⁷¹ It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn your statutes.

Praise the grace whose threats alarmed thee, roused thee from thy fatal ease

- *With Glowing Heart I'd Praise Thee*, Francis Scott Key, 1819

Spiritual apathy—not affliction—is our greatest enemy.

Affliction awakens us to sin;

2 CORINTHIANS 1:8-9

⁸ ...For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. ⁹ Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. *But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead.*

The sin of self-reliance;

JEREMIAH 17:5

⁵ Thus says the LORD: "*Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the LORD.*"

ROMANS 5:3-5

³ Not only that, *but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance,* ⁴ and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵ and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Affliction serves to limit/remove existing sin;

HOSEA 2:5-7

⁵ For their mother has played the whore; she who conceived them has acted shamefully. For she said, "I will go after my lovers, who give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, my oil and my drink." ⁶ *Therefore I will hedge up her way with thorns, and I will build a wall against her, so that she cannot find her paths.* ⁷ *She shall pursue her lovers but not overtake them, and she shall seek them but shall not find them. Then she shall say, 'I will go and return to my first husband, for it was better for me then than now.'*

Affliction delivers us from loving the world and instills in us a love for God;

1 JOHN 2:15

¹⁵ *Do not love the world or the things in the world.* If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

2 CORINTHIANS 4:17-18

¹⁷ *For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison,* ¹⁸ as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

Preparations can only be made in advance;

MATTHEW 6:19-21

¹⁹ "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, ²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ *For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

ROMANS 8:18

¹⁸ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

Our greatest good is to know him;

PHILIPPIANS 3:10

¹⁰ *that I may know him* and the power of his resurrection, and *may share his sufferings,* becoming like him in his death...

Let sorrow do its work, send grief and pain;
Sweet are Thy messengers, sweet their refrain,
When they can sing with me, more love, O Lord, to Thee,
More love to Thee, more love to Thee!

-More Love to Thee, Elizabeth Prentiss, 1856