



# **Fiercely Convinced**

**Mark 7:24-30**

**It's interesting to look through the pages of Scripture and note how God came to various people in the way they needed Him to come.**

- To Abraham the pilgrim, God came as a traveler. Remember those three visitors who came to his tent before the judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah? One of them was the Lord himself.
- To Joshua the general, Jesus came as the Commander of the Lord's army, telling him to take off his sandals because he was standing on holy ground.

**It's interesting to look through the pages of Scripture and note how God came to various people in the way they needed Him to come.**

- Jacob, in turn, was a wrestler. Figuratively speaking, he was always wrestling with people: he wrestled with his father Isaac...he wrestled with his brother Esau...he wrestled with his father-in-law Laban.
  - Another word might be manipulator

**Genesis 32:24 NIV** 24 So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak.

- C. H. McIntosh said, “To be left alone with God is the only true way of arriving at a just knowledge of ourselves and our ways.”
- What God wanted from Jacob was his surrender. But that wasn't going to happen until Jacob came to the end of his strength, so on it went throughout the night.

**Genesis 32:25 NIV** When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man.

- No longer is Jacob wrestling, but rather clinging

**Genesis 32:26 NIV** Then the man said, “Let me go, for it is daybreak.” But Jacob replied, “I will not let you go unless you bless me.”

- There is a wrong kind of wrestling with God in which we try to run from His work for our lives and refuse to go in the direction He wants us to go.
- But there is a right kind of wrestling with God when we fiercely hold until the blessing comes.

**Genesis 32:26 NIV** Then the man said, “Let me go, for it is daybreak.” But Jacob replied, “I will not let you go unless you bless me.”

- Jacob finally gave in. He surrendered. He had gone from cunning to clinging, from resisting to resting. He had been brought to the end of his resources. And God gave him a new name: Israel.

**Matthew 16:25 NLT** If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it.

- Jesus calls this, great faith
- When you become fiercely convinced in the character, power and hope in Jesus and you fiercely cling only to Him

**Matthew 16:25 NLT** If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it.

- This type of faith comes in surprising places at time
- **Mark 7:24-30**
- **Matthew 15:21-28**

## IT's easy to be fooled when it comes to faith

- Often what passes for trust in God is actually presumption
- Presumption = an idea that is taken to be true, and often used as the basis for other ideas, although it is not known for certain
  - Behavior perceived as arrogant, disrespectful, and transgressing the limits of what is permitted or appropriate

## **IT's easy to be fooled when it comes to faith**

- Many televangelist tell us, “Name it and claim it.”
  - You've got a life of prosperity ahead of you
  - You're sick, God want to heal you if you just have enough faith
  - Scripture tells us to pray in belief, with strong confidence in God's ability to heal, but He is bound by no obligation to do what we say or even want

## IT's easy to be fooled when it comes to faith

- Some use faith as a good-luck charm
- Faith is neither presumptuous nor tentative
  - Having faith is believing that God is who He says He is, trusting in His integrity to do what He says He will do
  - It is being confident that He will always do what is right for our good and His glory

## **Jesus never missed an opportunity to demonstrate a truth to His disciples**

- What you have here I would describe as a living parable
- These verses are not so much about the woman and her faith, but the disciples and their lack of faith and understanding who Jesus is

## Events

- **Mark 7:24 NIV** Jesus entered a house and did not want anyone to know it
- **Matthew 15:22 NIV** A Canaanite woman fell at Jesus' feet continuing to cry out, "Lord. Son of David. Mercy"
- **Matthew 15:23 NIV** Jesus seemed to ignore her pleas and the disciples wanted Jesus to send her away
- **Mark 7:27 NIV** First, let children eat all they want before feeding the dogs around the table

## Events

- **Mark 7:28 NIV** Yes, Lord, but even the dogs around the table eat the children's crumbs
- **Matthew 15:28 NIV** Woman, you have great faith, your request is granted
- **Mark 7:28 NIV** Her daughter was healed from that very hour

## Events

- Her faith is being contrasted against the faith of the disciple and Israel
- I find in her four characteristics of great faith

## **She had persistence.**

- The woman spoke boldly, pleaded repeatedly to the point of irritating the disciples
- We are given the liberty to “bother” the Lord with our prayers, He is infinitely patient
- If you’re not seeing results and the situation remains impossible, keep coming to Him until you hear NO
- Don’t stop or back off

## **She had persistence.**

- Jesus loves it when His children come to him
- Jesus isn't deaf or in need of reminding
- He isn't cruel to make you wait
- He is accomplishing something wonderful in you
- He is cultivating great faith in you
- Keep at it, remain persistent
- Deliberately wait for God to work

## **She had humility.**

- This was a woman who was truly humble
  - Her society considered her less than human
  - Pharisees considered her no more valuable than or worthy than a dog
  - She came to Jesus in effect saying, “I have no racial claim to the promises of God.
  - I have no righteousness worthy of divine reward

## **She had humility.**

- I only have my need and my faith in your mercy
- Her humility left no room for a spirit of entitlement
- There is a growing attitude in our churches today that the universe owes us success and comfort
- The painful, sad truth is that God owes us nothing but eternal punishment

## **She had humility.**

- When our expectation begins with the truth of what we really are entitled to, everything else becomes a gift
- A humble heart always avoids blaming and bears no grudges.
- This woman did not let a negative attitude keep her from seeking mercy from God

## **She had focus.**

- The woman sought out one person and no one else, there was only one person who had the answer to her need
- She was fiercely convinced in the power and mercy of Jesus
- There is no mention of a husband or other family members

## **She had focus.**

- The evil presence in her home probably affected everyone whom she had contact with
- She did not feel out of place in the presence of Jesus, disciples yes, but not Jesus
- She was clinging to Jesus as her only hope, just as Jacob kept clinging on for his blessing

## **She had confidence.**

- Despite her past experiences, the discouragement of the disciples, the Lord's apparent disinterest
- The woman continued to ask Jesus for mercy
- She may not have had all the correct doctrine, but she knew Jesus and she was fiercely convinced He could help her daughter

## **She had confidence.**

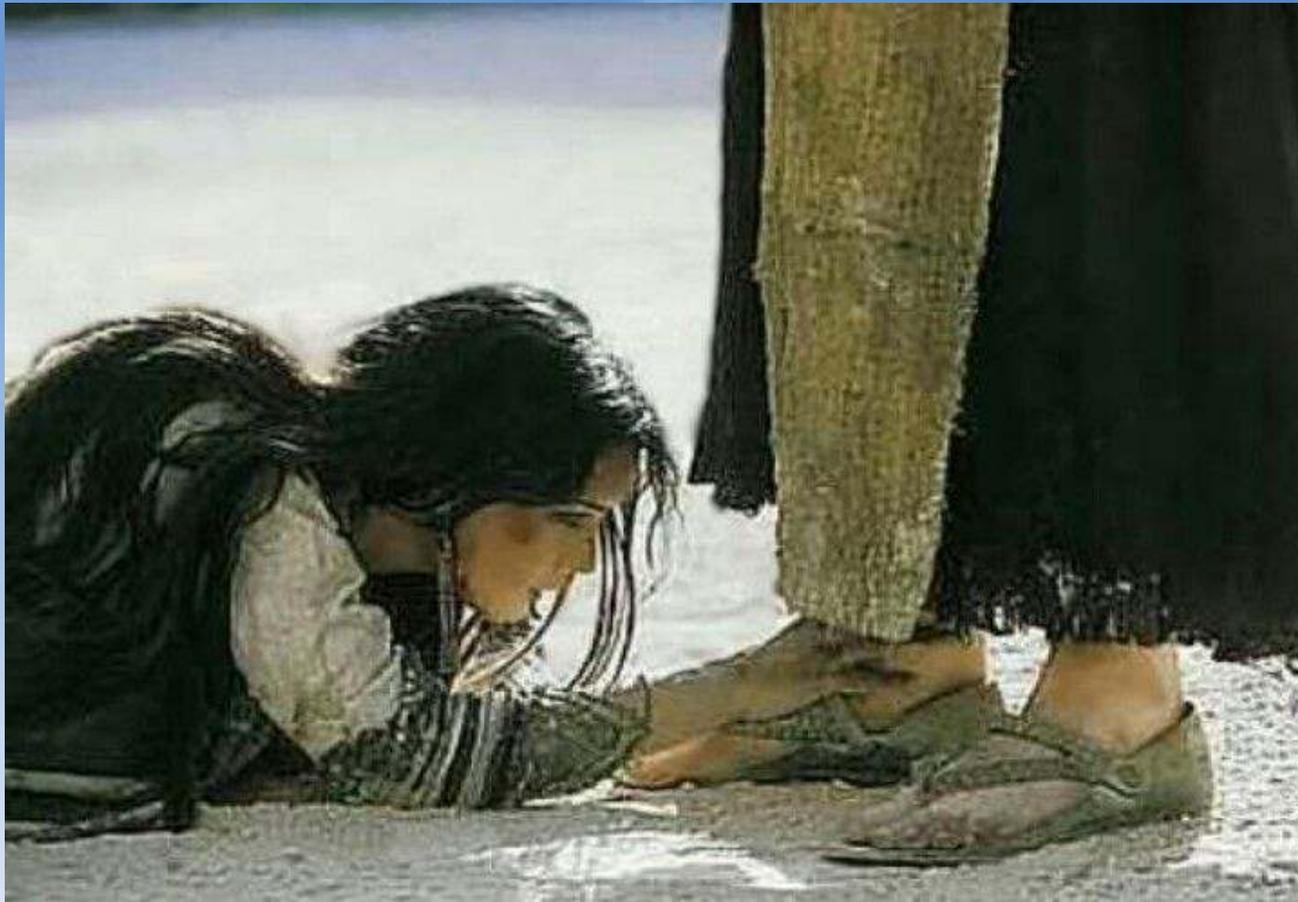
- When Jesus told her it was done, she did not ask for any proof
- She accepted the gift from Jesus, with great joy and went home to celebrate with her daughter

## **You may be here this morning feeling out of place like the prodigal son**

- You may be here this morning and discouragement haunts your days
- People may know some things about your life and you feel like they are judging you like the prodigal son's brother
- You may be one who slips out during the last hymn to avoid having to mix with church people

## **You may be here this morning feeling out of place**

- But you keep coming back fiercely convinced that if the Word of God is true, then is it true for you
- Don't let go, become convinced that God has a path of blessing yet ahead for you



**Become fiercely convinced in  
Jesus**