

Deane Church + Lostock Church  
w/b **Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2018**  
Matthew 15:21-28

***What is the context?*** Jesus has recently upset both the political authorities and the Jewish religious establishment. He now goes to the Gentile (non-Jewish) area of Phoenicia (west of Galilee) to get away from the crowds. This was the first excursion in Jesus' ministry beyond the ancient boundaries of Israel. A Jew who spoke with a Gentile, or a Jewish man who spoke with an unknown woman, would be ritually unclean according to the rules of the Pharisees.

Read **Matthew 15:21-28**

1. What is surprising and what is quite understandable about the woman's behaviour (verse 22)?
2. In verse 26, who/what are the "the children", "the dogs" and "the bread"?
3. What do you make of the woman's response?
4. How does her response compare to the response of Jesus' disciples (Matthew 14:26, 31 & 15:16 & 16:8)?
5. What does this passage tell us about:  
(a) what it is to be a true believer, as opposed to simply a church-goer?  
(b) God's grace?

Read **Matthew 8:5-13**

Matthew (originally writing to Jews) records Gentiles as showing great faith in Jesus when Jews so often were only interested as long as they were receiving a miracle (e.g. feeding of the 5000, a healing) or were actively opposing Jesus (e.g. Matt 15:1-2, 26:3-4).

6. As we think about the mission of the Church today, might there be some parallels?