

Mt 15:25-28 (NASB)

But she came and began to bow down before Him, saying, "Lord, help me!"

And He answered and said, "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs."

But she said, "Yes, Lord; but even the dogs feed on the crumbs which fall from their masters' table."

Then Jesus said to her, "O woman, your faith is great; it shall be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed at once.

This story is about asking for the wrong thing at the wrong time in the wrong way, and still receiving your heart's desire.

Jesus had not come to earth to minister to a Gentile woman: that work was reserved for his body, the church. She made the wrong request. And to do it, she interrupted a private get-away Jesus had arranged just for himself and his disciples. He had finally left the country altogether to escape the constant demands of the crowds, and then he was confronted by this crazy woman who wouldn't leave well enough alone. It was the wrong time.

On top of that, the woman made a nuisance of herself, "bothering" the disciples and "driving us crazy" (MSG). Even though his gatekeepers said, "no", she wouldn't stop. Ignoring them, she went over their heads and took her case straight to Jesus, begging him on her knees for help. Rude and invasive, she made her request in the wrong way.

And Jesus commended her faith and broke all the rules to give her what she most longed for! How deep, how wide, how high is his yearning to help us when we are in trouble! Even when it was outside of his purpose, the timing was wrong, and the way she asked was annoying and abrasive, Jesus reached out to rescue her and protect a daughter he had never even met.

Take a place in life where you feel ashamed to keep asking for help, and put yourself into this story. Jesus delighted in the fact that she kept asking and never gave up on her belief that he was good and he would be good to her. His heart is the same toward you.

1. *"Jesus, where I feel the least worthy of being touched by you is _____. What are you giving me in that place right now?"*
2. *"Father, sometimes I'm embarrassed to keep asking you for _____. What do you like about it when I keep on bringing this to you and don't give up?"*
3. *"Father, how are you protecting me today?"*
4. *"Father, hold me in your big, strong arms and tell me how I am safe in you."*
5. *"Holy Spirit, tell me about your name, 'The Helper'. What do you like about helping me?"*

Mt 18:10: Being Known, Security

“See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven continually see the face of My Father who is in heaven” (NASB).

“Watch that you don’t treat a single one of these childlike believers arrogantly. You realize, don’t you, that their personal angels are constantly in touch with my Father in heaven? (MSG)

In this famous 1963 photo, President John F. Kennedy’s son John Jr. is shown playing under the famous Resolute desk in the oval office. Born in the White House, John Jr. called the kneehole behind his secret door “my house.” To him, the leader of 250 million people was simply “Daddy,” and the nerve center of the country was his play place.

Like John Jr., “our house” is the nerve center of a kingdom, and our joys and concerns go straight to the top. As children of the king, our personal ambassador-angels enjoy constant face time with Father. Heaven actually has a system to keep even a single need of the youngest toddler from being overlooked!

When we think of access to a President, we envision a line of aides waiting at his door, each with a few precious minutes to be ushered in to deal with their agenda. But as sons, we have a secret door to a playground under the throne of heaven. Even after orchestrating the business of the universe, Father has an infinite number of moments to spend thinking of *you*. Not only are the hairs on your head numbered; but each one is tracked, and his count changes every time even one falls out!

And this amazing Father talks down to no one. The word “despise” in this verse means “to think little of” or “look down on.” We are commanded to look down on no one, because that’s how Father treats us. Everyone who approaches him is fully worthy of his time and fully engages his attention.

Know that your Father gets up-to-the-minute reports on your joys and concerns. He fully knows you, constantly looks out for you—and the secret door to playing under the throne is always open.



1. *“Jesus, how does Father’s constant concern for me keep me secure?”*
2. *“Father, how would you like me to think of heaven as ‘my house?’”*
3. *“How would you like me to play under your throne today?”*
4. *“Father, how do you pay attention to all of us at the same time? I have a hard time getting my mind around that.”*
5. *“Father, my desire is to be fully known. Let me experience how I am fully known by you today.”*

Recognition – Mt 10:32

“So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven...”

For years I read this passage with mostly fear—or at best, relief. I was afraid that I wasn’t a very good evangelist and I might fail this test. Or if I was doing well that week, I’d heave a sigh of relief when I read it, believing that I was going to squeak by. My picture of coming before God was approaching a distant judge, totally alone, waiting for a verdict from an impersonal set of rules that would either free me or imprison me for life.

But this passage gives a totally different picture of what you will experience in heaven. Imagine the scene: you are standing before God, the creator of the universe, for the first time. The book of life is opened, and the saints and angels, the 24 elders and the entire host of heaven wait breathlessly to see what will happen.

Suddenly, at the right hand of God, there is movement! Jesus rises, walks over next to you and puts his arm around your shoulders.

“This one is mine, Father,” he declares, looking back up at the throne. “I’ll vouch for her—she’s part of the family. Welcome her as you would me.”

As all of heaven cheers, Jesus turns to the throng and laughs. “Okay, brothers and sisters, let’s show her how we celebrate in heaven! Let me tell you the whole story of this amazingly beautiful life, seen through my eyes...”

Your desire to be recognized and to be known will be filled in heaven, on the universe’s biggest stage, by the one whose approval means the most.

1. *“Jesus, what is something you want to recognize me for in heaven?”*
2. *“What are you applauding in me today?”*
3. *“Jesus, here’s something I’d like to tell all of heaven about you...”*
4. *“How does it touch your heart when we tell others who you are to us here on earth?”*
5. *“What will it be like for you to tell the story of the life we’ve lived together to all of heaven?”*

Mt 14:28-32 (RSV): Security

And Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, bid me come to you on the water." He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus; but when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me. Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "O man of little faith, why did you doubt?" And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.

I have a hard time visualizing myself having the audaciousness to ask Jesus to walk on water. Okay, let's be honest—there is *no way* I would get out of a little wooden boat on a choppy sea and try to walk across the waves. Even beyond the physical act of standing on top of a lake is the impudence of what Peter is asking Jesus to do. 'Jesus, *if* this is you, even though you are in the midst of performing a miracle, do another one just for me, just to prove it's really you.' I didn't think we were supposed to ask stuff like that.

I wonder what the guys in the boat were thinking about Peter at that moment. Did they admire his fearlessness? Think he was showboating? Feel embarrassed because they didn't have the guts to do what Peter did? It can be tough to watch God do something powerful through someone else's life while you sit watching on the sidelines.

You gotta love the direction Peter is going, though. "Bid me come that to you..." Peter asks for a miracle to get him closer to Jesus. 'If this is really you, Jesus, you'll ask me to get closer, because I know that's what you are about. I'll come if you ask. And if it takes doing a miracle in my life, for that to happen, I know you'll do it to be closer to me.'

What would happen if you asked Jesus that kind of question today?

1. *"Jesus, I want to get closer. Bid me come to you, stretch my faith, and do a miracle to make it happen."*
2. *"Jesus, what am I missing about who you are that makes it hard to ask for a miracle to get closer?"*
3. *When Peter was in trouble, you immediately reached out and rescued him. What are you already rescuing me from right now?*
4. *When Peter couldn't believe you could make the water something he could walk on, you grabbed his arm and pulled him up—onto water he could walk on. You did for him what he couldn't do for himself. What do you love about doing that for me?*
5. *Jesus, I often feel like I'm sitting in the boat, watching others take leaps of faith that I'm too scared to attempt. Faith seems to come so slowly to me. How do you feel about my progress?*