

Devotional Program II: *THE MASTER'S DOG*

I needed a teacher for Bible School. At the bottom of Haw Mountain Orchard, I drove up the road beside Cabin Creek as far as I could. I was on my way to see Giles Graham, who lived alone. I felt the car and walked a quarter mile to the first gate. I was careful to close it behind me before I crossed the field to the house.

Giles was sitting on the porch. He had heard me coming, because sound carries long distances in the mountains. I spoke to him as I opened the gate into the yard. We started to talk about the weather as I joined him on the porch.

Many times "weather" was the starting point in our conversation. We talked about one thing after another, and then I asked him if he would be willing to teach the adult class at Bible School again this summer. He said he would if I was not able to find anyone else. Giles then changed the subject.

He told me that there was a pack of wild dogs ruining his livestock. The dogs were causing a serious problem and something would have to be done to stop them. As he was talking, I looked at his dog sleeping on the porch in the sun. I began to think about the difference between the dogs. The one on the porch has a master and the others did not. Christians have Jesus as their Master and others are on their own.⁴

Scripture reading: Matthew 15:24-28

Pastor Link's translation:

Jesus said, "I was only sent to the people of Israel. They are like a flock of lost sheep." The woman came closer. Then she knelt down and begged, "Lord, please help me!" Jesus replied, "It isn't right to take food from children and feed it to dogs." "Lord, that's true," the woman said, "but even dogs get the crumbs that fall from their owners' table." Jesus answered, "Dear woman, you really do have a lot of faith, and you will be given what you want."

Matthew 15:21-28 (NIV):

Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is suffering terribly from demon-possession." Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, "Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us." He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel." The woman came and knelt before him. "Lord, help me!" she said. He replied, "It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs." Yes, Lord," she said, "but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." Then Jesus answered, "Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted." And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

PRAYER:

Lord of Compassion, open our minds to Your wisdom, our hearts to Your Spirit, and our ears to Your call that we will serve You as Master of our life. Amen.

⁴See Matthew 9:35-36.