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An rfour.org Children's Time Message

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Written for Sunday, August 20, 2017

11th Sunday after Pentecost

Lectionary Year A

**Scripture:** [Matthew 15:21-28](#) [ **Summary:** *Jesus and the Syrophenician Woman* ]

**Supplies Needed:** No supplies needed.

**ASK** (a.k.a. *The On-Ramp*)

- Have you ever heard the word, "Unexpected?"
- Something that is *unexpected* is something that is a surprise.
- For example, let's say I came to the church building today and promptly locked my keys in the car -- that would be an unexpected moment (and thankfully didn't happen).
- Or, maybe you might be planning to do something outside on this sunny day, but if it rained once you got outside, that would be unexpected.

**TELL** (a.k.a. *The Freeway*)

- I wanted to share this word of "unexpected" with you because in today's scripture story, Jesus does some things I think most of us find to be unexpected.
- The story begins with a woman asking Jesus to heal her daughter.
- Instead of saying "Yes" or "No," Jesus ignores her, which is the first unexpected thing that he does.
- Then, when she keeps asking him for help, he tells her that he can't be bothered with her request because there are other people he is supposed to help.
- This is a very unexpected thing for Jesus to say. And, most likely, the woman did not expect this response from Jesus, either.
- But, the woman does not give up. Instead, she gives Jesus reasons why he should help her.
- And you know what? Jesus decides he *does* want to help her. He changes his mind and heals the woman's daughter.

## **SHARE the Good News** (a.k.a. *The Destination*)

- What I appreciate about this story is that the woman doesn't give up.
- It doesn't matter what unexpected things happen, she just keeps asking for help.
- And eventually that help is offered to her.
- I think this story is told because it helps us think about what happens when we ask God for help.
- When we bring things to God in prayer, a lot of unexpected ideas and understandings and events can happen.
- Those unexpected things, because they are unexpected, might make us feel like God isn't going to help us and that we should just quit asking God for help.
- But what we see in today's story is a reminder that when unexpected things happen, that we should keep asking for help, keep praying to God.
- When we do that, when we keep asking for help, just like the woman keeps asking for help, then we are more likely to receive unexpected answers to our prayers.
- And that's the good news for today.
- Let's pray – this is a repeat-after-me prayer (see CLOSING Prayer)

## **CLOSING Prayer**

**Dear God,**

Dear God,

**Thank you for Jesus...**

Thank you for Jesus...

**...who reminds us...**

...who reminds us...

**...that not all prayers...**

...that not all prayers...

**...are answered in expected ways.**

...are answered in expected ways.

**Amen**