

COLLOQUIES with Pastor Brian

When the Answer Seems To Be NO!

Romans: *I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. Do you not know what the scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel? for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. Just as you were once disobedient to God but have now received mercy because of their disobedience, so they have now been disobedient in order that, by the mercy shown to you, they too may now receive mercy. For God has imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may be merciful to all.*



Matthew: *Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, 'Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.' But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, 'Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us.' He answered, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.' But she came and knelt before him, saying, 'Lord, help me.' He answered, 'It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.' She said, 'Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table.' Then Jesus answered her, 'Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.' And her daughter was healed instantly.*

Leader: May God add blessings to the reading and hearing of these words.

All: Thanks be to God!

What are some of the things you've asked for before and haven't received? Our scriptures this week invite us to consider various requests made of God and Jesus and to observe how the Divine reacts. One of the Scriptures - Matthew 15, verses 21-28 specifically, invites us to consider what it looks like when the answer seems to be 'NO'.

I also wondered what this might look like for someone else, so I asked my youngest son what things he's asked for but didn't get. He thought for a while and shared some things that didn't surprise me, like 'video games, money, trips to see trains' (David really loves trains). Then he said a few things that were honest but hurt. "You had to say 'no' to me about most of our summer plans, Dad You also say no to me when I want to play games with you sometimes." Ugh. Those are absolutely correct AND I really wish to have some of those 'no's' back.

I'm guessing that this is part of the human condition. Wishing we had choices back or the chance to give different answers to all of these questions is probably a sign of our humanity. So it is comforting to know that Jesus' humanity is like our own; that he sometimes gave an answer that needed some tweaking.

If this article looks a little short today, it is because I said 'yes' to David wanting some time with his Dad and just told my need for perfection in writing things to wait until next time. If Jesus can change his answer, so can we . Right?

Blessings and Peace,

Pastor Brian