

Sunday, August 16, 2026 – Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

Isaiah 56:1, 6-8

1 - Thus says the LORD: Maintain justice and do what is right.

Cf. Amos 5: 24 – Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an everflowing stream.

Micah 6: 8 – What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.

6-7 - The foreigners who join themselves to the LORD, these I will bring to my holy mountain. My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.

Cf. verses from August 2 - Isaiah 2: 2-3, Micah 4: 1-2 – The mountain of the Lord's house shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it.

Mark 11: 17, Matt 21: 13, Lk 19:46 – But you have made it a den of robbers.

Psalm 67

1 - May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us.

2 - May your way be known upon earth, your saving power among all nations.

Cf. verses from August 2 –

Genesis 12: 3 – In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

Isaiah 42: 6 – I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations.

Romans 11:1-2, 21-28

1 - 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.

2 - God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew.

29 - The gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

30-31 - Just as you (Gentiles) were once disobedient to God but have now received mercy because of their (Jews) disobedience, so they (Jews) have now been disobedient in order that, by the mercy shown to you (Gentiles), they (Jews) too may now receive mercy.

32 - God has imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may be merciful to all.

Cf. Exodus 7-10 - Pharaoh hardened his heart – God hardened Pharaoh's heart.

Romans 1: 24, 26, 28 – God gave them up

Matthew 15:21-28

21 - Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon.

In present day Lebanon – north of Israel - looked down upon as the most wicked of people.

22 - 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."

A member of the enemy – someone from the most spiritually degraded of people. This is the first of three times she calls Jesus "Lord." She shows respect as she pleads for help.

"Son of David" – though a foreigner, she knows something about the Jewish faith.

23 - But he did not answer her at all.

Matthew does not try to hide, instead he intentionally points out Jesus's response. I think because he is writing many years later. He knows how this will end.

And his disciples came and urged him, saying, "Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us."

The disciples do not seem surprised by Jesus' response; instead they agree with it. They also show an over-inflated view of themselves – "she keeps shouting after us."

Cf. the disciples' response to the young children in Mark 10: 13.

24 - He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

I believe Jesus is testing His disciples as He appears to agree with them.

He does not send her away; instead He wants to see how the disciples will respond.

25 - But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me."

Her concern for her child is so deep, and her confidence in Jesus' power and compassion is so strong, that she perseveres. Also she has nowhere else to go. A second time she calls Jesus "Lord."

26 - He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs."

Jesus is using some pretty harsh language as He forces the disciples to face the truth about themselves. He also uses the word for a little dog, a puppy.

27 - She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table."

Again, her love for her daughter is so intense, and her faith in Jesus' compassion and power to heal is so strong, that she perseveres. She simply will not give up. A third time she calls Jesus "Lord."

28 - Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed instantly.

Cf. the words of Jesus to Peter in Matthew 14: 31 as he was sinking into the waves – "You of little faith, why did you doubt?"

What would Jesus say to you today – "Great is your faith" or "You of little faith"? If the latter, how could you grow in your faith so that He would say the former?

The disciples had seen this woman as their inferior, while in actuality she is their superior and in every way.

The disciples failed the love test. The woman passed the endurance test – and with flying colors.

How would you do today with the love test and/or the endurance test?