

**Talking Points**     *“Attention is the beginning of devotion”* -- Mary Oliver

*Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?” John 14:9*

What did we “see” of God’s nature in the session of the widow? \_\_\_\_\_

What did we “see” of God’s nature in the session about shame? \_\_\_\_\_

**Jesus Sees Women – Session 3**

*This is a different story.*

In this story, Jesus comes to new sight through the instruction of a woman. Today’s scripture has left scholars perplexed for generations. There will always be certain scriptures that elude us. Our goal is to allow the Spirit to lead us to open hearts and minds to ways of “seeing” these stories in a new light. But first...

Does God Repent? Split into four groups.

1. Take your group number and read the corresponding Old Testament story.
2. Prepare to tell the group the story, and the following observations
  - What are God’s plans in the beginning of the story?
  - What motivates God to relent?
3. How do you feel about the information that God repents, or relents?

**Let’s “SEE” who is in our story this week**

*Some background: After having a heavy conversation about purity, battling (again) with the Pharisees, and having to explain (again) to his disciples, Mark tells us that Jesus set out and went to the region of Tyre. That is a journey of at least thirty miles, and Jesus was traveling on foot. He was intent on getting away—far away, (see map). Jesus was looking for some down time apart from the sniping of religious leaders and the failure to comprehend exhibited by his followers. In traveling to a Gentile area, Jesus was, in mind and body, stretching toward a long-needed break in a place where no one would approach him for help, healing, or instruction. Jesus was not looking for opportunities to proclaim the good news, heal, or do miracles. He was seeking rest. Jesus Sees Women, Session 3,( p.2, column 1, para. 1)*

**Mark 7: <sup>24</sup>** From there he set out and went away to the region of Tyre.<sup>[a]</sup> He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there.

4. *Describe that feeling*

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*But his search for respite was foiled by a woman—a Gentile woman—who needed his help. Jesus Sees Women, Session 3,( p.2, column 1, para. 2)*

Mark 7:24 (continued) Yet he could not escape notice,<sup>25</sup> but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet.<sup>26</sup> Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter.<sup>27</sup> He said to her, “Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.”<sup>28</sup> But she answered him, “Sir,<sup>[h]</sup> even the dogs under the table eat the children’s crumbs.”<sup>29</sup> Then he said to her, “For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter.”<sup>30</sup> So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

*In both the Old and New Testaments, when people are referred to as dogs, it is deeply rude and denigrating. The goal of such a statement is to ensure that the person addressed knows their place—that of an animal, not a person—a station from which they cannot rise. ( p.2, column 2, para. 4)*

1. *How do you take Jesus’ first response to the woman?*
2. *Explain the metaphor she used in response to the “insult?”*
3. *What clues does her metaphor reveal about:*
  - a. *Her rights?*
  - b. *Her understanding of Jesus’ power*
  - c. *Her understanding of Jesus’ ultimate mission*
  - d. *Abundance and scarcity?*
  - e. *Response to mansplaining?*
4. *How do you see Jesus relenting/repenting/changing his mind?*

*Further on in his ministry, Jesus reveals God’s nature, and perhaps is thinking back on this encounter with this Gentile woman. **Parable of the Unjust Judge***

**Luke 18:**<sup>1</sup> Then Jesus<sup>[h]</sup> told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart.<sup>2</sup> He said, “In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people.<sup>3</sup> In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, ‘Grant me justice against my opponent.’<sup>4</sup> For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, ‘Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone,<sup>5</sup> yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming.’”<sup>[h]</sup><sup>6</sup> And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says.<sup>7</sup> And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them?<sup>8</sup> I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them.

*How has this lesson influenced you to “think differently” about prayer?*

*How has this lesson influenced you to “think differently” about God?*