

Scripture: Matthew 15:21-39
Singing: 256 – 20:1-3 – 17:3-5 – 152:1-5

The Definition of Saving Faith (1)

Intro: The big question and its single answer! (Acts 16:30-31)

A. Paul's answer emphasizes the *role of faith* (Rom. 1:16; 10:4)

B. What is true (or saving or justifying) faith in Jesus Christ? (Westminster Cat)

1. Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation, as He is offered to us in the Gospel!

a. Why *Him alone*?

b. How *offered to us in the Gospel*?

c. How a *saving grace*?

d. What makes *receiving and rest upon Him* saving?

2. Heidelberg Catechism enlarges this definition

THE GREAT FAITH IN THE WOMAN OF CANAAN

I. Her knowledge of Christ II. Her trust in Christ III. Her assent to Christ

I. Her great faith is based on her (limited) knowledge of the truth of Christ

A. The woman's need (vs. 21-22)

B. The woman's knowledge of Jesus (vs. 22b)

1. Though limited knowledge her knowledge was crucial

C. Her faith defined: *She held for certain truths God revealed to her about Jesus*

D. Examine: Do you have this first ingredient of saving faith as we see in her?

II. Her great faith is expressed in her trust of the truth of Christ for her!

A. Her coming & clinging reveals *she believed He came also for her* (22-23)

B. Jesus' trial of her faith is unparalleled in all His dealings (14:36; 15:30)

1. The details of her trial: vs. 23a – 24 – 26

2. The details of her faith: vs. 22 – 23 – 25 – 27

C. Great faith is **not only a certain knowledge I hold for truth**

1. it has a vital main ingredient: *an (assured) confidence ...*

D. Examine: Do you have this main ingredient of trust in God as we see in her?

III. Her great faith is expressed in her assent to Christ

A. The climax of her trial is Jesus' direct answer to her in vs. 26

1. Her response of faith is Holy Spirit's moment of victory

B. Her answer illustrates a third ingredient of faith: *the assent of faith!*

1. Do you *assent* that all God has revealed in His Word is truth?

a. that you come short of His glory in every layer of your being?

b. that you must part with all your own efforts of salvation?

c. that you must submit to God's plan or method of Gospel salvation?

Two Closing Observations and Applications

A. Faith is not meritorious to salvation but instrumental to receive salvation

1. If it was a meritorious matter, all pressure would be on us!

2. Since faith is merely the instrument to receive salvation, therefore the *strength of faith in Christ* doesn't affect the *reality of one's salvation*

B. Our focus must therefore not be on faith, but on Christ's Gospel to trust

1. It is the *object* of faith that determines the *value* of faith (Jer. 17:5, 7)

a. Saving faith does not save because I trust. It saves because of *what or who* I trust!

b. God never accepts us on merits of faith, but on the merits of Christ we trust!