

19 – 8-16-20 Jesus calls her a dog

In this Sunday's gospel, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd, the meek and humble of heart, the merciful and compassionate Savior, calls a Canaanite woman a "dog." It doesn't sound like Jesus at all, does it? Maybe he was having a bad day.

Good for the reputation of Jesus is that there is always more to the story than the surface facts. We all should know this with all the FAKE NEWS bombarding us daily.

As always, Jesus does and says things for a reason. This poor mother of a sick child comes to Jesus. She knows she is not a Jew. And she knows that Jews did not have anything to do with pagan Canaanites. And Canaanites could not care less; they had nothing to do with Jews. But, a mother would try anything to save her child. This woman most likely heard about Jesus' reputation as a healer and a merciful man. She had to try everything to save her child, even to seek the help of this Jewish preacher. Jesus was her last hope.

In the film *The Hunger Games*, President Snow rules over a futuristic society called Panem. Every year the people of Panem are forced to participate in a contest called "the Hunger Games," an event in which one boy and one girl aged 12-18 from each of the twelve districts surrounding the Capitol are selected by lottery to compete in a televised battle continues until one winner is declared. In one scene, Snow asks his chief Gamesmaker, a man named Seneca Crane, "Seneca, why do you think we have a winner [for the Hunger Games]?"

Seneca frowns and asks, "What do you mean?"

"I mean," says Snow, "why do we have a winner? I mean, if we just wanted to intimidate the districts, why not round up twenty-four at random and execute them all at one? It would be a lot faster." Seneca Crane stares at him, obviously confused.

"Hope," muses Snow. Crane, still confused, asks, "Hope?"

Snow continues, "Hope. It is the only thing stronger than fear. A little hope is effective. A lot of hope is dangerous."

The Canaanite woman never lost hope. She never gave up hope and Jesus honored that faith.

The Lord Jesus wants each one of us to hope in him just like the Canaanite woman hoped in him. No matter what our circumstance, our hope in Jesus will be honored. Our Lord will not let us down.

Difficulties in life will come. The Bible tells us: we may be pressed, but not crushed, persecuted but not abandoned, struck down but not destroyed. 2 Corinthians 4:9

To be like the Canaanite woman, whom Jesus commends, remember this principle: We demonstrate great faith when with an immovable steadfastness we trust God against all odds and circumstances. He is our hope. He is forever faithful.