

Don't Take No for an Answer

by Mike Tucker *

Woman, your faith is great. Your request is granted.” -- Jesus

Do you ever get tired of pursuing a goal? I do. Sometimes, even when the goal is a worthy one, I become weary and am tempted to quit – especially when it feels like I'm being shut out. No matter how hard I try or how loudly I speak, it seems no one is listening.

Recently, I've been reminded of the value of perseverance. Sometimes you just have to keep on asking for what you need.

A story came across the Reuters news wires about a family of ducklings that fell down a sewer grate in Vancouver. Their mother did what any parent would do. She got help from a passing police officer! The mother duck grabbed the policeman by the pant leg while he was on foot patrol. He shoved what he thought was just a goofy duck away, but she persisted, grabbing his leg again when he tried to leave, and then waddling to a nearby sewer grate where she sat down and waited for him to follow and investigate. Finally, the officer came to where she sat and saw eight little baby ducklings in the water below.

The rescue began. Using a tow truck, police removed the heavy metal grate. Then they used a vegetable strainer to lift the ducklings to safety. Soon, mother and offspring departed for a nearby pond.

The gospel writer Matthew tells of an encounter between Jesus and a Canaanite woman who desperately wanted healing for her child. She demonstrated incredible perseverance, even in the face of what seemed like heartless rejection.

They had hardly arrived when a Canaanite woman came down from the hills and pleaded, “Mercy, Master, Son of David! My daughter is cruelly afflicted by an evil spirit.”

Jesus ignored her. The disciples came and complained, “Now she's bothering us. Would you please take care of her? She's driving us crazy.”

Jesus refused, telling them, “I've got my hands full dealing with the lost sheep of Israel.”

Then the woman came back to Jesus, went to her knees, and begged. “Master, help me.”

He said, “It's not right to take bread out of children's mouths and throw it to dogs.”

She was quick: “You're right, Master, but beggar dogs do get scraps from the master's table.”

Jesus gave in. “Oh, woman, your faith is something else. What you want is what you get!” Right then her daughter became well. Matthew 15:22-28 *The Message*

While Jesus’ reaction to the woman strikes us as uncharacteristic, he reacted this way as an object lesson to His disciples, revealing the cruelty of the Jews’ typical attitude toward the Canaanites and all Gentiles. Despite this, the woman persisted. She would not stop seeking Jesus’ help until she got it.

That is exactly what Jesus wants us to do. Be persistent in pursuing your goals. Persevere in getting the help you need. Do not be intimidated by authority figures. And remember, we have a Friend who can help us even when all human endeavors fail. Christ is waiting to help you today.

With Love,
Mike

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