

SUPER-SENSITIVE CHRISTIANS by brother Charles Cook

MATT. 15:21-28 tells a truly amazing story about a woman to be admired. Being overly sensitive has been called "the vice of the virtuous." In the church we've all heard about people getting their feelings hurt, moving off to another congregation, or in extreme cases dropping out all together! Some of us need to lighten up a little - stop taking ourselves so seriously!

However...the likelihood of damaged feelings is especially possible where a group of people spend a great deal of time together. Where there is closeness and fellowship, such as that we enjoy in the Body of Christ, the possibility of hurt feelings is even greater! These sentiments are echoed in the song title "you always hurt the ones you love"

- 1) We always want to be on guard not to offend the sensitive souls among us!
- 2) Learning how to deal with those who are easily ruffled is an ongoing problem for the church!

All of you know what we are talking about here. You've had your feelings hurt by some brother or sister. but you got over it and didn't quite the church. Good for you!

But maybe instead of quitting you just became less active. Maybe you held back a little...and now you don't work as hard for the Lord as you once did. Somehow you've justified your actions because of your wounded feelings! I'd like for you to especially take on board this lesson.

THE STORY OF THE CANAANITE WOMAN

Here is one of the few times during his ministry that Jesus left Jewish territory and went into a Gentile region.

This happened near the middle of His three year ministry. Jesus takes the Apostles on a "retreat" from the crowds.

This Canaanite woman (a Gentile) comes to Jesus asking mercy on her sick daughter.

When you are a people person, as Jesus was, there's no way to get away from people with problems!

I. HERE COMES HER FIRST TEST: IT SAYS: "BUT JESUS ANSWERED HER NOT A WORD."

Jesus saw character in this woman and appreciated her. Had she been arrogant, without any humility, He could not have helped her

Does that not seem cruel to you? If there was every a time that someone's feelings might be hurt...this was it!

This would have been the appropriate time for her to turn away and say: "Well, if that's the way you're going to treat me, I'm out of here.
For many of us, this would be grounds for leaving the Church!

Suppose you came up to a respected brother and said "I've got a problem" and he answered not a word, might you be a bit SENSITIVE?
But this woman did not let the silence of Jesus turn her away! Was she without feelings? No! She had a greater need, and she knew that Christ was the only answer to her need. Her child was in danger! Her need was greater than her pride!

II. WELL, THE STORY ISN'T FINISHED.... THERE CAME YET A 2ND TEST FOR THIS WOMAN!

Many would have failed the 1st test. Very few would be able to endure this second test!

Now the disciples say to Jesus: "Lord, shall we tell her to go away?" Surely this insult will do her in! But no!

She does not leave! Her need was too great to let the followers of Jesus run her off!

How many do you suppose have allowed an unthoughtful remark to drive them away from the Church?

Of course, it would be best if no one ever said anything or did anything to hurt our feelings!

Hopefully, hurtful and thoughtless things will no longer be said in the church! But not likely!

III. THIS POOR WOMAN...THERE IS YET A THIRD TEST FOR HER!

Jesus then said: "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Notice her reaction: 'Then she came and worshiped him, saying, 'Lord help me. "

How many of us would still be standing there if the Lord had said this to us?

IV. BUT THAT'S NOT THE END...THERE IS YET A FOURTH TEST!

Jesus finally said: "It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs."

Not many of us would have carried the conversation any further! If I was insulted this badly in church. I might feel justified in leaving!

Now look at her. This woman simply replied: "Truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs. "

Note: Jesus used a word here for a little pet or household dog., .not a wild dog!
But because of her humility, she obtained the blessing she sought!

Jesus was certainly not being unkind to this woman. When he saw her heart, it melted his!

Conclusion: Let's see if we can draw any value from this story or applications for us

Sometimes we get mixed-up and think that these "touchy or sensitive people" are the most humble among us. Not so!

Sensitivity is not the same as humility! A humble person does not think of himself at all - super-sensitive people are that way because they think of themselves too much! That's why they're sensitive!

Some people think they're getting even when they quit the Church, but they're wrong!

IF WE MUST BE SENSITIVE AND HURT.. .LET IT BE OVER THE FACT THAT SO MANY PEOPLE ARE WITHOUT CHRIST!

Let's quit feeling sorry for ourselves and reach out to those who are truly unfortunate! The lost!

POEM: MY SUPER-SENSITIVITY

I've asked the lord to take from me
My super-sensitivity
That robs the soul of joy and peace
And causes fellowship to cease;
The things that people do and say
To foster hurt along the way.
I trust that by his Spirit sweet
I may these very people meet
And show them that his love in me
Has won another victory
The dart which carelessly they threw
Much closer to the saviour drew
This heart, inclined to feel the pain
Of idle words they spoke in vain.
I asked him why it hurt so much
When they upon my life should touch.
Then quickly he revealed to me
My super-sensitivity.

"Just leave it here," He seemed to say,

"The victory is your's today.

"Remember that each idle word

My listening ear has also heard.

Before you brought that hurt to me

My eyes the one who spoke could see.

The victory is yours today

If you will put that hurt away,
Remembering that love will grow
If you will only show it." so...
I've asked the Lord to take from me
My super-sensitivity.