

“From the Inside Out: Faith That Crosses Every Boundary” Matthew 15:10–28

In today's message, we encounter Jesus boldly challenging a religious culture consumed with outward appearances, reminding us that true defilement is not a matter of unwashed hands but of an unchanged heart — because what lives on the inside will always find its way to the outside. In striking contrast, a Canaanite woman — an outsider by every religious and cultural measure — crosses every boundary, refuses every obstacle, and refuses to quit until she reaches the feet of Jesus. Her humility, persistence, and wholehearted faith move Jesus to declare, “Great is your faith!” and heal her daughter in that very hour. Together, these two stories call us to examine not how we appear before others, but what is truly living in our hearts — and to pursue Jesus with the kind of bold, persistent, boundary-crossing faith that He has always honored.

1. What does Jesus mean by stating that it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person?
2. How does the teaching of Jesus on the defilement of the heart challenge traditional religious practices?
3. In what ways can we examine our own hearts to identify what might truly define us?
4. How can we apply the example of the Canaanite woman's faith to our own lives when facing barriers?
5. What is the significance of Jesus labeling the woman's faith as 'great'?