



March 31, 2017
The Lord's Prayer, The Seventh Petition
"And deliver us from evil..."

[Read Matthew 15:21-28](#)

The Canaanite woman is one of my New Testament heroes. Through her ministry, the scope of the gospel work of Jesus is expanded into the Gentile territory of Tyre and Sidon. She advocates for her little daughter, possessed by a demon. Her beautiful little girl was trapped in a web of evil with no way out—except for Jesus.

The woman—who is never named in the text—is my hero in several ways. She sees Jesus as “Lord,” and treats him as such. She begs him to save her daughter. When her first request seems to be ignored, she persists for the sake of her little girl. She is not put off when she is insulted. Instead, she takes the opportunity to expand the scope of the Kingdom.

She is commended for her persistent faith. That’s the first heroic aspect of her story. Her willingness to persist, her refusal to be put off, her insistence on justice—all of this makes her a model for our own determined faithfulness.

More than that, she is an ally in the battle against the Evil One. She will not hand over her daughter to the forces of darkness. She is not a passive victim as the fight is waged around her. Instead she takes the fight to the enemy and clears the path for Jesus to win the victory.

“Deliver us from evil,” we pray. Deliver us from the power of the Evil One—the One who wants us to abandon our hope and relinquish our trust. Satan likes nothing better than passive victims who are sure they can do nothing to resist. That is one of the lies of the Evil One—that there is nothing we can do.

But that is far from the truth. I think often of the words of James 4:7—“*Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*” I invite you to cling to these words. Think about those moments when you find yourself in that dark place where hope has abandoned you. Try this. Say out loud, “I recognize Your Work, You father of lies. In the name of Jesus, get away from me.” In my experience I can sometimes almost hear Satan’s footsteps as he retreats.

So we pray for deliverance from evil. And in this prayer we pray for the faith that empowers us to resist the Evil One.

Let’s pray. Dear Heavenly Father, send your Holy Spirit into my heart today to create the gift of faith. When I am under attack, strengthen me to resist the devil and let me hear his retreating steps. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

Do something: Consider a Lenten gift of Mosaic of Western Iowa or to Lutheran Family Services—two organizations that seek to release people from bondage of mind, heart and spirit.

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