

WEEKDAY WORSHIP

September 3-9, 2018

Worship as encounter with the living God cannot be limited to one hour per week. "Weekday Worship" invites you to extend your worship beyond the sanctuary, to hear the story of the Bible as your story, lived out each day of each week. Feedback is appreciated and should be directed to Rita Boyer.

BIBLE READING

This week's reading is: Mark 7:24–37 (<http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=393411352>)

Other readings are: Proverbs 22:1–2, 8–9, 22–23; Psalm 125; James 2:1–13, 14–17.

The theme is: Be Opened.

Mark is a brief Gospel where no word is wasted. Whenever the author offers details or descriptions, we can be assured that they are important to the story. One of the details that Mark invites us to pay attention to is geography. The first half of the Gospel takes place in and around Galilee, which is home territory for Jesus and the disciples - all of whom are Jewish. This week's focus reading invites us to journey with Jesus and his friends to Tyre, which is located in Gentile territory. By the end of our reading, Jesus and his traveling friends deliberately choose a longer route to reach their destination, going even further into Gentile territory than is necessary. On this journey, Jesus heals two Gentiles. First, despite his initial reluctance, Jesus heals a little girl in response to her mother's brash insistence and wit. In fact, Jesus' speaks rather harsh words to the mother. There were geographic, religious, and economic differences between the two. However, that does not stop a desperate mother from advocating for her daughter. After journeying further into Gentile territory, Jesus heals a deaf man. This time there appears to be no reluctance on Jesus' part, as he opens the man's ears. So are we called to be open to the welcome God extends to all people. So are we called to be attentive and responsive to the needs of all people. Sometimes the invitation to journey with Jesus is an invitation to cross boundaries that we may at first be reluctant to cross!

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

"Questions to Consider" enable you to connect your story to the biblical story. Rather than easy questions to be answered at first glance, these questions or reflections can be returned to and meditated upon throughout the week.

Do you think Jesus shared the prejudices of his contemporaries? What does that say to you about recognizing and dealing with systemic prejudices?

Continue to reflect upon the worship theme of September 2:

What do your actions say to others about your beliefs?

Prospect Presbyterian Church, Maplewood, NJ, www.prospectchurch.org
Rita Boyer, rita@prospectchurch.org