

THE CANAANITE WOMAN



The idea for this conversation between Jesus and Peter came from the 'Off-the record conversations Jesus and Peter' by John Bell and Graham Maule (Glasgow: Wild Goose Pub), 1999. It is inspired by a story from the Gospels, Mark 7:24-30 and Matthew 15:21-28 and was written by Yvonne Naylor for the publication 'Moving beyond Sectarianism' Columba:2001 pp 157-158. The play has been adapted for inclusion in this resource.

PETER: Jesus.

JESUS: Yes, Peter.

PETER: Jesus, that woman had a nerve didn't she? Screaming after us for you to help her out with her wee girl – typical Canaanite! We wanted to send her away for there's nothing you can do for the likes of her. And she was making a right scene.

JESUS: Yes, I tried ignoring her but it didn't work did it?

PETER: Jesus, she's a Canaanite. She's not one of us. You should have sent her away like we said, crying after us like that.

JESUS: Can you remember what I did say Peter?

PETER: Yes, you said quite rightly that you were sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel Jesus you have to focus. You can't be helping every Tom, Dick and Harry or you'll never get round your own people.

JESUS: You would have to admit though Peter that woman kept on going and showed her faith in me by kneeling down at my feet and asking me again to help her.

PETER: You didn't think that when you referred to her and her sort as 'dogs' did you?

JESUS: To think that I nearly gave that troubled woman the brush off. She reminded me of a truth that in any order of things everyone has a place, even the 'dogs'.

PETER: Jesus, are you telling me that that woman taught you something? Is that why you healed her daughter? Did you not resent even a wee bit being taught by a 'dog'?

JESUS: Peter, would there have been any point of me being here if there was nothing to learn from the experience? What she said was true and I didn't expect it. I saw the faith she had. I listened, I heard, I looked and I saw. Life is a journey Peter and all of us must be prepared to learn from those we might least expect to learn from.

PETER: So are you saying that they are part of God's plan too? Do we have to cross borders and be prepared to learn from those of a different tradition?

JESUS: You're a quick learner Peter.