

Intro: People with nowhere else to go – desperation. Jesus is not only the Lord of Nature and the Lord over demons, but He is also the Lord of Life who controls the threshold between life and death. When people with nothing left come to him for help, He takes the time to answer their call, for those who call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. In this passage we have two people who are driven to desperation, beyond hope of anything in this world: Jairus daughter is beyond the help of doctors (dying) and a bleeding woman who has tried every known medical treatment to no avail.

### 1. In Our Desperation Jesus is Our Only Hope

- a. Jairus implores Jesus to come heal his dying daughter.
- b. He was a "ruler of the synagogue"
  - i. Leader of synagogue worship – like Neil
  - ii. He would have been a respected man, both socially and religiously
- c. His daughter was dying
  - i. He had now come upon something so devastating that he could not deal with it, he could not solve it, he could not succeed
  - ii. Grace being put under was very frightening
  - iii. Losing a child is one of the greatest losses a person can suffer, and some of you have.
- d. He humbled himself to request Jesus' help out of desperation
  - i. Remember that many synagogue leaders didn't appreciate Jesus, but this man was at the point of despair and willing to request Jesus' help
    1. He fell upon his face in his desperation – begging the Healer to come help
    2. He was driven by need and desperation, not love or a desire to hear the truth of Jesus' teaching, but desperation
  - ii. And Jesus responded to his desperation, he did not turn away
    1. When there is nowhere else to go, Jesus is the right place to go

### 2. Jesus is Our Only Hope for Our Every Brokenness

- a. Unlike Jairus, this woman had no respect socially or religiously, but was unknown and unwanted and unseen
  - i. This woman had a "flowing of blood" - same words used in Leviticus 15 for a menstrual discharge
  - ii. This was basically a 12-year long uterine hemorrhage, and the main point is that it would have made her unclean and ashamed
    1. The law stated that this woman would have been unclean and therefore made anyone who touched her or her belongings unclean until the evening
    2. This law was to emphasize the distinctive difference between the holy purity of God and the finite createdness of man (men also had uncleanness due to bodily discharge)
    3. There was probably a deep sense of shame here, as well
      - a. She was "unclean", and thus kept separate – always reminded, not merely once a month, but 12 years straight, that she was different, unclean, untouchable
      - b. Having a hemorrhage, she was probably childless, which was very important in the ANE
      - c. She was probably "unwanted" as well, because of this
  - iii. She had tried medical help, but to no avail
    1. Note that Luke is generous toward the medical providers, whereas Mark is particularly harsh (Mark 5:25-26), who notes that she was worse off for her troubles with doctors because she was now suffering bleeding and broke
    2. The point is that she has nowhere else to go! She is desperate for restoration!
- b. So, here we have a picture of woman who has a physical problem, a spiritual problem, a relational problem, a social problem
  - i. Physical desperation – 12 years of hemorrhaging takes its toll
  - ii. Spiritual desperation – this bleeding made one ceremonially unclean according to Leviticus 15, which meant that she could not enter the Temple to worship

- iii. Relational desperation – being unclean meant that anyone she touched or whom her clothes or seating touched were also made unclean for a day
  - 1. Thus, nobody wanted to be touched by her or to touch her
  - 2. She most likely is unmarried, for she could not bear children – even if she is married she would have sexual problems with her husband
- iv. Social desperation – she would be ostracized and demeaned by society, cast aside and forgotten over 12 years
  - 1. I imagine at first that people were concerned, but over 12 years she was forgotten
  - 2. Nobody saw her touch Jesus – she had no friends to call to him (like some others in the NT)
  - 3. She was unseen, unnoticed, unwanted, invisible desperation of a humiliated woman
- c. There is a proper sense of despair and an improper sense of despair
  - i. The improper sense of despair tries anything and everything to get something that we believe will make us happy
    - 1. This leads us to use God as a tool to get something else
    - 2. People who think like this are desperately making vows to God, trying to bargain with him, even religiously pursuing him, but all in an attempt to get something from him, i.e. comfort, good family life, physical health, etc.
    - 3. They come to see Jesus as the means to these things which they believe will “cure” our inherent sense of emptiness, impurity, isolation/loneliness, etc.
  - ii. The proper sense of desperation leads the Christian to see Jesus as the only hope for our isolation, emptiness, etc.
    - 1. He is the joy we seek, the comfort we seek, the acceptance we need.
    - 2. He is the finality of our pursuit, not the means to the end, but the end itself
    - 3. The Christian knows that nothing can bring peace but Christ Jesus Himself; nothing brings rescue but Christ Himself; nothing satisfies the soul but the glorious excellences of Jesus.
  - iii. This woman took great risk out of her desperation, for everyone she touched that day had a right to be angry with her for making them unclean
    - 1. Yet she didn’t care – she would touch Jesus because he was her only hope
- d. We cannot connect to Jesus except by faith – that is, when we see that nothing in this world will satisfy our deepest longings and deepest needs and that Jesus is not a means to a happy family, a fulfilling career, or a good reputation, but rather that He is an *alternative* to them.

### 3. Hope is Found Only Through Humble Faith in Jesus

- a. What distinguished the woman’s touch from the hundreds of other touches was *humble faith* in Jesus
  - i. The crowd was pressing in on Jesus, touching him strongly and often
    - 1. the crowds “squeeze” Jesus
      - a. same word used of the weeds’ behavior - to choke, squeeze, crush
    - 2. This would be similar to a famous person in a crowd, being bumped and jostled
      - a. Luke mentions this to show the purposeful restoration of the bleeding woman by Jesus and the necessity of faith
  - ii. This closeness to Jesus and the distinction between the crowd and this woman indicates that faith is the primary distinction, not touching
    - 1. It also shows us that it is possible to be near to Jesus and not really be near to Jesus because dependence is not present
- b. The woman approached Jesus differently as she touched him
  - i. She touched the hem, or the tassel, of Jesus’ cloak (outer garment) from behind him
  - ii. This reveals her shame and humiliation
    - 1. She came from behind him and thus did not want to be seen by Jesus
      - a. Why? - She would have been unclean
    - 2. She touched the hem of his cloak
      - a. How low do you have to be to touch the hem of a full-length cloak?
    - 3. You must picture a woman crawling amidst a throng of people pressing in upon Jesus, too afraid to face him but merely seeks to touch him

- a. There is no indication that she seeks to touch Jesus to be healed, but merely that she desired to touch him
- c. Jesus accepts our imperfect faith
  - i. Her faith is somewhat misguided
  - ii. She seems to believe that touching Jesus alone would heal her, as if he were a magic wand or icon
    - 1. It was not the touch that healed her, but God through her faith - "your faith has saved you; go in peace"
    - 2. We must be careful of falling for some promise of technique the means of healing or the moving of God's power
      - a. Using technique to manipulate God's power or His Spirit is not faith, but manipulation - it places us and our performance as the originator of the power and God as a tool to be wielded - this is magic, not Jesus
        - i. There were many people touching Jesus, thus the point was not in the touch, nor in the placement of the touch or the length of the touch or the manner of the touch, etc.
      - b. The basic difference between magic and faith is the concept of *manipulation*
        - i. Manipulation says that, "If I do X, then Y will occur"
        - ii. Jesus' power is not manipulated – He gives it to whomever He wills and it does not become "unlocked" or "channeled" through any ritual or repeatable method
        - iii. This is one of the reasons why eastern spiritual energy healing techniques, even when wrapped in Christianese words, are improper
          - 1. They attempt to manipulate God's power through technique or method
          - 2. That is not what is going on with this woman
  - iii. She also seems to think that what she needs is physical healing through physical contact, but what she really needs is spiritual restoration with God through spiritual faith-contact
    - 1. The emphasis of healing is always "salvation that leads to peace"
    - 2. This salvation and peace are terms reserved for a relationship with God
      - a. Thus, true healing is not merely physical and physical comfort is never the purpose, but rather the spiritual restoration of the humble to God by the means of faith in Jesus
      - b. When we reach out to alleviate suffering around us, we are never content with the mere alleviation of suffering, but rather we strive in our efforts to see a person's relationship to God restored through humble (repentant) faith in Jesus Christ!
    - 3. What she was looking for was restoration in her created body (creation), but Jesus restored her relationship to God, to herself, to her community
- d. Yet, it was not the perfection of her faith that saved her but her faith in the perfect Savior
  - i. This flies in the face of the "It doesn't matter what you believe as long as you believe with your whole heart" mantra.
  - ii. It's more like, "It doesn't matter that you believe perfectly or purely, as long as you believe in the right Savior."
    - 1. Ice skaters: a bold skater convinced that ¼" of ice will hold him up or a timid skater hoping cautiously that 4" of ice will hold him up – who stays above water?
    - 2. The object of your faith and its ability to save is much more important than the boldness or strength of the faith
  - iii. This is encouraging, for it means that Jesus will respond to our faith even when it is filled with flaws and weaknesses, as long as we simply look to him
    - 1. The woman wasn't saved because of the quality of her faith (it's not a work to be honed), but *through* her faith in the authoritative King of Grace.
    - 2. His love and His work and His power save us, not the quality of our faith.
  - iv. Note that Jesus didn't lecture her on the frailty of her faith, but he met her where she was and rescued her out of love

- e. Her faith was also humble – all she knew was:
  - i. Nothing in this world could restore her
  - ii. She was unworthy to touch this holy man
  - iii. She was sure that He could still help, cleanse, restore her
- f. Jesus answered her desperate call with grace, mercy, and restoration

#### 4. The Power of Jesus Restores Our Relationships With God and Each Other

- a. Jesus' sense of power going out from him is so that he can reveal the woman
  - i. Jesus never breaks a sweat when stilling storms, casting out thousands of demons at once, raising the dead, healing the sick, restoring lepers, etc.
  - ii. Jesus' power to restore never exhausts him and he usually only uses a word of pronouncement to "seal the deal"
  - iii. Thus, Jesus does not *have* to "lose power" or reveal a weakening, but He does – why?
    - 1. He is saving the woman through his weakness
    - 2. Jesus is foreshadowing a greater weakness by which we are saved through faith – that of the cross where Jesus' power was poured out and by which He was given all rule and authority and dominion and by which he disarmed all his enemies and gathered His people to glory in Himself
      - a. "For he was crucified in weakness, but lives by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but in dealing with you we will live with him by the power of God. (2Co 13:4 ESV)
    - 3. The clothes of the High Priest are described in a cryptic way in Exodus 28:38
      - a. "And he will bear the guilt of the sacred gifts the people bring – it will be upon his head, so that they may be acceptable to the Lord."
- b. Jesus' request to know who touched him was not an information-gathering request, but a call to reveal the woman
  - i. The woman was hiding because her touch would have made Jesus ceremonially unclean (Lev 15)
    - 1. For her to purposefully touch a rabbi would have been considered a horrible violent act
    - 2. Her motivation, then, was one of humility toward Jesus and of unworthiness to confront him or even approach him from the front
  - ii. Peter's admonishment reveals the silliness of the question as a fact-gathering venture - everybody's touching Jesus
- c. His request is to reveal the hiding woman in order to complete her restoration, encourage her
  - i. Thus, when he pronounces that her faith has "saved" her, it is an announcement of God's pleasure in her to all the people around her as much as it is to her
    - 1. He is, in essence, telling them to accept her as clean and accepted by God because of her faith
    - 2. He is moving her from outside and unclean to inside and purified because she trusted in Him
    - 3. It is her repentance, i.e. her humble refusal to depend upon her own power and her trust (faith) in Jesus' power to restore that shows her faith

#### 5. The Messiah is Never Late

- a. The interruption by this woman made Jesus late to rescue the girl from dying
  - i. Put yourself in Jairus' shoes – people crushing Jesus slowed him down; the bleeding woman slowed him down; it was now too late
  - ii. His greatest fear had come, his daughter was dead, the last hope was lost
    - 1. "don't bother the teacher" – it's too late
- b. Against all hope, Jesus tells him not to fear, but to "only believe, and she will be saved"
  - i. Depend upon Me and my authority
  - ii. You've just seen me heal that woman, trust me to deal with this
    - 1. How greatly would he have to trust Jesus? Death is the final door and when it's shut, it's over.
    - 2. How great was his grief when Jesus tells him to "only believe"?

- iii. Note that Jesus doesn't tell Jairus that if he "thinks positively something good will happen"
  - 1. This is not in the realm of probability or possibility, but absolute certainty in Jesus' power, not his own
  - 2. It's not about Jairus' attitude or his faith in his faith, but his trust in the power of the Lord of Life
- c. Faith doesn't concern itself with others' view of oneself
  - i. The experts disagreed with Jesus
    - 1. Professional mourners knew death – it was their job
    - 2. When Jesus told them to stop doing their job because they were unneeded and the girl's story wasn't over, they laughed as though he was fool
      - a. Jesus said she was "asleep" – they thought he was an idiot
      - b. The Christian view of death is that the body "sleeps" while the spirit goes to be in the presence of the Lord until the body is raised up immortal
        - i. In fact, the word "cemetery" comes from the Greek word "to sleep" (*koimaomai*)
        - ii. Jesus has made death different – from finality to hope
  - ii. The people mocked Jesus for his promise, and thus they mocked Jairus trusting in him
    - 1. Jairus trusts Jesus, not the laughers, the Lord not the experts
      - a. Jesus rids the mockers of this sacred space – Mark says that He "threw them out" (same word of the money-lenders in the Temple)
    - 2. Jesus isn't pretending that she isn't dead, He is redefining death's power in the light of His own power – and Jairus must trust Him in order to let Him in the house
- d. Jesus is the Lord of Life
  - i. He doesn't use ritual or incantation, or methods or technique, His word is powerful because He has authority over death
  - ii. His compassion is apparent
    - 1. *Little girl, get up.*
  - iii. The same Word that calmed the seas, made demons shudder and run, closed the wounds of the bleeding woman, is the same word to which death itself submits and gives up its victim.

Jesus doesn't tell us to raise the dead, and the three disciples weren't there to learn how to do it. They needed to see the greatness of Jesus, the glory of the Lord of Life, so that when trouble comes and hope seemed beyond the pale, they were to entrust themselves to him. This story is about Jesus, not the girl or her father, or the woman who was restored. It is about His ability and goodness to utterly transform us from death to life and that we can approach him by faith alone.

Why were the parents to remain silent but the woman healed in front of everyone? I believe that the woman needed to be restored to the community, to a healing that restored her body, but even more restored her to worship with the congregation, restored her social life to be able to touch and be touched by others, that her uncleanness was made clean and that she was to be included again. The little girl was not unclean and had to no need to be restored socially. She was restored to her parents, thus was made whole in every way, both they and her.

You see, Jesus' restorative power is total. It is absolute. It is complete. When the Lord of Nature and the Lord of Life moves in power, nothing is left undone. When He paid down your debt against God, your sins upon that deathly hallowed cross, it was finished. Your sins are paid up totally, completely, absolutely. When He was raised from the dead, He was raised to rule totally, absolutely, completely. There is nothing beyond hope when Jesus moves, and we come to this Lord of Life who holds the power of Life within His hands of compassion by faith alone. No merit, no proving, not perfection, but humble dependence in the One whose merit merits all we need, whose resurrection proved all we need, and whose perfection perfects all who come to Him in faith.