

Jesus Heals a Woman and Raises a Girl

SESSION IN A SENTENCE: In Jesus' encounter with the woman and Jairus's daughter, Jesus calls us to have faith in His power over affliction, shame, and death.

BACKGROUND PASSAGE: Mark 5:21-43

St. Jude's Hospital is known for treating what no one else can. After exhausting every other option, weary and worried parents bring their children, hoping to find care no one else can provide because St. Jude's Hospital specializes in lost causes. So does Jesus.

As with St. Jude's Hospital, only those who have come to the end of their ropes come to Jesus. People who hold on to their pride tell themselves they have what it takes to make it on their own. Self-assured people think they do not need Jesus, which means whenever they face affliction, even if they find relief, they will find no true cure for the disease that ails them most.

Unlike St. Jude's Hospital, however, Jesus offers no mere hope of a cure. He *is* the cure. He offers all He is and all He has—He offers Himself.




In what ways does pride keep us from coming to Jesus?

Group Time

Point 1: Trust in Jesus' power to remove the suffering of affliction (Mark 5:25-29).

²⁵ And there was a woman who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years, ²⁶ and who had suffered much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was no better but rather grew worse. ²⁷ She had heard the reports about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment. ²⁸ For she said, "If I touch even his garments, I will be made well." ²⁹ And immediately the flow of blood dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease.

This woman suffered deeply for twelve years the physical, emotional, and social costs of her incurable disease. But it was, in some ways, far worse than what we can imagine in today's society. Sufferers can feel like outcasts in their suffering already, but we rarely intentionally shun them. We don't kick them out of worship services. We don't avoid them in the streets. Yet this woman lost everything on account of her disease. She was alone and cut off from others because she was unclean.

 What are some ways people try to deal with desperate situations?

In her desperation, the woman reached out for Jesus, her last but greatest hope. How did the woman get to this point? She heard about Jesus. She heard that He was powerful and reachable. Others had come to Him and found healing. When she learned He was in town, she believed He was drawing near for people like her. The woman didn't know the full power of Jesus at that moment. All she had was a simple but profound faith that He could do what others could not. She somehow knew that He alone would cure while others had only failed. So she came empty-handed and reached out for Him.

 Why should we be grateful to God that we can come to Jesus with empty hands?

Point 2: Trust in Jesus' power to remove the shame of impurity (Mark 5:30-34).

³⁰ And Jesus, perceiving in himself that power had gone out from him, immediately turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my garments?"

³¹ And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing around you, and yet you say, 'Who touched me?'" ³² And he looked around to see who had done it. ³³ But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling and fell down before him and told him the whole truth. ³⁴ And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease."

By faith, the woman ran through a crowd and touched Jesus' garment. That touch would have made Jesus ceremonially unclean, but the reverse happened. Her touch didn't make Jesus unclean; Jesus' power healed her and made her clean. That's what God grants through the touch of faith. Jesus takes what we can't live with and gives us what will make us live forever. It's the exchange every desperate heart truly longs for—our sin for Jesus' righteousness.

Voices from the Church

"It is only one particular touch that draws forth power from Jesus: the touch of the impure."¹

—Kim Huat Tan



What are some effects of shame in a person's life?

Jesus wanted to heal this woman deep within. He wanted to heal her shame and let everyone know what had happened. So He turned to the crowd of people and essentially called her out. He forced her to step out of the crowd, to come to the center of the street before all those who had despised her for her disease. What was Jesus doing at that moment? For all to see and hear, He was calling for her testimony of faith.

Faith: More than being simply a mental _____ of historical facts, genuine faith begins with a recognition and confession of the truth of the _____, followed by a receiving of Christ as _____ and Savior of one's life.

Point 3: Trust in Jesus' power to remove the curse of death (Mark 5:35-36,39-42).

³⁵ While he was still speaking, there came from the ruler's house some who said, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?" ³⁶ But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the ruler of the synagogue, "Do not fear, only believe."

As Jesus delayed, Jairus's daughter died. How his heart must have broken! Jesus, however, wasn't surprised. Yes, the girl died, but that was not news to Jesus. His main concern was not her death. He was concerned about what Jairus believed. On this side of the cross, we understand that death is not an unconquerable enemy to Jesus, but Jairus didn't know that. Even Jesus' disciples had yet to learn that. So Jesus turned, looked Jairus in the eyes, and said, "**Do not fear, only believe.**"

³⁹ And when he had entered, he said to them, "Why are you making a commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but sleeping." ⁴⁰ And they laughed at him. But he put them all outside and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him and went in where the child was. ⁴¹ Taking her by the hand he said to her, "Talitha cumi," which means, "Little girl, I say to you, arise." ⁴² And immediately the girl got up and began walking (for she was twelve years of age), and they were immediately overcome with amazement.

When his little girl died, did Jairus's faith die with her? No, because his faith wasn't ultimately in her life but in Jesus' word. He believed, and Jesus raised her to life again. What Jesus is looking for in us is faith in *Him*, not in our circumstances or even in what they could be. Because of His ability to raise Jairus's daughter—and moreover because of His own resurrection—we know we can trust Jesus even in death; we know there is hope beyond the grave.



What are some ways the resurrection power of Jesus frees us to live by faith and in obedience?

Daily Study

Day 1: Read Mark 5:1-20

Conventional wisdom says a graveyard is a place to avoid if a crazy person lives there, breaking every chain by which he's bound and smashing the shackles. But it is for such people that Jesus came. He came not for the well but the sick. He came for those bound and shackled to break the ultimate chains and shackles of the flesh, the world, and the devil.

So when Jesus approached the “legion” of demons inhabiting this poor man, He waged war against all that stands against us. We see that even the demons are under His authority. They had to ask permission to go into the pigs. Jesus has the power to undo our deepest oppression and set free those bound by the darkest of powers.

When such a force comes into the world and sets the captives free, word gets around. Those who witnessed that day's events couldn't keep it to themselves. They had to go and tell. When others came, they found the crazy man in his right mind. That's what the grace of Jesus does. He restores our right mind. He places peace into our tortured souls. He casts out the evil that binds. He removes the impure by the power of His word.

When Jesus sets us free, we take His gospel to the world. We go and tell what the Lord has done and how He has had mercy on us in our sinful state.



Who in your life needs to hear about Jesus' power to break chains and make us whole?

Day 2: Read Mark 5:21-24

Life isn't easy. Things happen. Look at Jairus. Verse 22 says he was a synagogue leader. He was a community leader. Everyone knew him. He was well off. Then his daughter got sick. And as time went on, she grew worse and worse until she was at the point of death. As he looked out his window, he saw a crowd. Jesus had come to town!

He looked back at his dying twelve-year-old daughter and decided to run to Jesus for help. He fell at His feet and said, "My little daughter is dying." His plea was urgent. His little girl was at death's door. Hospice wasn't just called in; they were preparing for the final moments. He needed Jesus' help immediately.

That's the beginning of biblical faith—simply looking at Jesus as the One who *can* help and coming to Him. But often it takes overwhelming circumstances before we're ready to come. We must become desperate enough to come to Jesus. It means letting go of pride. It's saying to yourself, "I can't do this. I need supernatural help." Jesus went with Jairus, and He'll go with you too when you need Him.



How do overwhelming circumstances draw us to Jesus? How does this story reassure us that Jesus will help us during such times?

Day 3: Read Mark 5:25-29

For twelve years, she suffered a constant flow of blood. It made her ceremonially unclean, preventing her from worshiping in the temple. She was a social outcast. Even if she were once well-to-do, she was now destitute. She was flat broke from doctor bills and no better for it. She had tried all that medicine had to offer and suffered not only from the disease but also from the cures. She was at the end of her rope. And as she sat in the street, she saw the crowd coming her way, and the One whom she had heard about was among them.

Her circumstances were beyond her control. She was desperate for help beyond what this world could offer. Her circumstances summoned faith from within. She ran toward Jesus, whom she believed could heal her when no one else could. She reached out her hand, but her touch didn't make Him unclean (as the Law of Moses said it would). Instead, Jesus' power made her clean. When we come by faith to Jesus with our defiling disease of sin—no matter how unclean we may be—His grace will wash us clean. He will make us well again.



What is keeping you from trusting the healing power of Jesus today?

Day 4: Read Mark 5:30-34

When we come to Jesus by faith and reach out for His healing, He will turn to us in His grace. He wants a conversation with us—not to shame us but to assure us. He wants the whole truth because He wants to give whole healing. And when we tell it all, He gives us *His* peace. Why? Because we've come to Him in faith, in total trust.

The truth this woman lived inside grew bigger than anything she could have ever imagined. This woman will, from this moment on, always be free. She will have a new relationship with Jesus—a relationship she could not have had if she had not come to Him in total honesty. From this moment on, because of her relationship with Jesus, she will now have access to His power forever. She will no longer need a hurried touch in a crowd. She will have moment-by-moment access to His power, to His grace, to His mercy, to His cleansing, to *Him*.

She didn't treat Jesus like the crowds did. She didn't touch Him as they did. She treated Him as her only hope. She touched Him by faith. And now she has Him by faith *forever*. And you can too. All it takes is the empty hands of faith reaching for Jesus, the only One who truly and entirely heals.



How does the gospel assure us that honesty with Jesus sets us free?

Day 5: Read Mark 5:35-43

Jesus is not asking us to muster up a certain amount of faith for healing. That's putting the results Jesus gives above the giver Himself. That won't do. We're all going to die one day. Physical healing isn't enough. We need more. Jesus is asking for more than trust in Him as a healer in the here and now. Jesus is asking for trust in Him forever, for everything, for all our happiness and joy, to trust Him with all our pains and sorrows, to hand over all our failures and successes, to bank it all on His unchanging grace, to trust Him with it all—holding back nothing.

What Jesus was saying to Jairus is what He is saying to us today: It's not the amount of faith that saves but instead the object of faith. It's not a *strong* or *weak* faith in Jesus that saves. It's faith *in Jesus* that saves. Period. The only amount of faith we need is enough to bring us to Jesus.



How does relying on the strength of your faith to save you impede your vision of God's grace?

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Send questions/comments to:

Content Editor by email to daniel.davis@lifeway.com or mail to Content Editor, *The Gospel Project: Adult Daily Discipleship Guide*, One LifeWay Plaza, Nashville, TN 37234-0175; or make comments on the Web at lifeway.com.

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Brian Dembowczyk

Managing Editor—*The Gospel Project*
AUTHOR OF *Gospel-Centered Kids Ministry*
AND *Cornerstones: 200 Questions and Answers to Learn Truth*

Jesus was born to die—a jarring statement indeed, but one that is quite true.

Christmas and Easter are fused together, linked hand-in-hand in such a way that each is dependent on the other for its meaning. The theology of such a statement is solid but incomplete, for Jesus was not born to die immediately but rather some thirty years later. Jesus' life, then, was not utilitarian—existing just so it could be taken away and picked up again—it had greater meaning and purpose. What Jesus did during those thirty years of walking the earth mattered; He lived a life of perfect obedience to the Father. He satisfied the demands of righteousness that we could not so He might take away our sin when we trust in Him and so His righteousness might be credited to us, making us fully pleasing to the Father (2 Cor. 5:21).

In this volume we delve deeper into the marvelous truth of the incarnation to see still further glimpses of Christ's glory on earth. His righteousness did not occur in a vacuum but rather among people, ordinary people like you and me. In each unit of this volume, we will look at Jesus' interactions with people as through a prism, making slight turns to see different yet equally brilliant perspectives of Jesus' works. In Unit 22, we will see Jesus' power to heal coupled with His deep compassion for people, even those who were marginalized in society. In Unit 23, we will see Jesus' riveting teachings empowered by His divine authority. And finally, in Unit 24, we will see Jesus' miraculous power over nature, revealing His identity as Creator God.

Each ray of light we will see points to the same truth: that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God given for our salvation. Jesus was indeed born to die, but He lived so that we too might live.

UNIT 22**SESSION 1**

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2. J. C. Ryle, "What It Costs to Be a True Christian," December 4, 2019, www.the-highway.com/cost_Ryle.html.

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2. John Onwuchekwa, *Prayer: How Praying Together Shapes the Church* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018), 43.

SESSION 4

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