

Mark 5 pt 2 v21-43

V.21-24 Jesus meets with a desperate ruler of the synagogue.

After healing a man who was possessed by unclean spirits in the region of the Gadarenes on the opposite side of the Sea of Galilee, Jesus returns to Capernaum and He is met by a crowd of people and one ruler of the synagogue who is desperate for a miracle.

Synagogues served as the local meeting place for the Jewish people.

While the Temple was in Jerusalem, there was only one Temple, and it was impractical and really impossible for the Jewish people to worship at the Temple regularly.

The Law required that people present themselves at the Temple for special occasions - such as Passover, and at the birth of a child, and that type of thing, but the local congregations met in synagogues. It was an important part of the culture.

Jesus taught in synagogues and so did Paul and the other Apostles as the first century church began to develop.

We can make some inferences about this ruler of the synagogue - named Jairus.

He would have served essentially as the pastor of that synagogue (to borrow from our terminology).

“It was his duty to select the readers or teachers in the synagogue, to examine the discourses of the public speakers, and to see that all things were done with decency and in accordance with ancestral usage...” (Thayer’s Greek Lexicon)

But we also know that Jesus had a rocky relationship with the seemingly religious.

We know that when Jesus taught in a synagogue in Nazareth, his own home town, that: “[Luk 4:28-29 NKJV] ...all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, 29 and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff.”

And yet men like Nicodemus - a religious leader, came to Jesus by night and desired His instruction.

[Jhn 12:42-43 NKJV] 42 Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess [Him], lest they should be put out of the synagogue; 43 for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

But this man Jairus is desperate and has hope that Jesus is the healer. He professes his belief that Jesus' touch will save his dying daughter.

It is in this moment that we see Jesus' compassion and gentleness.

Wonderfully, Jesus does not use this man's struggle as an opportunity to tear down the organized religious system of the day.

He doesn't say to Jairus, "heal yourself." He doesn't say to him, "sell all of your things and follow me Jairus." He doesn't say "recite to me the beatitudes," or "tell me about the doctrine of sanctification."

He doesn't do any of that. He simply goes with Jairus, a man in need.

Now we must note that sometimes Jesus does challenge us by His word, and He is certainly making us holy as He is - but first and foremost Christ was/is compassionate to us in our desperation.

When all we came to Him with was/is brokenness and need, Jesus meets us there, and walks with us without front-loading a multitude of requirements to deserve his company.

So Jairus and Jesus, and a great crowd of people are off to Jairus' house to see what it is that Jesus shall do. Will they make it in time? What if the girl dies?

V.25-30 BUT...they are met with a disruption of sorts on the road.

As it turns out, that great crowd of people was comprised of at least one other person who was desperately in need of Jesus' touch.

This person was a woman who had really gone through the wringer in her own life.

Assuming this woman was a Jewish woman she would have been considered unclean, and unable to participate in any worship, because of her chronic bleeding according to the Jewish Law.

[Lev 15:25-31 NKJV] 25 'If a woman has a discharge of blood for many days, other than at the time of her [customary] impurity, or if it runs beyond her [usual time of] impurity, all the days of her unclean discharge shall be as the days of her [customary] impurity. She [shall

be] unclean. 26 'Every bed on which she lies all the days of her discharge shall be to her as the bed of her impurity; and whatever she sits on shall be unclean, as the uncleanness of her impurity. 27 'Whoever touches those things shall be unclean; he shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. 28 'But if she is cleansed of her discharge, then she shall count for herself seven days, and after that she shall be clean. 29 'And on the eighth day she shall take for herself two turtledoves or two young pigeons, and bring them to the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting. 30 'Then the priest shall offer the one [as] a sin offering and the other [as] a burnt offering, and the priest shall make atonement for her before the LORD for the discharge of her uncleanness. 31 'Thus you shall separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness, lest they die in their uncleanness when they defile My tabernacle that [is] among them.

This woman was considered just like someone with leprosy, because of her condition.

For 12 years! This woman lived in this state for as long as Jairus' daughter had been alive.

Now we have lives intersecting.

We have Jairus, a synagogue leader, schooled in the law, with a dying child. And we have a lawfully unclean woman desperate for healing.

What happens when she touches Jesus, is He unclean? Strictly speaking no. But what would the Pharisees say?

The mishna (first major written collection of the Jewish oral traditions) teaches that the blood of a menstruating woman transmits impurity by contact and by carrying both when moist and when dry. The Gemara asks: From where are these matters derived? Ḥizkiyya says: They are derived from a verse, as the verse states with regard to a menstruating woman: “This is the law of him that has an issue...And of her who experiences the flow of her menstrual impurity” (Leviticus 15:32–33). The verse compares the status of the menstrual flow to that of the menstruating woman. This teaches that the status of the menstrual flow is like the status of the woman herself: Just as she transmits impurity by contact and by carrying, so too, the menstrual flow transmits impurity by contact and by carrying. (<https://www.sefaria.org/?home>)

So now we’re in a pickle!

Will this leader of the synagogue allow a theoretically, though not technically, unclean Jesus to touch his dying daughter?

Jesus knowing that this woman was healed then pauses from his immediate task and initiates a discourse about what has just happened.

Only that woman and Jesus knew - but it wouldn't be that way for long.

V.30-35

This woman has been called out. Not by name, she has an option to remain silent. Jesus doesn't pinpoint her. He asks the question - with more in mind than the casual touch.

We can safely assume too that if this woman believed Jesus was powerful enough to make her well then she believed he was also powerful enough to know the facts and to know who touched Him.

This woman then proceeds to tell "the whole truth." She does so in her fear (public speaking is certainly fearful for many) compounded by the fact that she was just a participant in a miracle. That's enough to make anybody tremble.

But what about Jairus - we don't know of his state during all of this. Is he thinking, "get on with it"? Is the memory of his daughter triggered when this woman explains that she has been unclean for 12 years? Does he recoil from the admission of uncleanness?

None of these things are written for us. But there are some interesting elements in motion here as these two lives intersect through the person and work of Jesus.

This is us too! We do have similarities with other saints. We also have our differences. Some saints are vastly different in politics, personal experiences, history, opinion! And yet - they intersect at the person and work of Jesus. What is certain is who Jesus is and his unmatched compassion for people regardless of where they come from.

The seemingly devout/pious/religious are treated with equal compassion and grace as the downtrodden, unclean, broken and bleeding.

And now, as this woman is recounting her life-story - a story of being taken advantage of by doctors and hopelessness, loneliness (who could she be with in her uncleanness?) Jairus is brought news that his daughter has died.

Now what? Give up? Start making funeral arrangements?

As any parent I'm sure that Jairus' heart shattered into a million pieces when he heard that news. I am also willing to speculate that one of the first things Jairus felt was regret - he had not even been there when his daughter breathed her last.

V.36 - Jesus does not leave Jairus alone with his heartache and fear. Jesus senses Jairus' fear, "was this all for nothing?! Why did this woman have to interrupt us?"

Jesus speaks words that sound hollow coming from anybody else but Him, "Do not be afraid; only believe."

It was belief that drove Jairus to the Lord in the first place - and Jairus is encouraged to keep his faith even in what has been described as "...the single worst stressor a person can go through."

"Parents and fathers specifically feel responsible for the child's well-being. And they're not just losing a person they loved. They're also losing the years of promise they had looked forward to."

(<https://www.fatherly.com/health-science/how-parents-experience-the-death-of-a-child/>)

V.37-43 Jesus raises Jairus' daughter back to life after.

Jesus is confronted with a chaotic scene - in fact this whole day has been quite disheveled, from the Gadarenes, to the crowds, to the woman who touched him. Sometimes life is like that. But Jesus is the steadfast one.

Now He enters into a scene of mourning, strong emotions, lots of tears and grief.

And he begins by teaching them about His authority over life and death. To Jesus, the Lord of all creation, death is not insurmountable. Death is not the final chapter. To Jesus one might as well be sleeping because if He desires He shall raise the one who has slipped into death back to life.

This is too much for the aggrieved to bear though. Imagine if somebody said that to us today - we might view it as highly offensive and insensitive. Death is real, and we have seen it and we know that there is no coming back.

But in Jesus' hands even death is subject to His command.

Jesus has a tender moment with this child by taking her lifeless hand and bringing her back into this life to be with her parents.

Now all are amazed by this but why does Jesus tell them that they shouldn't tell anybody?

Probably because Jesus knows how people are - we are sensationalists, we love spectacle, we love exploiting others for gain. Jesus probably didn't want that to happen to this young girl.

Furthermore, perhaps Jesus knew that this girl might be in danger as we find was the case with Lazarus.

[Jhn 12:9-10 NKJV] 9 Now a great many of the Jews knew that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead. 10 But the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also,

Finally, Jesus wants this girl to eat - to be fed. We could preach a sermon on that alone.

Ultimately what we find is Jesus' compassion, grace, gentleness with people - His willingness to touch and be touched in the most hectic of circumstances. We see too His authority over life and death and His

command to believe, even when the odds are seemingly not in our favor - believe.