

Be Freed

Mark 5:21-43

²¹ When Jesus had again crossed over by boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around him while he was by the lake. ²² Then one of the synagogue leaders, named Jairus, came, and when he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet. ²³ He pleaded earnestly with him, “My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live.” ²⁴ So Jesus went with him.

A large crowd followed and pressed around him. ²⁵ And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. ²⁶ She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. ²⁷ When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, ²⁸ because she thought, “If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed.” ²⁹ Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering.

³⁰ At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, “Who touched my clothes?”

³¹ “You see the people crowding against you,” his disciples answered, “and yet you can ask, ‘Who touched me?’”

³² But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. ³³ Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. ³⁴ He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering.”

³⁵ While Jesus was still speaking, some people came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader. “Your daughter is dead,” they said. “Why bother the teacher anymore?”

³⁶ Overhearing what they said, Jesus told him, “Don’t be afraid; just believe.”

³⁷ He did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James and John the brother of James. ³⁸ When they came to the home of the synagogue leader, Jesus saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly. ³⁹ He went in and said to them, “Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep.” ⁴⁰ But they laughed at him.

After he put them all out, he took the child’s father and mother and the disciples who were with him, and went in where the child was. ⁴¹ He took her by the hand and said to her, “Talitha koum!” (which means “Little girl, I say to you, get up!”). ⁴² Immediately the girl stood up and began to walk around (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished. ⁴³ He gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this, and told them to give her something to eat.

Introduction

- Mark 5:1-20: Jesus healed a demon-possessed man who was out of control and dangerous in a Gentile area. He commanded the demons out from the man, and they went into a herd of pigs that ran into the lake and drown. When the people saw what had happened, they pleaded for him to leave. The man who was healed from the demons wanted to follow Jesus, but Jesus asked him to stay to share with his people about what God had done for him.

*17 Then the people began to **plead** with Jesus to leave their region.*

*23 He **pleaded** earnestly with him, “My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live.”*

- The same Greek word, “plead” is used in verses 17 and 23. On one side, the people who witnessed the miracle of the demon-possessed man healed pleaded Jesus to leave, and on the other side, Jairus pleaded Jesus to come to his house to heal his daughter. Such were the vast responses people had towards Jesus.
- Mark 5 is a series of events that Jesus was ministering to the specific individuals by healing them. All 3 of the of them were “unclean” by the standards of the law:
 - The demon-possessed man was living in a Gentile area.
 - Leviticus 15 states that people who were bleeding remain unclean until their bleeding stop. The woman had a sickness that caused her to bleed non-stop.
 - Jairus’ daughter died.

1. “Be Freed from Your Suffering” (vv. 24-34)

The Woman

- Unclean:
 - She was not allowed into the temple. She couldn’t join the people for worship and celebrations during festival. She had no access to God.
 - She was avoided and became an outcast because those who touch an unclean person become unclean themselves. She had no friends, she couldn’t be with her family, there was no social and family interactions, no hugs and kisses from her loved ones.
- She sought all kinds of help she could get. She was so desperate that she spent all that she had seeking for a cure. Not only was she not cured, but she was also taken advantage of and was cheated. At the end, instead of getting better, she got worse.
- The woman was suffering. She was in pain. She was an outcast. She was cheated. She tried everything but nothing worked. She lost everything she had. She was lonely, ashamed, frustrated and feeling hopeless. Her desperation forced her to gather her courage and go to Jesus in hope that she could get the healing she has been looking for.
- The woman was an outcast, she would have been shamed and stoned if she publicly seeks Jesus for healing. Her past experiences with people had made her afraid, to close up, to cave in, in fear of the reaction of the people.

Jesus’ Response to Her

- Jesus replied in gentleness. Jesus welcomed her, accepted her and commended her of her faith, her faith that led her to rise above her fears to reach out to Jesus. It was not the touching of Jesus’ clothes that healed the woman. Many people touched Jesus as they were pressing towards Jesus, but none of them experienced healing. It was her faith accompanied by her courageous actions that led her to encounter Jesus and his healing.

- Jesus was on the way to heal Jairus' daughter. It was an urgency since Jairus' daughter was about to die. But, Jesus still stopped to minister to another person who equally needed healing and restoration. Jesus could have just continued with his journey when he realized power has gone out of him, without the need to turn around and talk to the person. But Jesus wasn't satisfied with just dispatching healing and miracles, he is interested in the person, he wanted a personal encounter with the woman who has received healing. The woman mattered to him.
- For 12 years of her life, she has been rejected by her community. She was sick and unclean. She couldn't meet the standards for acceptance into the community, and so she became an outcast. She was a victim of the stigma of her society. But, Jesus broke that stigma, he broke the barrier between the clean and the unclean, the rich and the poor. He cared for her because she is a person made in the image of God, with dignity and value, and she mattered to him.

Stigma in Our Society

- We do not have cleanliness issues today, but there are still a lot of stigmas that we live with. Because of that, we have learned to live according to those rules to be accepted by society. In order to be accepted, we only reveal the parts of our lives that we think people would like and accept, while we do not disclose our weaknesses and flaws. We are afraid that if we become vulnerable and show people who we really are, they would reject us because we do not meet their standards and requirements.
 - Social media: to gain likes
 - Cancel culture: gets rejected when we don't agree with them
 - Value in performance and achievements: looks good on the outside
 - People pleaser: do anything to be accepted
 - No principles and values: flow with the society
 - Defence mechanism: wall to protect ourselves; suppressing our feelings, cover up our need for acceptance
- The only way we can really be accepted is to go to Jesus. He knows all our flaws, our weaknesses, our sins, our evil thoughts and actions, yet he calls us to himself, he welcomes us, he receives us, he loves us, he heals us, and he changes us.
 - Healing and restoration
 - Freedom from being stigmatized, freedom from the need to be accepted by society's standards
 - Being vulnerable
 - Genuine relationships

2. "Don't Be Afraid, Just Believe" (vv. 35-43)

Jairus

- As Jesus was still speaking to the woman, some people from the house of Jairus came, bringing him bad news about the death of his daughter.
- "If Jesus managed to reach my house earlier, my daughter would not have died."
 - He was likely waiting anxiously at the shore for Jesus to come back from the other side of the lake.

- When he finally got to Jesus, a large crowd was still hovering over him, slowing Jesus down from getting to his house.
- Halfway through, a woman who had a blood issue came, and Jesus had to stop to talk to her even though she has already been healed.
- At this point of his ministry, Jesus has started receiving opposition from the religious leaders. Being a reputable and respected synagogue leader, by going to Jesus for help, Jairus was risking his reputation and position. The religious leaders would not have approved his actions. He would be rejected and stigmatized by his community. But that did not stop Jairus. He was in great desperation, so he went to Jesus anyway. Being a man of high status, he could have sent someone on his behalf, but he was so desperate that he went to Jesus by himself.
- The irony: The woman turned to Jesus because she was stigmatized and rejected by the community, and Jairus is turning to Jesus even though it is going to cause him to be stigmatized and rejected by the community.

Jesus' Response to Him

- When Jairus received news of the death of his daughter, Jesus turned to him and said, "Don't be afraid, just believe." Jesus had just healed a woman who suffered 12 years from a sickness that had no cure. The woman exemplified the kind of faith that Jairus needed to have; she did not allow her circumstances and fear to dictate her beliefs and actions. And now, Jairus is challenged to have the same faith.
- There was a great commotion of people crying and wailing, a custom of showing that there is a death in the house. Jesus went inside and told them that the girl is not dead, she is only sleeping. The people laughed at Jesus. They all knew that the girl had died. But, they couldn't grasp what Jesus was about to do for the girl. Like the woman with the blood issue, they had the correct evaluation of the situation; but unlike the woman, they had no faith that Jesus could do the impossible, that Jesus could perform a miracle and bring her back to life.
- Jesus raised the girl from the dead. But he gave strict orders to not let anyone know about it. The miracle clearly showed the power Jesus had over sickness and death, but the miracle wasn't a public display of power. Jesus' intention was not to receive attention and praise from superficial people. His mission was to come and save his lost sheep. He cared for Jairus and his family, he built Jairus' faith and he healed his little girl. Like the woman with the sickness, Jairus and his family mattered to Jesus, and Jesus wanted to heal and restore them into the kingdom of God.

The Woman and Jairus

Jairus	The Woman
Synagogue leader: - in charge of the synagogue worship - be in the synagogue and temple regularly	Sick and unclean: - couldn't worship in the temple - couldn't connect with other people
High status: reputable, respected	Low status: avoided, shamed, poor, outcast
Desperate need led them to Jesus	

- There is a common stigma that status and power can give us what we want. Jairus' status and privilege does not give him an advantage when it comes to things that matter most. They both had needs. What Jesus responded to was their faith in going to him. Jesus ministered to both of them because both of them reached out to him.
- Both the woman and Jairus shared the same desperation that led them to seek Jesus for help. The crowd was waiting for Jesus at the shore, and they followed Jesus to Jairus' house. But the woman was singled out because she went to Jesus with such faith that brought her physical and spiritual healing with her encounter with Jesus. And her faith became an example and an encouragement for Jairus to believe that Jesus could heal his daughter. Jesus eventually left the crowd behind because he was not interested in "performing" for them. He was concerned for those who really needed him and sought after him, and he wanted to minister to them.
- We can go to Jesus with our needs. We matter to Jesus.

2 Corinthians 12:8-10

⁸ Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. ⁹ But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. ¹⁰ That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

- There will be times where God will answer our prayers and meet our needs. And there will be times where God will answer our prayers and give us his grace to persevere, to rely on him, to draw strength from the Lord. We need to learn to trust the Lord as he answers our prayers. He is our Good Father who loves and cares for us. He is the Good Shepherd who looks after every person. He is the God who knows all things and is in control. We can trust him to give us what is best for us. We need to discern his answer for us.

Stigma: The Need to Earn God's Acceptance

- In the Gospels, Jesus constantly reached out to the unclean people, he cared for them, he ministered to them.
- We are all unclean because of sin. But instead of us working our way back to God, earning his approval and acceptance, he reaches out to us, he pursues us, he sends his son to take our place. Jesus took it upon himself all the "uncleanliness", paid the price of the sacrifice, to remove the "uncleanliness" in us, so that we may be restored in our identity as children of God, restoring our relationship with God and with His people. That is the healing that Jesus brings to those who would desperately go to Him.
- We are received and accepted based on the righteousness of Jesus. He loves us, he cares for us, he welcomes us and ministers to us.
- Let us receive forgiveness & acceptance from God. Let us go to him with our brokenness and need, allowing God to free us from the stigmas that we have lived under. Let us invite God to break all the false ideas we have believed and receive healing and love in Christ, so that we would truly be set free from our suffering.

Prayer

“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” (2 Corinthians 12:9)

- We will find our acceptance in Christ.
- We will go to God with our brokenness and needs.
- We will receive spiritual healing and restoration.
- We will be set free from the stigmas that we have lived under.

Church

- We will hunger for God, through prayer and the meditation of God’s word.
- We will be focus on what is important, instead of pursuing earthly treasures.
- Transformative work of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God.
- We will be faithful to welcome and minister to all the people that God sends to us.
- We will be a place of healing, restoration and reconciliation.
- Unity based on God’s love and truth: breaking barriers between people from different groups.
- Workplaces: we will respond to our calling in the harvest field, representing Christ to the world.
- Compassion and wisdom to help those who are in need.
- Salvation for our loved ones.
- Ministries:
 - Open doors
 - Wisdom and discernment to reach out and minister
 - Sensitive to the needs of the people

Covid-19

- To be vigilant and to look to the Lord
- Those who are sick, those who have lost loved ones
- Government: wisdom and compassion
- Economy
- Mental health
- Church: to bring hope with the Gospel

Malaysia

- Leadership: righteousness, integrity, compassion for the people
- Unity: between all people group
- Justice and mercy: care for the marginalized (the poor, oppressed, widows, orphans, foreigners)
- Church: instruments of love and unity, prophetic voice to the nation
- Salvation

