



THE GOSPEL OF MARK

Study Guide Full
Mark 5:21-43
October 13, 2019

From the healing of the demoniac, and Jesus' authority over unclean spirits, we turn to the healing of the bleeding woman and the restoring of Jairus's daughter —and thus Jesus' power over debilitating illness and even death itself. We see that **nothing can separate us from the love of God and his desire to heal us.**

21 And when Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered about him, and he was beside the sea. 22 Then came one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name, and seeing him, he fell at his feet 23 and implored him earnestly, saying, "My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well and live." 24 And he went with him.

And a great crowd followed him and thronged about him. 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. 30 And Jesus, perceiving in him 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."

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." 37 And he allowed no one to follow him except Peter and James and John the brother of James. 38 They came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and Jesus saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. 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. 43 And he strictly charged them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.

Mark 5:21-43

Notes:

Commentary Notes:

vv. 21-24a. Crossing westward the Sea of Galilee, back into Israel, Jesus meets Jairus. Synagogue rulers were chief administrators of the synagogue, those key places of Jewish instruction and prayer, whose responsibilities included looking after the building and supervising worship. While not

Discussion Questions:

Discuss: How can we characterize Jairus? As one of the rulers of the synagogue, how might his approach to Jesus have cost him?

a priest, Jairus surely would have known that Jesus was *persona non grata* in the synagogue (3:1-6); yet, he risks his reputation and eschews his pride to (in echo of the demoniac in 5:6) fall at Jesus' feet.

vv. 24b-29. Jesus' path to heal Jairus's daughter is interrupted by the desperate pursuit for healing of the women with a hemorrhage.

Mark vividly describes the woman's suffering, noting the physical, emotional, and financial cost of her illness. Having heard what healing works Jesus has performed so far in his ministry, she reaches out to touch his garments: an action that would have been socially improper in a Middle Eastern context, even apart from her ceremonial uncleanness; yet at the same time, an action that highlights the woman's courage and faith, and that results in miraculous immediate healing.

vv. 30-34. In a chapter in which we have seen Jesus portrayed as fully divine, miraculously driving out the legion demons and then referring to himself as "The Lord" (5:19), here we see Jesus portrayed as fully human, asking who touched his clothing, ostensibly not knowing.

Study: Review what conflict erupted the last time that Jesus was in the synagogue: reread Mark 3:1-6.

Reflect: Have you ever been in such desperate need that you were willing to risk your reputation and pride to ask for help? How can you identify with Jairus?

Study: Review what the Old Testament says with regards to those considered unclean, by reading Leviticus 15:25-33. How does knowing this historical background help us understand the plight of the bleeding woman? Also, what did Anthony preach in terms of understanding these verses correctly?

Reflect: How have you seen, in your past, apparent "interruptions" to be actually be key matters of ministry, to be the stuff of relationships?

Meditate: Recognizing that ἅπτω (*hapto*), "to touch", is a key word in these passages, we see in these narratives that touching the ritually unclean is Jesus' standard mode of healing. Also, it is this touching that brings these individuals back into community. How are you in need of the touch of Christ this week, particularly as regards your own needs for community?

Meditate: How is the faith-filled truth that Jesus wants to become ritually unclean in order to be with, touch, and heal you encouraging your heart this week?

Discern: How is the presence of Christ in both of these narratives encouraging you to step out farther in terms of the ministries of presence and touch that is congregational care? Ask for the Spirit's direction.

Yet Jesus does recognize that δύναμις, *dynamis* (power, force, ability) had gone out of him.

The woman cannot keep silent; fearful and trembling—most likely as God’s reign has become instantaneously manifest in her life, after 12 years of suffering—finds herself in the same position of Jairus: at Jesus’ feet.

Addressing her as “daughter”, Jesus welcomes her into the family of faith, commending her trust in his power.

vv. 35-43. The narrative of Jairus returns, as the incident of the woman’s healing delayed Jesus long enough that Jairus’s daughter is dead.

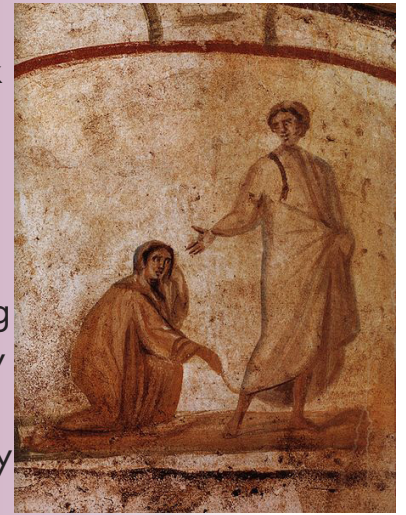
Yet Jesus’ words to “just believe” strengthen Jairus’s resolute faith; note Jairus in no way tries to blame Jesus for his daughter’s death; nor does he try to dissuade Jesus from his journey.

What results is a miraculous reversal of the power of death. Putting out the large group of mourners, expected around a synagogue ruler, and their rebuking laughter, Jesus raises the girl from death to life.

Confess: In what ways are you currently, momentarily lacking the woman’s faith in the power and reign of Christ? Ask the Spirit to search your heart.

Pray: The Church Father Augustine writes in his *Sermon 62*, “Multitudes are they who throng about him; few are they who by faith touch him.” Pray that the Spirit would empower us to truly touch Christ as we come to him seeing our need of his healing, power, and grace.

*Healing of a Bleeding Woman (4th century)
Roman Catacombs (commons.wikimedia.org)*



Study: Numbers 5:1-4 details those considered unclean according to Mosaic law. What kind of persons are described there? How do those verses provide critical background to truly understand what Jesus is doing here?

Discuss: Why do you think Mark places the narrative of the bleeding woman sandwiched inside that of Jairus and his daughter? How do the two stories relate? What are some key connections? What did Anthony highlight?

Discuss: In what ways are Jesus’ words, “Do not fear, only believe,” particular and appropriate to the given context of Jairus and his daughter? How could these same words be unhelpful if we utter them in an admonishing tone to other believers, in a distinctly different context?

Pray: Pray that we would be Christ’s hands, working to restore the ostracized to healing, community, and new life.