

Daughter your faith has healed you

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[0 : 00] Let's turn to the passage that we read in Mark's Gospel, Mark chapter 5. I'd like to look with you at the account given here in Mark's Gospel of Jesus meeting with the woman, the woman who had the hemorrhage of blood for 12 years.

And especially, we can look at verse 34. Jesus said to her, Daughter, your faith has healed you, or your faith has saved you.

Go in peace and be freed from your suffering. Perhaps in reading the Gospels, you've sometimes asked the question, why all these miracles?

Why did Jesus perform these amazing works and perform so many of them?

What is the purpose of it all? Because, as we know, that's one of the things that, in one way, turns off a lot of people from believing the Bible, or at least it's the reason that many people give.

[1 : 25] Because there are these things that seem to be so extraordinary, so out of the usual, things that seem to be so supernatural, and in a sense, are so removed from our ordinary everyday experience.

Why was it necessary? Why did God think it necessary that Jesus should perform all those miracles? Are they demonstrations of God's power in Jesus Christ?

Well, yes, they are that. They are called works of power. They are actual demonstrations of who Jesus Christ is. In a way, it would be surprising if God, in the person of Jesus Christ, should come into this world and be totally ordinary.

Because surely, in Jesus Christ, the supernatural, the unseen world, broke through into this world in its most unique and most permanent way.

But, of course, Jesus' miracles are more than that. They were also works of compassion. Because, I think it would be right to say, Jesus never performed a miracle just to demonstrate how great he was.

[3 : 03] His miracles were all in answer to a need, a needy situation of some kind. Some as seemingly trivial as the fact that a bride and bridegroom would be embarrassed because the wine at their wedding had run out.

In fact, Jesus chose that occasion for the first of his great, mighty works. And there was an element of compassion in that, providing for those at that wedding celebration.

There was also a demonstration of his great and unique power. But in Christ's miracles, particularly his miracles of healing, there is something else again.

And that is what we call today a visual aid. Many of Jesus' miracles are visual aids to help us to understand why he came into this world.

And it's that aspect I'd like to follow through this evening as we look at this woman and her healing. What I mean is this.

[4 : 24] In illness and disease, we see perhaps one of the clearest visual aids we could have to what evil has done in this world.

because the Bible makes it quite apparent that there is a link between the fact that the human race has rebelled against God and the fact that people suffer of pain and disease and illness.

Now we must be very careful exactly how we say that. We must never say that simply because a person is ill or because some particular accident befalls someone that that proves that that person is worse than anybody else.

Jesus himself warned very clearly against that. But what I'm saying is this. If man had never sinned, if human race had never rebelled against God, there would not have been any suffering, there would not have been any pain.

Because suffering and pain are all bound up with the great fact of what we call death. And the Bible makes it very clear, the wages of sin is death. The moment man rebelled against God, he cut himself off from the life of God and doing so, left to himself, he would die and know all the pain and suffering of that death, physical, spiritual, and eternal.

[6 : 05] So when we come to see the miracles of Jesus, the healing miracles of Jesus, we are seeing what we may call a visual aid, helping us to understand why Jesus came into this world.

Jesus came into this world to deal a death blow to death, to reverse the effects of the fall of man when man rebelled against God.

He came into this world to liberate not just men, but liberate the whole creation from its bondage to decay, as how Paul puts it in Romans chapter 8.

And so, in Jesus' miracles, they were not only works of wonder showing his power, they were not only works of compassion showing his love for people in need, but they were visual aids helping us to understand that he came as a savior, not just to deal with the effects of sin in the world, not just to deal with what we may call the symptoms, part of those are the diseases and the illnesses, but he came to deal with the root cause itself, the disease, the disease, we may say, of sin.

And so, when we read about these miracles of Jesus, we are right in drawing a whole and complete lesson from them.

[7 : 44] And so often, Jesus makes this very clear, even in the kind of language that he uses. Here, when he says to the woman, your faith has healed you, it literally is, your faith has saved you.

And that word, save, is a very wide word because it includes the idea of healing, but it also, of course, includes the idea of salvation from sin and salvation from death and from judgment.

And on many occasions, Jesus makes this very clear, that there was this link and people who had faith in him were having faith, not just in him as a miracle worker, but they were having faith in him as a person, faith in him as the Messiah, as the one who loved them and as the one who was able to save them, not just from their disease, but also from their sins.

Remember the man and his four friends let him down through a hole in the roof in front of Jesus. And Jesus made it very clear that the first thing he said to the man was, your sins are forgiven you.

And that's what set people talking and set people asking questions, what on earth is this man saying? How can a man forgive sins? Only God can forgive sins. Jesus said, which is easier to say?

[9 : 17] Your sins are forgiven or rise up and walk, but that you may know that the son of man has authority on earth to forgive sin. He said to the man, take up your bed and walk.

Now of course, it's easy to say both of those things. It's a very different matter to say those things and for our immediate result to follow.

And Jesus was demonstrating there when he said that, and the man rose up and walked, that not only had he the power and authority to heal his bodily disease or disability, but he had power and authority to forgive that man his sin.

And we see there again Jesus making clear that link, showing that in his miracles of healing, he was demonstrating in a very visual way his power to get to the root cause of all suffering and all pain in the world.

That is the fact that man is a rebel and Jesus came into this world to save those who are rebels and sinners against God. He said, putting it perhaps most clearly of all, he said, I've come to seek and to save the lost.

[10 : 38] lost. It's not those who are whole, those who are healthy, who need a doctor, but those who are sick. And to use that very picture, the idea of someone being sick, use that to help us to understand what it is to be lost.

And so as we look at this tonight, I want you to bear that in mind, that as we're thinking about this woman and her illness, we're having there a kind of visual aid to help us to understand something about sin and something about the salvation in Christ.

Well, let's look first of all then at the woman's illness. Verses 25 and 26, we get a description of it. A woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for 12 years.

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. Now we see first of all that her illness, her disease, was a very personal one.

Now in a sense, all illness or all disease is personal. And it's only when you are sick that you really know what it's like to be ill. And it's only then that you really can sympathize with somebody else who has the same kind of complaint.

[11 : 56] In that sense, illness is a very personal thing. You feel it very personally. But surely this particular complaint was very personal and even private to herself.

And she felt obviously very much that it was her problem. It wasn't really something that could harm somebody else, like say the disease of leprosy, something that might be contagious or other contagious diseases, but it was something that affected her.

It was very personal to herself. Now that in itself is a visual aid to help us to understand something about sin.

Because we can talk about sin or evil on the broad scale, thinking about the evil that we see in the world. And everybody one time or another complains about how bad the world is.

But you see, it's only when we begin to see, as this woman did about her disease, that it is a matter personal to ourselves that we can begin to get anywhere.

[13 : 09] If this woman didn't have a sense of personal need about this or about some other thing, she would never have come to Jesus. But this woman felt this very distinct personal need and eventually she came to Jesus to seek his help in it.

Now, tonight I hope that everyone here has got some sense of their own personal need of salvation in Christ Jesus. Because if you don't have, then it's almost a waste of time being here.

It's almost a waste of time listening to what else this passage has to say to us. Because unless we see that personally we need Christ, then all the rest of it is perhaps just an interesting academic exercise.

Do you feel that personally as this woman did so obviously? But then also her disease was surely an isolating one.

It was something that was, because of the laws, the regulations of the Old Testament, it was something that meant that she was excluded from contact with other people and contact with the wider sort of community.

[14 : 44] it was something that obviously would make her feel very isolated from others. And that again is a picture to help us to understand something about sin.

We may think that doing what we like, doing what we want to do, irrespective of what God says or what his law says, we may think that that's the way to get on with other people and to get to know other people and to do things with them.

But God's word warns us that in fact sin is an isolating thing. It may sometimes not appear so in this life.

It may appear as if doing what we want to do helps us to get on with other people. But in fact, if we think about it a little bit more carefully and look at our own experience a little bit more clearly, we begin to see that it's not so.

The person who consistently does what he wants to do, irrespective of what God says, irrespective of what other people may need or require, that person is living more and more to himself, making himself the center.

[16 : 02] And we all know how a person who is completely self-centered is a person who very definitely isolates himself from others. Now the clearest statement we can get of this in scripture is the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ about the ultimate end of sin, the logical conclusion of sin, which he spoke most clearly about and that is hell.

Hell, a total and complete separation from God. He talked about being thrown out into outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

the whole idea there of outer darkness, people being terribly, terribly isolated from any kind of warmth or fellowship with any other being.

That's something of the reality of what Jesus says about hell. But her disease, quite obviously also, was a weakening disease.

disease. We all know how blood is of course so important to us so that nowadays we can have blood transfusions when we lose blood.

[17 : 18] Blood is absolutely necessary to life. If you lose too much blood, you die. And if you're constantly losing a certain amount of blood, you're anemic, you're unhealthy, you're weak.

And this is obviously what was happening to this woman. She was not strong and healthy as she ought to have been. But because of this constant loss of blood, she was getting weaker and weaker steadily.

That's something also true about the great disease of sin. sin. The more we continue to sin against God, the more we continue to ignore what he says to us, the more we continue to reject his kind offer of salvation in Jesus Christ, the weaker and weaker we become.

I want to make that very clear because many people think, well, when we're young, we can perhaps enjoy ourselves, use all our energy to enjoy ourselves.

It doesn't matter too much about religion or about these kind of things. We'll think of these things when we get older. Then we'll have more time to think about those things. We'll not be so concerned for enjoyment and so on.

[18 : 45] It's a fallacy. because the older you get and the longer that you continue in the habits that you have formed over years, the weaker you become, the stronger the disease becomes.

A disease left untreated becomes stronger and stronger, gets a bigger and bigger hold upon you. So it is with the disease of sin. Its chains get stronger and stronger to bind you.

and it needs a far greater power, far greater strength to come out of that kind of bondage than before.

And that's a warning to us that any decision about this invitation of the gospel ought not to be left to any time in the future and certainly ought not to be left when we are weaker and weaker.

but ought to be taken now as the gospel itself says. Now is the day of salvation. The longer we continue in sin, the weaker we become and the more hold sin has upon us.

[19 : 58] But also her disease was quite clearly as far as human terms are concerned, it was an incurable disease. disease. We read there that 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.

Not only was her condition steadily deteriorating, but it was something that in spite of all the best efforts of the physicians of her day, there was no cure, there was nothing that they could do.

She had tried every different kind of doctor. Different treatments, different remedies, yet none of them worked. And she had spent all she had.

She was now in a worse state than she was to begin with. To begin with, she had her disease, but at least she had her money or her wealth, whatever it was.

Now, she still had her disease and she had no wealth, no money. Now, again, of course, that is a picture also of the deteriorating effects of sin in our lives.

[21 : 10] No improvement, but a steady deterioration. But the point being emphasized here is that the disease, in her case, humanly speaking, was incurable.

There was nothing that doctors could do. Now, we know, of course, that there are examples of that kind of disease. today. And perhaps one of the most obvious examples is many forms of cancer.

The suffering can be alleviated, the pain can be dulled a little bit, but the actual disease cannot be cured. There are other examples.

And that is what the Bible is talking about when it uses the picture of disease for sin. It is an incurable disease. disease. It is a terminal disease. It is a disease that will not yield to all the best efforts of the wisdom of this world.

People talk a great deal in the media, and of course recently, a great deal more than usual, about the curse of violence in our society.

[22 : 24] many people are thinking about the kind of things that are happening in our society. And all different kinds of answers have been put forward.

And of course all of these have been tried in the past. But none of these things that come merely from the wisdom of men can cure the root cause of the breaking of God's law, which is the sinful heart of man.

We need not new policies, we need not new environment, but we need a new internal environment. We need new people.

We need a transformation from the inside, and that cannot be worked by man himself. So then this woman's disease, in its being incurable, also demonstrates to us something very real about the power of sin in our lives.

I would like to think with you next about her meeting with Jesus. How this woman met with Jesus and what happened. Well, first of all, she had heard of Jesus.

[23 : 48] Verse 27, when she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him. She heard about Jesus. We don't know how she heard about him. We don't know how long beforehand she had heard about him.

It might have been a very short time. It might have been some considerable time before him. Eventually, she decided to come to him. We don't know. But it's quite clear that before she came to him, she had heard about him.

She knew something about him. There was something about his fame as a healer. Something about his fame as being compassionate and helpful to the needy. Something about him being someone who was selfless in giving himself in his time for others.

Something about perhaps the claims that were being made concerning him. Claims that may have seemed extravagant to some, but maybe not to this woman. Claims about him being the Messiah, the son of David.

Perhaps these things or any combination of them. These things this woman had heard and she was now coming to Jesus.

[24 : 57] She had perhaps heard something about him being a savior or a liberator. Someone who could free people from the things that bound them.

Only just recently he had just come back across the Sea of Galilee where he had liberated a man, a man who was more bound by evil than perhaps many others that Jesus met in his lifetime here on earth.

A man literally bound and steeped in evil, yet Jesus had set that man free. A man who called himself Legion. Perhaps you'd heard something of that or of some of Jesus' other great works of liberation salvation or of saving people.

So this woman was drawn to Jesus. We've got to ask ourselves tonight, how do we think about Jesus?

How do we feel about him? When we hear the kind of things that Jesus did for people, are we drawn to him? He came into this world to draw people to himself.

[26 : 08] If we have some understanding of our need, as we've outlined, something about the disease of sin, do we now feel that we're being drawn to the Lord Jesus as the one who came into this world for the very purpose of liberating us from sin?

This woman was drawn to him, and that's the next stage in the development of her faith in him. But also, of course, the woman wanted to be healed.

verse 28, she thought, if I just touch his clothes, I will be healed. Now, it may seem so obvious to say that of course this woman wanted to be healed, but that's the question that we've got to ask ourselves.

Do we really want to be healed? Each one of us here, no doubt, we know of something of the reality of sin in our lives, something that makes us less than we ought to be, something that perhaps fills us with shame in our better moments.

Do you really want to be healed? Do you really want to be set free from that? Do you really want to have the assurance here and now in this life that not just that particular sin or that particular problem that may be uppermost in your mind, but that every disability, every handicap, whether physical, mental or spiritual, will one day be reversed and removed if you believe in Jesus Christ?

[27 : 52] Do you want to be healed? Do you want to be saved? Do you want to be transformed? Transformed into a creature of such splendor eventually that if people living here and now could only see you in that condition, they would marvel that it was the same person?

That's something of the glory that is to be that the Bible speaks of. Do you want to be healed or do you want to cling on to your disease?

Well, then we see next that the woman believed and this is really all about faith, isn't it? Jesus makes it so clear that it was her faith that saved her.

She believed. She thought, we're told, if I just touch his clothes, I will be healed. Now, we needn't go into the details of what was involved in how she exercised her faith.

there is something mysterious about it. How she could, simply by touching Jesus' garment, as one of the other gospels tells us, just the hem of his garment, how by doing that she could be healed.

[29 : 13] But surely wasn't it not the act itself, the outward act, but it was the fact that I'm trying to stress here that she believed that by coming to him, she would be healed.

Now, of course, there was a great deal of ignorance in the womb. She didn't know a great deal. She maybe didn't know as much about religion, maybe she didn't know as much about Jesus Christ as you do tonight here.

Maybe she didn't know as much about Jesus as the youngest child here this evening. But the point is not how much she knew, but what she did with that knowledge.

She'd heard that Jesus Christ could save and she came to him in the only way she could. She was shy, she was ashamed perhaps, she didn't want to make a big fuss, but she came in the only way she knew she could come and she just touched him.

She believed that by coming to him in that way, she would be healed. She believed it. What an astonishing great step of faith on perhaps the very little information she had about Jesus.

[30 : 22] She believed it to be true and she trusted that he would help her. That of course is exactly what we're asked to do in coming to Jesus. We're not asked to perform any great works.

We're not asked to perform any kind of great service to God that will kind of earn our salvation. Those works of service come out of a love of Christ who saves us.

What we're asked to do is just to come to Christ and to believe, to trust that he will do the very best for us, that he will save us, that he will restore us, that ultimately he will make us like himself and that we will be with him forever in his presence in heaven.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Notice that the woman didn't just talk about faith, didn't just talk about coming to Jesus, she actually did it.

She actually came up to him and touched him. Now it's very important to talk about what the Bible teaches us.

[31 : 46] It's very important to think through what God's word says to us. And I know that at the boys camp just now, we're doing quite a bit of that.

Talking, asking questions, thinking through some of these things. But we can go on talking and talking and talking, perhaps with the best intentions in the world, but without coming as this woman did and doing the thing that she was talking about, that she was saying, that she was thinking in her mind, then there is no help and there's no deliverance.

She not only thought about it in her mind, not only did she believe this to be true, that he could save her, but she actually came on the basis of that being true and touched him.

That's exactly what we're asked to do, to take Jesus at his word, what God's word says about him, that he is the savior who came into this world to deliver us from sin, to believe it to be true, to trust him, to do it, and to accept him as our savior.

And we read that immediately she did this, she was healed. Now isn't it astonishing that many people there around Jesus were told specifically that there was a large crowd following him and they were pressing round about him.

[33 : 10] Many people, as his disciples rightly said, many people were touching him and jostling him as they moved along. You know how a crowd of children especially coming up round someone they're wanting to draw their attention, they're sort of touching them and poking them trying to get attention.

Well, maybe people were around Jesus just like that. But it was only this woman who was healed. Many people were there that day, many people who perhaps had plenty of need in their lives, but only this woman was healed and was saved and was delivered because this woman had faith in Jesus Christ in a most extraordinary way that he would help her.

And then finally, I just want to notice with you something here that we're shown about the love of Jesus Christ. Because if it wasn't for that love and the way in which he expressed it, we would know nothing of what happened there that day.

It's because Jesus took notice of what happened and drew attention to it, that we know all about it so that we can benefit from it today.

After all, remember, Jesus here was pushed for time. Jesus here had just got off the boat when he crossed over the Sea of Galilee. There there was a man immediately pressing for his attention.

[34 : 41] He wanted him to come and to see his little girl who was very sick, on the point of death. And Jesus immediately set off with him, hurrying towards that place.

And people were crowding around about him and perhaps they were coming with all kinds of different requests and questions and perhaps delaying him. And he was maybe in a hurry to get there.

Yet Jesus took time when he sensed that there was a person there who needed his help. Now, of course, we know that it was all working in his good providence, not only for the help of this woman but also for the amazing raising from the dead of that little girl.

But the point is, Jesus took the time to deal with this woman and to deal with her lovingly. We see there Jesus' estimation of the value of the individual.

There were crowds there around about him, perhaps people pestering him about all kinds of things, but there was one person there whom he knew really needed his help.

[35 : 51] That individual to him was all important and that individual got all of his attention at that particular time. Now, there's a great example to every one of us. But doesn't it show to us the amazing love of the Lord Jesus Christ?

You tonight, may have the feeling that nobody cares perhaps too much about you. Perhaps you've got the feeling that you're not all that important.

Many people today have that feeling in the kind of society in which we live. After all, if you're a failure, if you're not a success in our society today, you can feel very well left out of things.

But a Jesus, the individual, every needy individual, is important and valuable in his sight. And no one is rejected or turned away who comes seeking his help.

The Lord Jesus Christ now has this whole universe to administrate and to control by his power. But he's got time for you tonight to come like this woman did to ask his help.

[37 : 07] He'll not turn you away. notice also that Jesus wanted the very best for this woman. Jesus wasn't content with a second best for anybody.

Jesus was delighted that that woman had faith to come and to receive his healing. But he wanted the very best for her. The very best for her was that not only would she have the experience of healing but that she would be given the opportunity given the privilege to publicly testify to her faith in Jesus Christ.

See that woman being very shy and retiring she would just love to have slipped away in the cloud. Jesus wouldn't let her. Jesus wouldn't let her.

Not because he wanted to show her up or wanted to shame her not at all but because he wanted the best for her. That her faith would be strengthened that she would be encouraged.

And he stopped and he looked around and he wanted to find out who it was who touched him and in spite of all the protests of his disciples that it was impossible to tell who touched him in that crowd he kept on looking around until the woman had to come and had to fall down there and tell him and everyone round about exactly what had happened exactly her need and tell about how she had faith in Christ to come and touch him and the testimony that she was healed.

[38 : 48] Now maybe there's someone here tonight who does in fact know the Lord Jesus Christ as their savior. Someone who has come to faith in him maybe very recently but you've never actually spoken about it to anyone else.

Well the Bible tells us quite clearly that we are to publicly acknowledge him as our Lord. To confess Christ before men. That doesn't mean that we need to be expert speakers or stand up on platforms to do it.

It just means to say that we tell even just one other person that we believe in Christ as our savior. We know that our sins are forgiven. we know that we're taking Christ at his word and we're on our road to glory.

That's all it requires. This woman gave her very simple testimony to what happened. Everyone who comes to know Christ as savior can do the same. And that tremendous witness in itself gives us great assurance in our own lives.

because there's nothing worse than knowing that we believe something about the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe him to be true. We believe him to be the savior.

[40 : 09] And yet we've never told anyone else about that. It really has the effect of causing us to lack assurance of salvation. We feel perhaps we're not really Christians after all.

but to actually do it as this woman did here. Then that in itself is a strengthening experience. And that surely is at least one of the reasons why the Lord Jesus Christ took time and stopped, sought out that woman and gave her that opportunity of giving that testimony so that she herself would be strengthened and others would be instructed by what she had to say.

So then as we think about sin as the great disease, let us remember that the Lord Jesus Christ is the great physician. That passage we read in Isaiah 53 makes it so clear that he came into this world and he took upon himself all our diseases, all our pains, all our sorrows.

These words that are used there can be translated either of physical pains and physical diseases or they can be translated of things more like sorrows and grief.

The point being that Jesus took to himself all our sin and all the burden and result and pain of our sin upon himself.

[41 : 36] Being the great unique physician that he is, he came not just to cure the disease, but he came to remove its cancer and its germ and remove it unto himself because that was the only way in which our sin could be removed so that he suffered from that disease.

He suffered by taking upon himself the sins of the world to the extent of dying upon the cross, dying and bearing the just judgment of God against sin so that we might be by faith in him liberated and brought into the glorious family of the children of God.

Let us pray. Our gracious Lord, we thank you for all that Christ Jesus has done for us and we pray that tonight you would cause each one of us here not only to ponder these things that we've learned from your word but by your spirit to believe in Christ as our savior.

We pray for those who struggle with these things and we pray that you would enable them to cast themselves wholly upon yourself.

We pray for those who seek ways of excusing themselves and turning away yet again from Christ. We pray that you would show to them the utter foolishness of such a way and the great glory and the great life that Jesus Christ is offering.

[43 : 30] Oh Lord, cause us to put behind us all ideas of our own self-sufficiency because your word tells us that if we try to save ourselves ultimately we shall lose ourselves.
but that if we now give ourselves up to you we are ultimately saved. We ask these things in Christ's name.
Amen.