

Walking through Mark 5:21-43

So, you have Jesus crossing a lake and a large crowd gathering around him. Imagine lots of people. Jairus, a synagogue leader, probably heard about Jesus and went to him...” My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live.” Jesus goes with him. Along the way, there’s this episode of a woman who was bleeding for 12 years. Suffered under the care of many doctors, spent all she had, getting worse...She also heard about Jesus. Came up from behind him in the crowd. “If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed.” Immediately, her bleeding—12 years!—stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering. Jesus immediately, asked, “Who touched my clothes?” **Even amidst the crowd pushing against Him, He knew someone touched him in a different way.** Jesus knows faith when he sees it. He knew the difference between the touches. So, he just kept looking. The woman figures out what happened—trembling with fear—told him the whole truth. “I’ve been bleeding for 12 years, I’ve seen so many doctors, I’ve spent all I’ve had, I’m getting worse, I heard of you and believed you were able to help me. And knew that if only I could touch you, I would be healed.” “**Daughter**”—the only person Jesus has ever called that, “your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering.” What love he had for her. **Oh the love that one has for a daughter—delighting over her; desiring her good; wanting what’s best, is in pain when she’s in pain. Daughter. A clue that Jesus probably understood the angst that Jairus was going through as he was waiting for Jesus to continue on to help his own daughter.** So they go on. Some men came to Jairus and said, “Your daughter is dead. Why bother the teacher any more.” Jesus ignores what they said and said to Jairus, “Don’t be afraid; just believe.” Jesus let Peter, James and John follow...and got to Jairus’ home. Commotion. People crying and wailing. “Why all this commotion? The child is not dead but asleep.” People laughed. **You see, the world has its timing and if we walk according to the world, we will think Jesus is late. But, no...Jesus has his own timing...and when we follow Him, we can rest assured and take detours gladly.** Jesus took Jairus, Jairus’ wife and the disciples who were with him, went in, took the girl’s hand and said, “Little girl, I say to you, get up!” Immediately, she gets up and walks around...And Jesus tells the people around to give her something to eat.

When you read this, who do you identify with? Do you identify with the woman? I certainly do. Interestingly, I was about 12 when I received Christ (woman was bleeding for 12 years; little girl was 12). My parents sent me to church when I was about 5. I went every week with my cousins because my parents thought that church kids were good kids, and would be out of trouble just enough. And would get into good colleges. So, I went to church and heard all the stories. Noah’s Ark; Daniel; David and Goliath. **I learned a lot about God. I heard about Him.** And I memorized verses, mainly to get prizes. I went to Sunday School, mainly to get prizes (because there was an attendance chart). **It was all a part of being a good student.** It wasn’t until I was about 12—7th grade—when I was in church and heard, “Going to church doesn’t mean you’re a Christian. Doing all this Christian stuff doesn’t make you a Christian. You have to invite Jesus into your heart and Jesus in you is what makes you a Christian.” He proceeded to tell us how to invite Jesus into our hearts, giving us a sample prayer. I realized that night—sitting on my bed—that I hadn’t done that. I knew that I was going through the motions, but didn’t really have Jesus IN my life. My sins had not been forgiven, I was still separated from God. That night—as much as I knew how at 12 years old—I **did what the woman did and reached out to touch Jesus.** I wasn’t just the crowd anymore, just hearing him or crowding around him. I touched him...and believed that He could do something for me. I saw my need and knew Jesus could meet it. And after that initial reaching out, it’s been a new life. My outlook has changed. I am connected to a life source., no longer living for things that don’t satisfy. And as I continue to reach out to Him...I watch him heal me and set me free from things...even things like needing approval from people...or a bad temper...things that enslaved me in life.

Or do you identify with Jairus? Jairus going to Jesus was on behalf of someone else. His daughter. His love for his daughter is what drew Him to Jesus. Most people in his position—a synagogue ruler—didn't believe in Jesus. But, Jairus humbled himself—as everyone who wants to go to Jesus must—and knew that only Jesus could do what he wanted to see done. How do we know he humbled himself? He goes to Him and falls at Jesus' feet **v. 22**. The SAME thing that the woman did **v. 33**. It didn't matter what their social status was. They both fell at Jesus' feet. I certainly identify with Jairus too. Going on behalf of someone in desperation.

I remember my junior and senior year at Yale, I started to see my community more with the Lord's eyes. Just seeing the lives of children I was tutoring, teenagers I was working with at the homeless shelter, people I met in New Haven. One night, I was in my BR single, reading Isaiah 58 and Matthew 25, and started to see more clearly God's heart for the oppressed, for the hungry and poor wanderer. I realized that we—His body, His hands and feet—we were to be a part of helping to set people free, to clothe and give drink. And I literally fell at His feet to pray for the poor and needy in New Haven...for those who couldn't speak up for themselves. That's when the Lord put on my heart to do something that I called "night runs" ...which was just going out every night...with packed sandwiches from the dining halls...just going out and talking to people—Walter, Annette, Russell, Bobby, Junior, Linda, Barry—helping them get to shelter if they wanted it (sometimes they didn't), setting up a loaning system, praying for them, learning the services in New Haven that could be of assistance, struggling through which friends to trust and who to be more strict with, sharing the gospel. I saw that apart from physical poverty, there was spiritual as well. So much of the brokenness in their lives—as well as in the lives of my Yale friends—was as a result of walking away from God. As a side note, there were also homeless friends who despite their situation, were full of God's Spirit and alive in Him.

But anyway, this brings us back to the passage. If you look at vs. 34, "Daughter, your faith has healed you." You think Jesus is only talking about her physical sickness here. But, no...in the Greek, that word "healed" means "saved". "Your faith has saved you". Jesus constantly does this: addressing our physical sicknesses, but spiritual as well. With the paralytic in Mark 2, he says, "your sins are forgiven"—a very spiritual thing...and then, also, "get up and walk."—a physical thing. Even with Jairus' daughter, I find it funny that Jesus raises from the dead...and then, tells people to give her something to eat...something very practical.

The physical and the spiritual. And of course Jesus would put these things together. They're related. The root problem of the issues we see today—whether it's cancer, poverty, abuse, war, people having power trips—sin is the root problem. **And when I say sin, I don't mean that one person did something wrong.** No, it goes all the way back to the fall—with Adam and Eve, and how we chose to go our own independent way. God said, "here's life. Life is found in me. Choose it." And we said, "no thanks." We cut ourselves off from the life source and said, no...let's do it my own way. **And we went from everything being full of life, no shame, and relationship with God to painful toil, shame, separation from God. Painful toil?** Guys, your midterms and the burden of work is a result of the fall! You can just look around and see the effects of sin everywhere. And right after the fall, you see **broken relationships**, with Cain and Able, you see anger, jealousy, rage; we see people being used and abused by one another. Because of sin (going our own way apart from God), our bodies, things **deteriorate**. Because of sin (going our own way apart from God), we see irresponsibility in how we **steward the earth** and disasters happening. Because of sin (going our own way apart from God), we turn to things like drugs, or relationships or being busy **to give us significance, joy, or meaning** when we should be turning to God. So, when we see in this story—the woman bleeding for 12 years...or a little girl—12 years old—dead...these all have to do with the fact that we are separated from the life source of health and goodness...

And so, what Jesus did...was not ONLY address the physical nature of everything. He didn't come just to do that. How fleeting would that be because even after raising the little girl from the dead, she still died at some point. No, there was something deeper that caused these physical things to happen. In the end, what we needed was that deeper spiritual healing: **A way to get back to God and be connected to the life source.** For both the woman and Jairus, their faith in Jesus Christ is what brought them back and as a result, SAVED them. Not just healed them. But, saved them. He has saved us. Saved from the grave, from the awful place of being separated from God...and being brought to a satisfying relationship with God...furthermore, the good news is also that He will bring us to a new place that is not touched by sin.

We must make the connection between saved and healed if we want to be effective Christians. In Christendom today, there's almost a dichotomy. Is it sharing the gospel in word? Do I need to learn how to share the gospel **and verbally point someone to Jesus?** Or is it sharing the gospel in deed? Meeting people's practical needs? For Christ, there was never that separation. He never separated those things...He healed, He delivered people from demons, He freed people from suffering. And He called people to follow Him...commending their faith. In 1 John 2:6. It says, "Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did." For Christ, he never separated the spiritual and physical. Neither should we.

I know many of you are asking, "What is God's will for my life?" "What should I be when I grow up?" Well, let me know tell you what I think you should be. Ready? Everyone one of you should be...in full-time ministry. Does that mean joining staff with a Christian ministry or becoming a pastor? Not necessarily. But, the heart of serving God shouldn't be any different. What I mean is that your life is about the Lord, **doing what Jairus did and connecting people with the Lord.** There's a difference between occupation and vocation. Occupation is what occupies your time? In a given day, is what occupies your time filling out legal papers, is it teaching high schoolers, is it washing windows? Is it taking care of kids? Is it doing business with apple? That's your occupation. But, what I'm talking about is "vocation". What are you called to do? If you look Biblically, we are called to be ministers...to serve...to speak God's word. To walk as Jesus did. And all the time and angst you put into figuring out what your occupation is and training for it...I challenge you to put that much time and angst into thinking about your vocation.

Think about everything it takes to train to be a doctor...all the decisions that need to be made:
--science classes and pre-med requirements
--lab experience or clinic? Or other experiences related to medicine?
--when and how to take my MCAT's
--do I go straight to med school or take a year off?
--once you get in, go through classes...and then, you have to take your boards at the end of 2nd year med school.
--3rd year, you start rotations. Learn the different fields. Psychiatry. Surgery. Pediatrics. Even within pediatrics, there's oncology and other specialties.
--then you have to decide on a field.
--you get placed for residency and you learn by grueling immersion. You go from intern to junior resident to senior resident (your exposure and accountability increasing as you go up).
--During residency, you take the US Medical Licensing Exam and then, a specialty exam at the end of residency.
--you also have to decide do I work at a hospital or private practice? Can I further specialize, in which case you would have to do fellowships. And the training goes on.

In the same vein, are you thinking about what it takes to be “trained” to be in ministry all your life? A lifetime of ministry is what we desire to see in you, regardless of your occupation. Are you looking to be trained now?

--your relationship with God...the intimacy you develop, the things you share with Him...you take that with you after Yale. the same relationship I have fostered with God in high school and college is what has carried me through even till now. It’s gone deeper through the years...but, it’s the same thread. Making the time in college is the same mechanism of making time later in life. Too many Christian students push God to the side during stressful times, thinking, “after midterms, then I’ll make Him a priority.” If you don’t change that now, it will stay with you after Yale and life only gets more stressful. Make Him the center of your life now...and you will be trained to make Him the center of your life after Yale.

--the same desire for God’s glory during our prayer meetings in Dwight Library as students at Yale, that’s the same heart and desire I have now or that I had when I sitting in my law firm office after Yale—on the 11th floor looking over the city of New Haven. Just a yearning for God’s glory.

--we have alumni tell us all the time...the skills they learned in leading a freshman Bible study or discipling younger believers, in really digging deep in God’s word...it has helped them minister where they are now: in other countries, to youth groups at church, in Sunday School, in their small groups, investigative Bible studies with co-workers.

--as students, you have the time to allow God in to heal you of things...maybe hurtful things you experienced as a kid...addictions. You might have unhealthy emotional patterns that keep coming up. Are you taking the time to be open, seek healing, maybe seek good counseling? Reaching out as the woman did. Working through things so that even your ministry post college will be more healthy?

--are you learning how to share the gospel...the good news of Jesus Christ with your friends? It’s not an easy thing to do. Are you taking advantage of various evangelism training sessions we offer or something we offer called a summer missions project? Learning how to do it on a missions project for 6 wks, sharing day in and day out over and over again helps you to get over the hump when talking to family members or co-workers. It’s the same hump. For me, in college, after going on two summer projects, I found that I was so much more trained to find gospel connections to everyday life, to connect people to Jesus, and give them concrete steps on how to know God.

--being trained now to work with other Christians or other people on a team setting so that you can work functionally with others after college.

--or learning to be inconvenienced. I was reading in my “night run” journal this past week, and there were times that some of these homeless friends I made would call me at 11 pm on the blue phone (do you guys even know what that is?)...they would call me for something to eat. The inconvenience of dropping what I was doing to serve them is the same inconvenience for Sang and I to be living on the side of town where we are more in touch with New Haveners...but, as a result have to pick up trash regularly from our sidewalk or deal with a not-so-great school system. Or when we asked our friend—Dave Cho—to come speak at our Fall Retreat...he was covering the financial crisis for the Washington Post, has a family, very busy...but, put that aside for the sake of ministering the word. **Practice putting aside personal agendas for the sake of others.**

--lastly, in regard to making decisions: can you say “no” to things—even very good things now—out of obedience to Christ...so, that later, you can say “no” to things like excelling in your job at the cost of neglecting your kids or being so busy, that you can’t be there for a neighbor. Are you training yourself to say “no”?

All these things I’ve talked about, they don’t just happen when you get older. You don’t just snap and become a lawyer who is a full-time minister of God’s word. You don’t just live in New York

and suddenly have compassion on the people in need who walk by you every day. Actually, sometimes you do by God's grace suddenly become these things. But, more often than not, it's trained...something you start now.

Let me add...there are seasons for being trained in different things...there's a time when you need to be trained—almost exclusively—to be a minister. And times to be trained in something professionally. **My heart is that you would do both excellently.**

I will forever be grateful to Dr. Lim, the father of one of our alums—Joanna Lim, TC 05. He embodied both. He was good at his job, but knew the limits of his field. He understood the importance of one's relationship with God. It was about the middle of my father's fight against cancer...Sang and I were in LA for that year to care for him. My dad was a hard man at that time. Didn't step foot in a church because he didn't like institutional Christianity. There were many points throughout that year, that we thought it was the end. Either when they found a spot somewhere, or when he got really weak, or when systems were shutting down. There was this one day that we thought he was near the end and called Dr. Lim. He was just a friend we knew through Joanna, who had made himself available when my dad was diagnosed with lung cancer. **You have to understand that my father didn't trust anyone except doctors.** He wouldn't give anyone the time of day unless they were a doctor. And Dr. Lim knew that and so he made himself available. When Dr. Lim heard where my dad was at, he—without hesitation—said he'd be at my house that evening. He was a busy man down in Orange County...and any of you are from LA, you know that the 5 (the freeway number) which connects LA and Orange County is a bear especially during traffic hour. But, no...he drops everything, calls his friend—who's a Cantonese pastor in Chinatown (my dad spoke Cantonese but Dr. Lim didn't)—and they both come to my house that evening. Dr. Lim—and as a result, this pastor—had my dad's ear. By the time Dr. Lim got to my house, my dad seemed to be doing better and it didn't seem like he was near the end anymore. Dr. Lim gave him advice about how to help his digestive system, about what the readings meant on his blood test...etc...but, he was also able to share the gospel and his own testimony, with his pastor friend translating and adding stuff. It was beautiful. Dr. Lim asked if he wanted to receive Christ and my dad said he wasn't ready. So, they just prayed for him. Although my dad wasn't ready then, I believe that seeing Dr. Lim's care for him and hearing the gospel so clearly was significant in him coming to Christ months later.

For Dr. Lim, faith in Jesus and physical care went hand in hand. They weren't separated. And that's my heart for us. **That as we are being trained so meticulously to do the occupation we feel like God has called us to do—to teach, to care for people medically, to start businesses and non-profits—**

that we would see the issues in our society the way God sees them

that our hearts would break at the poverty and brokenness

that it would drive us to our knees

and that we would be trained ministers as we seek restoration not only on a physical level, but spiritually too.

“Whoever claims to live in Him must walk as Jesus did.” (I wonder about the doctors who cared for the bleeding woman. If they knew to bring her to Jesus Christ, would it have been different?)