

A sick woman and a dead child

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[0 : 00] Twelve years is a pretty long time. I wonder if you can remember back to your 12th birthday.

! Some of you are looking forward to your 12th birthday, which might be soon and might be some years away. Twelve years ago is quite a long time. For me, twelve years ago, I just turned 18. I officially became an adult.

And now I am 30 with a responsible job and I even have one or two grey hairs. Twelve years is a long time.

And in our passage this evening, we find a 12-year-old girl and a lady who has suffered for 12 years.

We begin the story seeing this man, Jairus. Have a look at verse 22. Then one of the synagogue leaders named Jairus came. And when he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet.

[1 : 23] Jairus is an important man. He's a religious leader. Not just a religious leader, he's a synagogue leader. A bit like, I guess, a church leader. And we know in the Gospels that religious leaders didn't particularly like Jesus.

And perhaps this man, Jairus, wasn't sure about Jesus either until he had to come to him. He's a man with an important job, religious leader. He's also, he'd be a wealthy man.

He was important and he was respected in the community. He's a man who looks like he's doing just fine.

But then something goes wrong. Have a look down in verse 23. He pleaded earnestly with him. My little daughter is dying.

His daughter is dying. She is sick.

[2 : 38] Nothing and nobody can make her better or help her to live. Jairus, with all this importance, was powerless to make her better.

He had lots of money, but he couldn't pay for her to be fixed. He had lots of authority, but he couldn't tell her to get better. He was powerless.

And so he comes and finds hope in just one person. And that is the Lord Jesus.

And so he comes to him and pleads with him. In verse 22, he fell at his feet. 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. This is the desperate cry of a powerless man.

[3 : 45] This is a big risk for Jairus going to Jesus. Religious leaders, as I said, didn't like Jesus.

Jairus was laying his reputation on the line. If anyone was turning to follow Jesus, it shouldn't be him.

He could lose his reputation and even his job by going to Jesus. But Jairus still comes and he still pleads with Jesus because he sees in Jesus that his only hope for his little 12-year-old girl to be healed and live is Jesus.

And that shouldn't surprise us from what we know about Jesus. Just in looking, flicking back a few chapters in Mark's gospel to chapter 1, we see from verse 21 that Jesus heals a man who has an impure spirit.

And then later on, if you've got the NOV, there's little headings. It says, Jesus heals many. Go to chapter 2 and we see that Jesus heals a man who's paralyzed.

[5 : 09] Jesus is powerful. In chapter 4, at the end of chapter 4, from verse 35, Jesus is on that boat and the boat is rocking. There's a storm raging.

And who silences the storm? It is Jesus. And in the passage just before this, Jesus restores a demon-possessed man, casts the demons into the herd of pigs.

There is no one like Jesus. He has power to do things where we are powerless. And Jairus is seeing that.

Where he is weak and powerless, Jesus is strong to save. And where we are weak and powerless, Jesus is strong to save.

But then someone else comes along who also needs some help. We've already said 12 years is a long time.

[6:11] Some of us in the room aren't even 12 yet. 12 years is a long time. And verse 25 introduces us to this woman.

We don't know her name, but we do know this. And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for 12 years. So we meet a suffering woman.

12 years bleeding. And because she was bleeding, this meant she was something of an outcast. In the Old Testament law, if you were bleeding, you couldn't go and worship in the temple.

You were unclean. You were basically viewed as dead. Because blood symbolizes death. And this meant this lady was alone.

Nobody would dare go near her or touch her. She now had very little money. And she was rejected by others.

[7:17] Where did her money go? It went on spending it on treatment. Verse 26. She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and spent all she had.

She has nothing. And yet instead of getting better, she grew worse. This woman was powerless.

She was powerless and she knew she would never get better. She is just like Jairus for his daughter. Jairus, as important as he was, was just like this poor lady.

They were both powerless. But this woman knew that she could find hope by trusting in Jesus, God's chosen king. For where we feel weak and powerless, Jesus is strong to save.

And so she could trust Jesus in all of this. And so she decided what she was going to do was just reach out and touch Jesus' cloak.

[8:30] Believing that she could simply be healed. Not because Jesus' cloak was something magical like out of Harry Potter. But because she had faith in Jesus' power to heal.

Have a look at verse 28. She thought, if I just touch his clothes, I will be healed. She had heard that Jesus had been healing people.

And she believed that he was the one who could heal her. He was her only hope. For where she felt weak and powerless, Jesus is strong to save.

And some of us this evening feel weak and powerless. And this woman is an encouragement to us. To show us that the only place we can turn for help and hope is to Jesus.

We need to reach out for him. And surely he is strong enough to help us and to hold on to us.

[9:45] He can give us strength for today and for tomorrow. Where we feel like we have no strength. And this woman was wonderfully, amazingly, miraculously healed.

See how powerful Jesus is. Verse 29. Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering.

But that's not the end of this scene. Jesus stops and says, who touched me? See that in verse 31.

In verse 30 even. Who touched my clothes? But verse 31. You see the people are crowding against you. His disciples answered. And yet you ask, who touched me?

There's loads of people around him. What a ridiculous thing to say. People are brushing up against you all the time, Jesus. It would be a bit like a train station in Paris during the Olympic Games.

[10:57] So, so busy. Basically everyone around is brushing past each other. Just move on, Jesus. But Jesus insists.

Verse 32. Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. Then the woman, knowing all that had happened to her, came and fell at his feet, trembling with fear, and told him the whole truth.

For this woman, as Jesus was looking around and saying, who touched me? She was trembling. She must have thought, am I in some sort of trouble?

Is Jesus going to cast me away? Have I done something wrong? But no, look how loving Jesus is towards her. Verse 34. He said to her, daughter, your faith has healed you.

Go in peace and be freed from your suffering. Jesus spoke so kindly to her. Words that, such kind words that she probably hadn't heard in 12 whole years.

[12:08] Daughter, your faith has healed you. What a beautiful thing. Where we feel weak and powerless, Jesus is strong to save.

Some of us have recently enjoyed the Paris Olympic Games. I want to tell you briefly, I'm sure many of us know about him, briefly about this man, Eric Liddle.

He was a famous Olympian who was an Olympian 100 years ago at the Paris Olympic Games. Eric Liddle is well known not to have competed in his best event, the 100 meter sprint, because it was happening on a Sunday.

And people questioned him and said, what are you doing, Eric? This is your best event. This might be your only opportunity to get a gold medal. What are you doing, Eric?

But he knew it was the right thing to do. I said, miss church, miss remembering the Lord in a special way on a Sunday. What are you doing, Eric, though?

[13:22] And I want to say to Jesus, what are you doing, Jesus, in this passage? You were on your way to heal Jairus' daughter, who is literally about to die.

And you stop and talk to a woman who has been unwell for 12 years. Surely she could wait a few hours. This would be a bit like an ambulance, taking someone to a hospital in an emergency and stopping on the way to put a plaster on a little boy.

And look, Jesus, verse 35. While Jesus was still speaking, some people came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader.

Your daughter is dead. Why bother the teacher anymore? What are you doing, Jesus? This girl has now died.

Eric Liddell's story continued. He chose not to compete in his best event, but instead ran the 400 meters race, which wasn't on a Sunday.

[14:37] 100 meters compared to 400 meters is quite a difference. One of the hardest of them all. It takes endurance, extra effort, consistency to win that.

But people said, what are you doing, Eric? You've just been so foolish. But Eric ran that race, and he won.

He was honoring God and trusted that God was with him, and he even got a gold medal out of it. We might say to Jesus in this passage, what are you doing?

Jesus knows what he's doing. Jesus says, trust me. Verse 36. Overhearing what they said, Jesus told him, don't be afraid, just believe.

Just believe, just trust me. I know what I'm doing. But can we trust Jesus with something as big as death?

[15:45] Jesus. Jairus trusted when his 12-year-old girl was alive. Now she is dead, and he's really got to trust Jesus. And sometimes in our lives, we have to trust Jesus' timing.

We have to trust what Jesus is allowing, even though it doesn't make sense. Even though it might feel really hard and rubbish.

For this poor Jairus, his 12-year-old girl was dead. What are you doing, Jesus? But as we learned in Habakkuk recently, it's okay to ask those questions.

It's okay to say to God, what are you doing? Why this? Why this way? Why don't you sort this out now? Well, but Jesus is going to show something even greater.

That death is not a problem for God's chosen king. So have a look in verse 39. when Jesus arrived at the house, people crying, wailing loudly.

[16:58] He went in and said to them, why all this commotion and wailing? The child's not dead but asleep. He's basically saying, don't cry. What an insensitive thing for Jesus to say.

Someone's died. A little girl has died. If you just lost someone to death, and I said to you, don't cry, that would be really unhelpful.

We know Jesus himself. He wept at the grave of his friends. But we also know that what Jesus says is true. The child is not dead but asleep.

Now, I don't find it easy to wake up from sleep. It takes me a while. But for Jesus, waking up someone from not just sleep but death is very easy.

Have a look in the passage down in verse 41. He took her by the hand and said, which means little girl, I say to you, get up.

[18:08] And what happens in verse 42? Immediately, the girl stood up and began to walk around. She was dead.

And now because of Jesus, she was alive. That's a big thing. And that, for Christians, for us who trust in Jesus, we can know, we can have confidence.

By trusting in Jesus' death for us on the cross, death is just like falling asleep. One day we'll wake up just to live with him forever.

And so we can trust Jesus in life and in death. And we really can trust Jesus in life. He even cares about the little things.

Have a look in verse 43. See his wonderful compassion on this little girl. He gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this and told them to give her something to eat.

[19 : 11] He'd just raised her from the dead, but he says, this girl is hungry. And Jesus cares about even that. Jesus is the one we can trust in the big things and in the small things.

So Jairus in this passage felt his powerlessness to save his little girl. And the suffering woman felt her powerlessness to get better.

And all of us this evening are utterly powerless to save ourselves from our sin and from eternal condemnation. But where we feel weak and powerless, Jesus is strong to save.

And that's what we see in this meal. For Jesus, God's chosen king, chose to go and suffer and die for us in our place so that we can know his life.

For while we feel weak and powerless, Jesus is strong to save. Father God, thank you so much for what we see of Jesus in that little passage.

[20 : 36] Thank you that where we are weak and powerless, Jesus is strong to save. Thank you so much for his compassion on that woman saying, daughter, your faith has healed you.

Thank you so much for his compassion and that little girl raising her from the dead and saying, give her something to eat. Thank you that we can trust Jesus in the big things and the small things.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.