

AM Luke 8:40-56

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[0 : 00] Welcome to another Sunday morning, another Sunday morning when we're considering Luke's gospel together, and another Sunday morning where we're considering the awesome majesty and the awesome power of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And we see it this morning as we see his power over death. That as Jesus raises Jairus' daughter, as Jesus raises this little girl to life, he reminds us that he is the one who has power over death itself.

We're coming this morning to Luke chapter 8, Luke chapter 8 and the verses 40 through 56, verses 40 through 56. Let's read it together now, please. Luke chapter 8, beginning to read at verse 40.

This is the word of God. Now, when Jesus returned, the crowd welcomed him, for they were all waiting for him. And there came a man named Jairus, who was a ruler of the synagogue.

And falling at Jesus' feet, he implored him to come to his house. For he had an only daughter about 12 years of age, and she was dying. As Jesus went, the people pressed around him.

[1 : 06] And there was a woman who had a discharge of blood for 12 years. And though she had spent all her living on physicians, she could not be healed by anyone. She came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment, and immediately her discharge of blood ceased.

And Jesus said, Who was it that touched me? When all denied it, Peter said, Master, the crowd surround you, and they're pressing in on you.

But Jesus said, Someone touch me, for I perceive that power has gone out from me. When the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling. And falling down before him, declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed.

And he said to her daughter, Your faith has made you well. Go in peace. While he was still speaking, someone from the ruler's house came and said, Your daughter is dead.

Do not trouble the teacher anymore. But Jesus, on hearing this, answered him, Do not fear. Only believe, and she will be well. And when he came to the house, he allowed no one to enter with him except Peter and John and James, and the father and mother of the child.

[2 : 17] And all were weeping and mourning for her. But he said, Do not weep, for she is not dead, but sleeping. And they laughed at him, knowing that she was dead.

But taking her by the hand, he called, saying, Child, arise. And her spirit returned, and she got up at once and directed that something should be given to her to eat.

And her parents were amazed. But he charged them to tell no one what had happened. Amen. This is the reading of God's inspired and inerrant word.

Let's turn to the Lord in prayer now. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you that as we come this morning, we come in the name of your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

We come in the name of the one who has defeated death. We come in the name of the one who has conquered death. We thank you that as we come this morning, we come not to a crucified Saviour. We come not to a body that is still in a tomb, but we thank you, Father, that we come to a risen Lord.

[3 : 20] We come to one who has drawn the sting of death, who has tasted death for every believer so that we might have eternal life. We thank you, Father, for all of your mercies, that even as we gather together this morning, even as we perhaps feel the inferiority of meeting together over the Internet, as we feel the inferiority of watching pre-recorded sermons.

We thank you, Father, for the mercies that you've given us. We thank you that we have the Internet. We thank you that we have all of these technological resources at our disposal. We thank you that we can still enjoy good word ministry together.

Father, we long for the day when we will meet again. We long for the day when our voices will be united in praise of you. We long for the day, Father, when we will be able to greet one another. We long for the day, Heavenly Father, when we will once again be that visible representation of your body here in Dumfries. But until that day comes, Father, give us patience. Until that day comes, Father, give us joy in the means that you've given us. We remember our land before you at this time.

[4 : 43] Praying again for our leaders. Praying for Nicholas Sturgeon. Praying for Boris Johnson. Praying for all of those, Father, who are taking decisions that will materially impact people's lives.

We pray that they may act with grace and wisdom. We pray that they may know your guiding and leading in the days that lie ahead. We pray, Father, that you would protect against a second spike of this coronavirus.

That you would protect against more people getting sick and dying. We pray, Father, that you would be with us now as we come to your word. Give us insight and understanding.

Help us to see the great truths that are there, we ask. In Jesus' name. Amen. So let's turn then, please, to Luke chapter 8.

Luke chapter 8 and these verses 40 through 56. Verses 40 through 56 of Luke chapter 8. I have to say that for me, one of the most frustrating things about ministers is that for a job that's all about communication, so many ministers are terrible at it.

[5 : 54] Now, I'm not talking about videos that you might see on YouTube. I'm not talking about how they communicate to you as they preach sermons. I'm talking about ordinary, bog standard, everyday communication.

Replying to emails, replying to text messages, replying to those sorts of things. You might email Minister X on Monday. You've presented to him quite a simple email.

You've presented to him quite a simple request. And yet, by the time Saturday morning rolls around, you still haven't heard anything from Minister X. And eventually, when you do get a reply, it will always start with the phrase, well, sorry it's taken me so long to get back to you, but.

Now, I read an interesting book about this a few months ago. I can't remember the title of the book. I just remembered that this was one of the takeaways for me from the book.

Because it was speaking about this very subject. And it said that the problem wasn't so much with the ministers who weren't replying, the problem was with me. You see, in my arrogance, in my self-interest, I assumed that my problem was the most pressing.

[7 : 07] I assumed that my problem, or my email, should be the top of that minister's to-do list for the week. When, in fact, most of them probably had quite extensive to-do lists already. In my arrogance, I assumed that my problem was the most pressing.

In my arrogance, I assumed that my need should be top of their list. As we come to this passage, as we come to this section in Luke chapter 8, as we come to this very famous account of Jairus and this woman with the discharge of blood, we can imagine Jairus seeing that his problem was the most pressing, can't we?

After all, he had this daughter who was about to die. After all, he was in desperate need for his family. And yet Jesus stops to talk to this woman.

Jesus stops to deal with this woman whose problem has already been healed, whose illness has already been cured. Jairus felt like his problem was the most pressing.

But in his plans and his purposes, Jesus had other problems that were literally pressing in on him as well. He would deal with Jairus, yes, but he would also deal with this woman.

[8 : 22] He would help Jairus, yes, but he would also help this woman as well. We want to see three things together this morning. See three things together from these verses in Luke chapter 8.

Firstly, we want to think about a distraught father. A distraught father that as Jairus meets Jesus off the boat, we see his distress, we see his concern, we see the worries of life pressing in on him.

Secondly then, though, we want to think about a desperate woman. We're introduced to this woman who has spent all her money, who has invested her life savings in looking for a cure.

And yet her condition grew worse. She's desperate and she reaches out to Jesus to help her. But then thirdly and finally, wonderfully, we want to think about a death-defeating saviour.

That Jesus raises this little girl from the dead. That Jesus gives this little girl back to her family. We want to see these three things then.

[9 : 25] A distraught father, a desperate woman, and a death-defeating saviour. So firstly then, a distraught father, a distraught father. And we see that in verses 40 through 42a.

Verses 40 through 42a, a distraught father. So we remember what we saw last week in Luke's Gospel. We remember the things that we thought about last week in Luke's Gospel.

We remember how Jesus cured the demoniac. We remember how Jesus drove those legion of demons out of the man. Remember the reactions of the crowds of the people in that area.

They said to him, look, please depart from us. Please leave our region. Please leave our area. We can't be dealing with this. Remember verse 37. Jesus willingly obliged.

If they didn't want him in their region. If they didn't want him in their town. Then he wasn't going to stay where he wasn't wanted. We remember the reaction of the man who was healed. He said to Jesus, look, please let me come with you.

[10 : 21] Please let me come with you. And Jesus says, no. Rather, go and tell everyone what God has done for you. Go and show the people the mercy and grace of God that's been extended to you.

And we say that because it explains for us what we read in verse 40 of this week's passage. It explains for us where we're at as we come to verse 40. Because when we come to verse 40, we read, no, when Jesus returned.

So the question in our minds is, well, where is Jesus returning to? Well, quite simply, he's returning from the land of the Gerasenes. He's returning from that journey he'd made a few days earlier. He's returning having been asked to leave by the people of the region.

He's returning from the other side, as Luke puts it. Now there's a bit of a reception party that's laid on for him, isn't there?

There's a bit of a welcome party that's there. This crowd welcomed him. This crowd are there waiting for him to return. This crowd are there looking for Jesus, looking for the boat, carrying the Savior back.

[11 : 22] It's then that we're introduced to this man, verse 41. And there came a man named Jairus, who was a ruler of the synagogue.

Now what does that mean? What does it mean when we're told that Jairus was a ruler of the synagogue? Well, quite simply, it means that he was one of the religious teachers of the day. He was one of the religious leaders of the day.

He was one of the religious elite of the day, if you like. He was a man of poise, a man of standing. A man who people would look to for advice, for counsel, for instruction.

He was a man who was concerned with keeping the law of God. He was a man who was concerned with doing right. And yet, where do we find him in Luke this morning? Where do we find him in Luke's account of Jesus' life this morning?

There came a man named Jairus, who was a ruler of the synagogue. And what does he do? Verse 41. Falling at Jesus' feet. Here was a man who was used to decorum.

[12 : 28] Here was a man who was used to social standards being kept. Here was a man who didn't fall at anyone else's feet. Here was a man who people respected. Here was a man who people looked to.

And yet here is a man at the feet of Christ. There's something a little unseemly about it.

There's something that would have gone against every social etiquette of the day about it. This religious leader, this man respected by the community, comes and falls at Jesus' feet.

You may remember some years ago. Now this wasn't during my lifetime. I have to say that I don't remember watching it live. But I remember watching it a few years ago. You may remember a very famous incident in the BBC Sports Quiz.

It was a question of sport involving Princess Anne and the retired footballer Emlyn Hughes. There's a great deal of controversy around it because Emlyn Hughes was a great fan of putting his arm around his teammates.

[13 : 36] He was a great fan of hugging those who were on his team and giving them high fives. There was a great deal of controversy because he put his arm at one point around Princess Anne and then instinctively withdrew it.

It was felt that this was unseemly. It was felt that this wasn't really in keeping with the spirit of the monarchy at the time. And that's how people would have felt as Jairus comes and falls at Jesus' feet.

That's the kind of reaction that people would have had as Jairus comes and falls at Jesus' feet. They would have said, what is he doing? He doesn't do that. Doesn't he know he's not supposed to do that?

Why is he falling at Jesus' feet? Why is he doing this? Well, we get the answer in verse 42, don't we? Why is he doing it?

Why does he come to Jesus and fall at his feet? Well, he had an only daughter, about 12 years of age, and she's dying. There's nowhere else to go.

[14:38] There's no one else to turn to. There's no other source of help available. He's seen Jesus heal. He's heard about the great things that Jesus can do, and he reasons well. Maybe he can help.

I've got nowhere else left to turn. Often God will bring us to an end of ourselves. Often God will bring us to an end of our resources, because it's only as we reach the end of our resources, it's only as we reach the end of ourselves, that we realize that God can help when no one else will, and when no one else can.

It's one of the things that we've seen from this coronavirus epidemic, isn't it? We've seen people who have no thought for God. We've seen people who have no inclination towards God, who have never considered the things of God being brought to an end of themselves, having their worldview so fundamentally shaken, that they now turn to God.

That many of them who've never been to a church service in their lives are now streaming live services into their homes each Sunday. Why? Because they've been brought to an end of themselves.

Because they've realized that all of these things they've built their life upon have been shaky and foundationless. But what's the key thing? The key thing isn't being brought to an end of yourself.

[16:07] The key thing isn't being brought to an end of your resources. The key thing isn't having your worldview fundamentally shaken. The key thing is what Jairus does here. You see, all of this happens to him.

All of these things are true. But what does he do? He comes to Christ. He sees that Christ is the one who can help him.

He sees that Christ is the one who can deal with his problems. Maybe you're tuning in this morning. Maybe you do feel helpless. Maybe you do feel hopeless this morning.

Maybe you can resonate with Jairus here, having been brought to an end of yourself. Feeling that you've nowhere left to turn. Well, what a reassuring thought it is this morning to know that you can turn to God.

To know that you can come through the Lord Jesus Christ. To know that you can cry out to him in prayer. And know that he will hear you. To know that he will answer your prayers.

[17:10] That's a distraught father then, coming and falling at the feet of Jesus. Secondly, though, we want to think about a desperate woman. A desperate woman.

And we see that in verses 42b through 48. So let's try and picture the scene in our minds. That the people have seen the boat coming. They recognize it as the boat that's carrying Jesus.

This great crowd gathers round and they give Jesus this rapturous welcome back. And suddenly Jairus comes and falls at Jesus' feet.

And says, look Jesus, can you help me? Please, my daughter is dying. Please come and do something. Come and heal my daughter. So then, verse 42b, the whole crowd set off to Jairus' house.

The whole crowd set off to see what Jesus will do. The whole crowd go with him to see if he will heal the little girl or not. And you can imagine with the size of the crowd, with the enthusiasm of the crowd, there's a little bit of jostling going on.

[18:11] There's a little bit of jockeying going on. You know what, yourself, if you've been to any large sporting event, you've been to perhaps a large concert, you know there comes that moment at the end where everybody's trying to get out those very narrow exits.

Everyone's trying to make it up those very narrow steps. And whether you want to or not, it's inevitable that there's a little bit of jockeying goes on. There's a little bit of rubbing shoulders that goes on.

Whether you want to or not, whether it's accidental or not, it just happens. And that's very much the scene for us in verse 42b. That as this crowd goes, inevitably, there's a little bit of jockeying going on.

Inevitably, there's a little bit of rubbing shoulders going on. But in the midst of this crowd is a woman who has a problem. In the midst of this crowd is a woman who has a serious problem.

She's had this discharge of blood for 12 years. More than that, Luke records us. And remember again, Luke, the physician, Luke, the doctor, records for us.

[19 : 22] What does he say? Verse 43, there was a woman who had a discharge of blood for 12 years. And though she had spent all her living on physicians, she could not be healed by anyone.

She's tried all the pioneering drugs. She's tried all the latest laser treatments. She's tried all of the new therapies that have come around. She's spent all her life savings on this.

But it hasn't done any good. No one has been able to help her. No one has been able to heal her.

The doctors, such as they were at the time, have drained her of her life savings.

And she sees her opportunity, verse 44. She sees, verse 42b, that the crowd's already jostling in.

She sees that the crowd's already pressing in on him, verse 42b. And so she thinks to herself, verse 44, well look, perhaps I can sneak up behind him.

Perhaps I can just touch the hem of his garment. Perhaps I can just touch him and I know that that will heal me. I can just touch him the same way that everyone else is doing, the same way that this crowd's doing.

[20 : 36] And maybe, just maybe, he can help me. Maybe, he can heal me in a way that none of the doctors have been able to. What remarkable faith that the woman shows.

She doesn't want the song and dance of being healed in front of the crowd. She doesn't want the song and dance of a commendation from Jesus for her faith. Now admittedly, there's probably also a little bit of shame.

There's also a little bit of guilt mixed in there. She's worried, as we'll find out in a few verses time, she's worried that Jesus will reprimand her. She's worried that if Jesus finds out her problem, then he won't help.

But there's a great amount of faith. If I only touch his garment, then I will be made well. She has a problem. She realizes Jesus is the one who can help, that Jesus is the one who can deal with it.

And so in this quiet, unassuming way, she reaches out and touches the hem of his garment. And immediately, she's healed. Friends, of course, our problem this morning is sin.

[21 : 45] Each of us is enslaved to sin. Each of us since birth has been held in sin's grasp. Ever since we've been born, we've had that natural bent away from God and towards ourselves.

We all have that problem of sin this morning. And the only solution to sin is the same solution we see to the woman here. The only solution to sin this morning is to reach out by faith and take hold of Christ.

The only solution to sin this morning is to reach out and be healed by the Savior. To come to know him as our personal Lord and Savior. To come to know that he died in our place, that his sacrifice for sin was the price that was due from us.

To look out to him for healing. Healing of our right relationship with God. But it doesn't go quite as she's planned, does it?

She reaches out, verse 44, she touches the fringe of his garment, verse 44, and immediately her discharge of blood ceased. But then notice what happens, verse 45.

[22 : 49] Jesus says, well, hold on. Who touched me? Hold on. Someone touched me. I perceive that power has gone out from me.

She's been caught. She hasn't escaped unnoticed as she hoped. She hasn't escaped without being detected as she hoped.

And Peter says, well, look, Jesus, look at the crowd. Look at all these people and you're saying, well, who touched me? Look at the way they're jostling all around you and you're saying, well, who touched me? How can you ask that?

Jesus says, look, I know, verse 46, I know someone touched me. So who was it? The woman has to own up now, doesn't she?

She's been caught out. And so she comes, verse 47, and notice how she comes. Notice what Luke records for us about her state as she comes, verse 47. When the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling and falling down before them, declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched them.

[23 : 54] How does she come? Well, she comes with fear and trembling. She comes again falling at the feet of Jesus. Why? I think there's an element of being afraid.

She thinks that Jesus is about to give her a rush. She thinks that Jesus is about to give her an argument. She thinks that Jesus will be cross at her. She's perhaps worried that Jesus will be annoyed because she has made him ceremonially unclean by touching her when she was at this discharge of blood.

She wasn't sure how Jesus was going to react and so she comes with fear and trembling. She comes falling at the feet of Jesus. And she tells the whole story.

She tells the crowd about this discharge of blood. She tells the crowd probably about how she spent all that she had on physicians. She hasn't got any better but got worse. She tells about how she saw her opportunity.

She tells about how she reached out by faith and touched the hem of his garment. She tells her that at that moment her discharge of blood was healed. Jesus, rather than giving her a telling off, rather than giving her a row, rather than shouting at her, simply says to her, verse 48, daughter, your faith has made you well.

[25 : 10] Go in peace. You'll get no condemnation from me. You'll get no argument from me. Your faith has made you well. Go in peace.

You see, friends, this is the true picture of Jesus Christ. And by extension, this morning, it's the true picture of God. You see, a lot of people will read the Bible and they'll say, look, isn't that God so vindictive?

Isn't that God so mean? And yet, friends, well, the picture that we actually truly see of God is a picture of mercy and grace.

It's a picture of speaking kindness to those in need. It's a picture of speaking healing to those who are sick. Jesus speaks kind words to this woman in distress.

Now, of course, God judges the ungodliness of man. But for all who will come, for all who will receive it, grace and mercy is available.

[26 : 17] Forgiveness is available. Healing is available. Restoration is available. Healing that this lady experienced is available. The welcome words that this lady heard are words that we can all hear this morning.

the question is, will we come? Will we experience it for ourselves? Will we experience that spiritual healing? Will we experience that forgiveness of sin for ourselves?

So we've seen a distraught father. We've seen a desperate woman. Then thirdly, finally, this morning, we want to think about a death defeating saviour.

A death defeating saviour. And we see that in verses 49 through 56. So the drama is building, isn't it? The tension is building, isn't it? Jairus has come to Jesus and said, look, can you help my daughter?

On the way, they've had this kind of interruption, if you like. And you can imagine Jairus pacing backwards and forwards. You can imagine Jairus sort of saying, well, look, Jesus, she's been healed.

[27 : 19] What's the problem? Jesus, she's well. What's the delay? You can imagine Jairus panicking. His problem seems so much more acute. His problem seems so much more pressing than this woman, certainly now that she's been healed.

And then the bombshell drops in verse 49. While he was still speaking, that is Jesus, while he's still speaking to the woman, someone from the ruler's house came and said, your daughter is dead. Don't bother Jesus anymore. Don't take up any more of his time. Your daughter's dead. There's nothing that can be done for her. But again, notice how Jesus responds.

Notice what Jesus says to Jairus. Notice how Jesus speaks words of compassion to him, just as he had to this woman a few verses earlier. Jesus, on hearing this answer to him, don't fear, only believe and she will be well.

They come to the house and the crowds are forced to wait outside. They come to the house and most of the disciples are forced to wait outside. It's only Peter and James and John, Jesus and the mother and father of the child who are allowed to go in.

[28 : 32] When they arrive, there's obviously this scene of mourning going on. There's obviously this scene of great wailing going on, wailing over the seeming pointlessness of this loss of life. Everyone is weeping at the tragedy unfolding in front of their eyes.

And Jesus comes into the midst of that wailing. Jesus comes into the midst of that mourning and what does he say? Verse 52, do not weep for she's not dead but sleeping.

And notice what happens even in the midst of this scene of mourning, even in the midst of this scene of intense suffering. Notice what happens, verse 53, and they laughed at him knowing that she was dead.

Look Jesus, we know a dead person when we see one. Look Jesus, we know that she's not asleep. Don't you think we might have tried to wake her up? Don't you think that we might have checked to see if she was breathing or not? We know she's dead.

We know she's not asleep. Takes her by the hand, verse 54, and says, little girl arise, child arise. And she gets up at once.

[29 : 36] Jesus this morning is the one who has power over death. We see that here of course, don't we? But we also see it with Lazarus.

We also see it with the widow of Nain's son. And most supremely of all of course, we see it with the cross. The cross where Jesus died, that tomb that was empty three days later, that tomb that was empty that proved Jesus had defeated death.

the one who died in our place so that we might know eternal life. Remember those verses that Paul penned? Remember those wonderful words that Paul told us under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit?

What did he say? The wages of sin is death. The due reward for sin is death. And each of us is in problems this morning because each of us, as we thought about earlier, is by nature sinful. Each of us has turned away from God.

Each of us goes our own way with no thought for God. What we deserve by nature is death. We've all sinned.

[30 : 40] We've all rejected God and deserved death as a result of that. And yet as Jesus Christ died on that cross, think of those words that he cried out, it is finished.

The sacrifice for sin has been offered. The price has been paid. The debt has been cancelled. And now the gift of God is eternal life for all who believe.

Are you afraid of death this morning? Again, the coronavirus has brought that into sharp relief, hasn't it? We hear of numbers, we know of people who have died with coronavirus.

And so the question for us is, are we afraid of death? then come to Christ this morning. The one who defeated death, the one who conquered the grave, the empty tomb is there to prove it.

Maybe you're here and you're not afraid of death. Maybe you're here and you're a Christian. Well, it's a great reminder to us that death has no sting for us anymore. That death holds no power over us anymore because our Savior has gone through the curtain.

[31 : 58] Because our Savior has defeated death in its power. Our Savior is the one who has defeated death time and time and time and time again.

Our Savior is the one who has defeated death once and for all. Come to him this morning and know life. And know it to the full.

Amen. Amen.