

# A Bleeding Woman and Jairus' Daughter Encounter Jesus

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- [ 0 : 00 ] So we're continuing our series in Encounters with Jesus, and this reading is from Luke chapter 8, starting at verse 40, telling of some more people who met Jesus.
- Now when Jesus returned, a crowd welcomed him, for they were all expecting him. Then a man named Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, came and fell at Jesus' feet, pleading with him to come to his house because his only daughter, a girl of about twelve, was dying.
- As Jesus was on his way, the crowds almost crushed him, and a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years, but no one could heal her.
- She came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak, and immediately her bleeding stopped. Who touched me? Jesus asked. When they all denied it, Peter said, Master, the people are crowding and pressing against you.
- But Jesus said, Someone touched me. I know that power has gone out from me. Then the woman, seeing that she could not go unnoticed, came trembling and fell at his feet.
- [ 1 : 29 ] In the presence of all the people, she told why she had touched him and how she had been instantly healed. Then he said to her, Daughter, your faith has healed you.
- Go in peace. While Jesus was still speaking, someone came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue ruler. Your daughter is dead, he said.
- Don't bother the teacher anymore. Hearing this, Jesus said to Jairus, Don't be afraid. Just believe, and she will be healed. When he arrived at the house of Jairus, he did not let anyone go in with him except Peter, John, and James, and the child's father and mother.
- Meanwhile, all the people were wailing and mourning for her. Stop wailing, Jesus said. She is not dead, but asleep. They laughed at him, knowing that she was dead.
- But he took her by the hand and said, My child, get up. Her spirit returned and at once she stood up.
- [ 2 : 38 ] Then Jesus told them to give her something to eat. Her parents were astonished, but he ordered them not to tell anyone what had happened.
- So first of all, I'm wondering if you could think back over your last week since maybe last Sunday. And I'm wondering if at any point during your last week, you set out to do something.
- And you were prevented from doing it by an interruption. So an emergency, a phone call, a knock at the door, or a chance meeting. Could you put your hand up if you remember in the last week being interrupted by something?
- Quite a few. Quite a few of you. So hopefully if that's happened to you, and maybe it's been frustrating, then this passage is for you.
- Because in this passage, Jesus is interrupted. He's actually interrupted twice. Are the slides coming up, Janine?

[ 3 : 51 ] Taking their time, don't worry. He has been, Jesus has been across at the other side of Lake Galilee. And on his return, a large crowd are waiting for him.

It says in verse 40, a crowd welcomed him, for they were all expecting him. It's an expectant crowd waiting. And interruption number one is, I have real trouble saying this.

I always say Jairus. Jairus. Please forgive me if I get it wrong throughout this. Jairus. And he falls at Jesus' feet and pleads with him to come because his only daughter, a girl of 12 years old, was dying.

And then the second interruption is, Jesus is on his way to Jairus' house. And the crowds are crushing him, and he feels someone touch him.

And it's the woman who needs healing. So when Jesus is interrupted this second time and asks who touches him, Peter says, Master, the people are crowding and pressing against you.

[ 5 : 10 ] And I think I can hear a slight frustration, perhaps, in Peter here. The crowds are pressing. The demands of the crowd are pressing. They need Jesus, and Jesus is off following these interruptions.

We don't know what Jesus planned to say to these expectant crowds this day. We never find out. Because the interruptions become the story that Luke tells us.

Luke's narrative moves on. But we know by the next chapter in Luke 9, a crowd of 5,000 people have gathered when Jesus feeds them, the feeding of the 5,000.

So we don't know what Jesus had intended for this day, if he had intended something. And actually, the word encounter, I love the word encounter, so I looked up what it meant.

And it means to meet someone unexpectedly. Is it an interruption to Jesus' plan? Or is it, in fact, the plan all along? Maybe God's plans don't always run parallel with our own.

[ 6 : 16 ] C.S. Lewis said this about interruptions.

He said, The great thing, if we can, is to stop regarding all the unpleasant things as interruptions of our own or real life. The truth is, of course, that what we call interruptions are precisely our real life.

The life God is sending us day by day. So we're going to have a look this morning at Jesus' interrupted day. And I want to look at three things about it.

I want to look at Jesus' priorities. How does he prioritize? Where does he go? And why does he make that decision? And what can we learn from what and whom he prioritizes?

I want to look at Jesus' presence, because there's something, I think, important about the presence of Jesus in this passage. Everyone wants his presence. What does it mean to have Jesus present with us?

[ 7 : 25 ] And Jesus' practicality, I've struggled a bit over this word, but it does begin with a P. Jesus' ministry. Jesus is, of course, supernatural, no more so than in this passage.

But I think there's also something practical about his ministry that we can overlook. And his healing is holistic. So let's have a look at Jesus' priorities.

So the first interruption. Jairus, who is an important figure. Luke tells us that he's a synagogue leader. And Jesus, but Jesus still leaves a crowd of expectant people to help one man.

And actually, the person he's going to help is this man's 12-year-old unnamed daughter. And it does feel to me a bit like the shepherd who leaves 99 in search of the one person.

The second woman, she's even more unexpected, I think. The woman with 12 years of possibly menstrual bleeding.

[ 8 : 33 ] We don't know what is causing her bleeding. But under Jewish law, it meant that she was ceremonially unclean. Leviticus 15 said that this woman would be barred from temple.

And as Richard reminded us a couple of weeks ago, ceremonial uncleanness is contagious. Anyone who touched this woman or his touch by her would be considered unclean.

So Jesus, having been interrupted by the synagogue leader, is now interrupted by the woman who is not even allowed to enter the synagogue. So what can we learn from Jesus' priorities?

I think we can learn that Jesus gives priority to the people the world doesn't always prioritize. So one of the things I've tried to do is challenge myself to smile, make eye contact, and say hello to people I pass who are street homeless.

And I try and do this even if I'm not going to stop and offer to get them something to eat. Even if I'm in a rush, I try and do that. Because marginalized people are often unseen.

[ 9 : 53 ] And Jesus, it seems, tends to see them. Can we see them too? I think we need to really listen to God's prompting. So many years ago, I can't remember if we were studying at church or I was studying myself, but I was looking at the Samaritan woman that Jesus meets at the well, the passage that Chris preached on last week.

And Chris reminded us that Jesus meets her at noon in the heat of the day. At that time, we were doing some work out the front of our house, which is on the main road on Norwood Road.

And I felt that God was speaking to me about the people who passed my house in the heat of the day at noon. After the commute and the school run, when things have quietened down.

At the time when people can go past, perhaps unnoticed. And actually, I've slowly developed a friendship with one of those people that walked past my house in the middle of the day.

And it's been a really slow development of a relationship. But this person now comes along to welcome space. And I believe that God is slowly at work in his life.

[ 11 : 06 ] I think the third thing we can do is slow down a bit and take time. And I'm not very good at this. Just before Christmas, I'd been speaking to a woman who was street homeless.

I stopped and I talked to her about coming to welcome space on Monday. And she seemed really positive about it, but she didn't actually come along. And a few days later, I passed her in the street.

And she stopped and said, you're the woman from the church. Do you know what I said in response to this person? I said, I can't stop. I'm catching the train to work.

That's why I said to this woman. She hadn't even asked me a question. And to be honest, I could have stopped. I leave myself plenty of time to get to work.

And as soon as I got on the train, I thought to myself, God really wanted me to stop. I did the wrong thing. And I thought, maybe I'll see her again and I'll be able to make up for it.

[ 12 : 13 ] But it was before Christmas and I never have seen her again because I thought I didn't have time to stop. And maybe you're thinking, well, sometimes we need to be places on time.

And often we do need to do that. Jesus gives us roles and responsibilities. For years, for about 10 years, it was my priority to be at the gates of Rosendale Primary School at 3.25 on weekdays.

And I wouldn't let any interruptions stop me from getting there on time because that was my priority. But often our busyness is about the choices that we make.

And I think we could reflect on whether we always make the right ones. I have days where I absolutely can be interrupted. And I need to pray that on those days, God shows me the right people.

I think also being interrupted is about being present. I love my Bluetooth headphones. I wear them when I'm making the packed lunches, when I'm cleaning the house.

[ 13 : 18 ] And when I wear them, my family know that it's best not to try and ask me questions. If I'm wearing them all the time, then I signal to people that I'm not present and not available.

How can we encourage chance encounters and conversations? So the next thing I want to look at is the presence of Jesus. Jairus wants Jesus' presence with his daughter in his home.

So he goes to get Jesus in the hope that he can heal her. In verse 49, someone comes to tell him that it is too late.

His daughter is dead. And in verse 50, Jesus says in response, just believe she will be healed. And Jesus goes.

And by the time he gets there, he has this kind of conversation with the mourners, where he says, she's actually not dead. She's just asleep. So I guess the question I was thinking of is, at what point is the daughter healed?

[ 14 : 23 ] It seems to me that maybe Jesus is able to heal her before he actually arrives and says that he's asleep. And in the previous chapter of Luke's gospel, Jesus heals the servant of the centurion soldier.

Do you remember that passage? Without actually going anywhere, he's able to heal him remotely. So if she is healed already, or maybe even if Jesus can heal her without going, why does he go?

Does he want to make sure he gets the credit for it? Well, no, he doesn't, because Jesus actually asked the family at the end not to tell anyone about it. I think he actually goes because he wants to demonstrate that this unnamed 12-year-old girl is worthy of his presence.

And then there's the woman. And then there's the woman with the bleeding. And she doesn't demand Jesus' attention.

She just wants a touch of his cloak. And this moment reminds me of the story of Ruth and Boaz that we looked at back in June. Do you remember that Ruth is sent by Naomi to lay at Boaz's feet at night, unnoticed?

[ 15 : 47 ] And just like Jesus, Boaz is subtly made aware of the woman's presence. He is startled by her. And Ruth says to Boaz, I am your servant, Ruth, she says.

Spread the corner of your garment over me since you are my kinsman, Redeemer. This woman also wants a touch of a garment, Jesus' cloak.

And when Jesus notices her, she comes before him trembling. And Jesus responds to her, daughter, your faith has healed you. I've never thought much about the daughter.

I thought it was maybe kind of term of endearment. But I can't find anywhere else in the Gospels where Jesus calls someone his daughter. Jesus gives protection to this woman as a male kinsman by calling her daughter to this unclean woman.

Jesus becomes her kinsman, Redeemer, and she becomes a child of God. And look at what Jesus says to Jairus' daughter when he finally makes it in verse 53.

[ 17 : 00 ] My child, get up. And it's interesting looking at these two stories, isn't it? Because I think we're in a time where maybe we don't see the supernatural healings that we'd love to see.

And that's really hard. But at the same time, we have something today that the people in this passage don't have. Because of the death and resurrection of Jesus, we can have the presence of God available to us at all times.

We have that access through Jesus' death and the gift of his spirit. So if emergency befalls you, you don't need to send anyone to get Jesus.

You don't need to push your way through a crowd to get his attention. We have his presence anytime we want it. And you know what? I take that access for granted.

The presence of Jesus transformed the lives of these two women. They became daughters of God. It will transform our lives too because we are God's precious children.

[ 18 : 13 ] So let's spend more time in Jesus' presence. And finally, my favorite little bit in this passage, and actually I love most of this passage, is right at the end, after the spirit of the girl has returned, she stands up.

And Jesus says to her parents, well, he tells her parents to go and get her something to eat. Why does Jesus say that? And why does Luke think it's important to record it?

Well, it's a practical thing to do, isn't it? This girl was dead. She's experienced a traumatic event. And Jesus is ministering to her holistically, physically, spiritually, emotionally.

I've done some training for my work on how to help people who have experienced trauma. One of the exciting things for me about this area is that science is now demonstrating what we've instinctively understood through age-old wisdom.

So science can now show us that the very best thing you can do for someone in the aftermath of trauma is to soothe their body through food, a hot drink, wrap them in a blanket.

[ 19 : 40 ] And I love that Jesus knew this, that healing comes supernaturally, but also in the provision of a hot meal. Do you remember a time when someone has maybe prepared a meal for you and it has been healing?

After Annie was born, Annie's my oldest daughter. She was born in King's Hospital. And I probably hadn't eaten for a long time.

And a couple of hours after Annie was born, a nurse came in with a hot meal. It was some chicken pasta dish.

I'm not even sure what it was at the time. But it tasted like the most amazing meal I have ever eaten. I can still remember how good it felt to eat that meal.

Because it was exactly what I needed, what my body needed. And God knows that about us. In the next chapter of Luke's Gospel, Jesus will send his disciples to preach the Gospel and heal the sick.

[ 20 : 53 ] Jesus turns water into wine at the wedding in Cana. And in the next chapter, as I've mentioned, of Luke's Gospel, he feeds 5,000 people. While also teaching them the Gospel.

When you encounter Jesus in the Gospels, you go away spiritually transformed, physically healed. And you go away well fed and watered.

Jesus' ministry is supernatural and it is practical. I follow a social media account called Very British Problems.

I don't know if anyone else has heard of it. And it's mainly preoccupied with bin collections, how to say no without actually saying no. But recently it had a post about what is your favourite cup of tea.

The cup of tea in bed on Sunday morning. The cup of tea on returning from shopping, football or work. The first tea back home in your house after a holiday.

[ 21 : 54 ] Or my favourite, the cup of tea you have leaning against the worktop when you've just cleaned the kitchen. Maybe one day we will need a new entry.

The cup of tea that is handed to you when God has raised you from the dead. So what can we learn from Jesus on this interrupted day?

That interruptions are sometimes how God gets our attention. That God's agenda is more important than our agenda. Jesus prioritises those who are marginalised over those who are powerful.

Because they are so often unseen and unheard. Can we give these people our attention? That God's presence is a precious gift which gives the power and protection which comes from being God's children.

That God heals. I really hope that I live to see someone raised from the dead. This happens here. I never want to stop praying for or believing in supernatural healing.

[ 23 : 11 ] But while I'm waiting for and seeking and praying for those things, I want to be someone who gives my time. Who allows interruptions. Who slows down enough to sense God's presence and hear his voice.

And I want to be someone who can minister practically. Someone who can put the kettle on. Thank you.