

Great Faith

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[0 : 0 0] Turn again to the chapter we read in Luke's Gospel, Luke chapter 8, and I want us to look at this last section here. It's headed that Jesus heals a woman and Jairus' daughter.

We read in verse 40 that when Jesus returned, the crowd welcomed him, for they were all waiting for him. 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, and so on.

This is a well-known passage, and I'm sure there's nothing in it that we're not familiar with, and we're just highlighting, as always when we're looking at sections, just as it were, an overview of it.

And we find something that is highlighted so often as we're going through the Gospels is the kind of unrelenting pressure that Jesus was always under.

There seemed to be no escape for him. And how different today, because those who are at the forefront of life, those who are, I suppose, and today we talk of celebrity, and people who are at the high point of society.

[1 : 1 7] And the one thing about these people is that they're virtually inaccessible, they're inaccessible, unless they make themselves, because they often live in homes where there's high protection, they're whizzed away in high-powered cars, they have minders around them, and unless they make themselves available, it's almost impossible to get access to them.

How different for Jesus, who was at the very forefront of national life in these days, some 2,000 years ago, that despite the non-stop pressure, Jesus was always available.

And we find him saying that, and we can hear the almost exhaustion in the words, where he says, Foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath nowhere to lay his head.

That was speaking about just the sheer exhaustion in our nature, as he was dealing, constantly dealing, constantly dealing, and there seemed to be no let up.

And yet the wonderful thing is that Jesus turned none away. And that's what we find here, is dealing with two people who are real pressing needs, different needs, but so pressing.

[2 : 3 8] Now one of the things that I think that we can learn very clearly from this passage, and throughout the ministry of Jesus, is that our passion can be very near to Jesus in many ways, and yet not receive blessing.

You see, we're told in this particular passage here, in this incident, that there were people, a lot, there were crowds pressing round Jesus. They were jostling for a better position, in order to see him, in order to hear him.

All these people pushing round him. And yet, there's only one person out of that crowd that we read of, that gets real blessing.

There's another who comes with need, and who will eventually get great blessing. But I think it's teaching us that we can be very near to Jesus, and yet miss the blessing.

In other words, if we were to apply it to ourselves, we can come to God's house, we can have our Bibles, we can open it, we can read the Word, we can hear the Word, and yet it'll bypass us, where we are not touched by Jesus.

[3 : 53] And if you're finding that you're coming to church, and that it's bypassing, that the Word is not touching you, or affecting you, then there's something wrong.

It's like we were talking to the young people, about the interference, on the radio. What is the interference? There's something. Because God hasn't changed.

His provision hasn't changed. He is the Lord who gives, so liberally. So we always have to ask ourselves, if we come under the Word, reading it, meditating upon it, prayerfully, let us not expect to have our souls filled, touched, bathed, thrilled, if we're coming to the Word, without any preparation.

Because, if we find that, we're spending all our time, picking, of just what the world gives, and then pick up the Word, then, we're not going to get anything from it.

It's the same thing, if you're going to be eating, or if I'm eating, sweets, and all these sort of things, and then you come to eat your proper food, you've got no appetite for it. And we can lose, God's people can lose their appetite.

[5 : 13] They can go through, you can go through all the motions, and still be reading the Word, and still coming to church, but deriving no benefit, because you're eating, and I'm eating, so many of the sweetest, as it were, of the world.

So that your spiritual appetite, is gone. There's the interference. And so we've always got to check out, if it's not happening for you, if it's not happening for me, then we've got to examine, because God hasn't changed.

Whoever changes, let us remember, the Lord hasn't changed. His Word hasn't changed. But we change. So we've got to look at these things.

But that is one of the lessons, that we can be in the presence, of the Lord, we can be under His Word, and yet not be touched, not be affected, not receive the blessing.

But there's this lady, who receives the blessing, and she just stretches out, a quivering, nervous, fearful hand, and yet, she reaches out, despite all her fears, all her weakness, all her sense of inadequacy, she reaches out, by faith, and just touches, that we're told here, the fringe of His garment.

[6 : 38] Let me ask you, have you reached out, by faith, to the Lord? Is your hand, reaching out to Him? In other words, are you searching for Him?

Are you seeking Him? Are you asking Him, to be the Lord of your life, to come in, and deal with you? Now, as we say, there are two people, in this crowd, that Jesus deals with, and He deals, of course, first of all, with the second person, who tries to come, so quietly.

Now, the first person, is this man, Jairus, who we read, was a ruler, of the synagogue. In other words, he would be a very well, very prominent, well-known, prominent person, within the community.

But, and he would have been, a wealthy man, but his wealth, his prominence, his standing, none of these things, could in any way, prevent, what had happened, at home.

He was beside himself, like any parent would be, with anxiety, with worry, with concern. Because, as we read there, that his only daughter, who was about, 12 years of age, was dying.

[7 : 50] She was so ill, that when he went running away, he realized, that she was at the point, of death. And Jairus comes, and he throws himself, falling, at the feet of Jesus.

Jairus didn't come, in a half-hearted way, he came, just throwing himself. This was life, and death. But the great thing, about Jairus, was this, he knew, who the answer was.

He knew, who had the answer. It was Jesus. He wasn't going, to run to the synagogue. He wasn't going, to run to the rabbis. He was going, straight to Jesus, because he knew, that Jesus, was the only one, who could deal, with this particular problem, that was facing him.

Now, this incident, is talked about, in other gospels, as well, and it would appear, that Jesus, at this point, was turning, making his way, as it were, to go, with Jairus, to his home.

When, this woman, reaches out, as Jesus went, see, that's where he's going, he's going, with Jairus, as Jesus went, the people, pressed around him, and there was a woman, who had, had a discharge, of blood.

[9 : 07] And she, reaches out, and touches, Jesus. And Jesus, asked the question, who was it, that touched me?

And you can, almost hear, the exasperation, of the disciples, and particularly Peter, because he said, Peter said, Master, the crowds, surround you, and are pressing, in upon you.

Peter didn't get it, I suppose, in the same way, as you and I, wouldn't get it. Because, Jesus said, who touched me? And people, are touching him, all the time, they're pressing, they're pushing, there are hands out, they're trying to get, closer and closer.

Just the way, it is in any crowd. There's always jostling, and trying to make, your own space, in your own room. And that's how it was, because it was, a moving crowd. But Jesus, says, who touched me?

Because, power, went out of Jesus, that's what he tells us. Someone touched me, for I perceive, that power, has gone out, from me. The power, that is in Jesus.

[10 : 15] My friend, have you discovered, that power? For yourself, just what we were saying, a little ago. That power, is available, for you today. However you are, whatever needs, you may have, in your life, whatever problems, you may have, in your life, whatever troubles, you may have, in your life, the Lord is there, for you.

And his power, hasn't changed. You go to him. You don't have to go to him, publicly, in any great demonstration. This woman went, this woman just, reached out. Nobody else, was aware, there, the disciples, weren't aware, the crowd, weren't aware.

But that woman's hand, was different, to anybody else's, because her hand, went out in faith. She so believed, that Jesus, was the answer, to her problems, that she just, reached out.

And that movement, was by faith. You see, when we go to God, in prayer, we go by faith. That is, that is faith. whoever comes to him, comes by faith.

You cannot come, any other way. Because, whoever comes, the Bible tells us, must believe, that he is. That's at the very heart, of her, the soul's movement, out from itself, to God.

[11 : 32] This is, persuasion, and assurance, that Christ is, who he says he is. And that Christ, is able to do, what he says he can.

And so, this woman, goes and, takes a step. And I'm sure, that at this particular point, when Jesus stops, and he begins, this question, he says, because he just stopped, and he said, who touched me?

Someone touched me. For I perceive, that power, has gone out. And so, he's starting this, and because, when all denied it, everybody, would be saying, wasn't me, wasn't me.

This woman, wasn't saying anything, of course. I would imagine, that Jairus, at this point, must be beside himself, with worry. And he's saying to himself, oh, you can picture yourself, in Jairus's position.

And he'd be saying, why stop now? My daughter's, at the point of death. This woman, has this problem. Of course, he didn't know, at this particular time, what a, but when you think about it, this woman, had this problem, for years.

[12 : 40] What's another, few minutes, or another hour, going to make? What difference, is it going to make? Please, my case, is so urgent. But let us remember this, that the Lord, has a timetable, to everything.

And the Lord, will never go ahead. The Lord, can never be rushed. And that's something, we can often, find it difficult, to understand. Particularly, in the society, in the age, that we live in.

Which is one, of perpetual rush, from the moment, we get up, till we go to bed, at night, it's rush, rush, rush. And we often, find it hard, to understand, that today, in this society, that we live in, that's pushing all, pushing, pushing, pushing.

But the Lord, the Lord, will always move, at his own speed, at his own time. And everything, is perfect, in its own time. There is a purpose, and there is a season, to everything, under heaven.

The Bible, tells us that. And the Lord's delays, delays, they're not delays, as far as the Lord, is concerned. It's all working, to a perfect time. They're delays, as far as we're concerned.

[13 : 50] And it doesn't make, any sense to us. And we sometimes say, Lord, why? Justice is silent, sometimes. We don't understand. But the Lord knows. And here, the Lord stops.

And he comes to deal, with this poor woman. This poor woman, who had spent, all that she had. That's what we read here. And there was a woman, who had a discharge, of blood for 12 years.

And she had spent, all her living, on physicians. And she could not, be healed, by anyone. And you know, in a sense, although that's not, what it's exactly, saying here.

So many people, spend, all that they have, in trying to find, something, to satisfy their life. In a sense, it's like their life, is hemorrhaging away.

There's an emptiness. There's something missing. And people go down, all the different roads, and avenues, and say, oh, and for a wee while, they get satisfaction, they get pleasure, they get happiness.

[14 : 52] But there's always, still underneath, there's an emptiness. The wisest man, who ever lived, Solomon. And he was given, this incredible wisdom, by God.

When we say, the wisest man, that ever lived, that is because, the Bible tells us, that God, the Lord said to, was to Solomon, that he was going to give him, a wisdom, that none before him, would have, or after.

And yet, despite that wisdom, there are some things, about Solomon, that you would say, well, he didn't practice, all those, what he preached, his own, although he had, all that wisdom.

But there was a period, we read about it, in Ecclesiastes, where Solomon went down, all the different roads, of life. He tried everything, everything. Threw himself, into music, into work, physical work, mental work, into all kinds, of studies.

He threw himself, into everything, of life, to try, to find, what is it, that will really, satisfy? And at the end, he summed it all up, and he said, you know, without God, it's all, vanity.

[16 : 04] It's not extraordinary, well, it's not, but that's, that's what's, summing up. It's all, vanity. And so many people, have discovered that, that at the end, of their days, and remember, life is short.

We're only here, for a few, short years. And if we live, our lives, without the Lord, irrespective, of what we achieve, it'll all, be vanity.

Now, I'm not in any way, taking away, from all the good, that people do, that all the good, that is in life, but I'm talking here, in light of eternity, and as, it's, endlessness.

To live, out, our days, without, the Lord, irrespective, of all the, many wonderful, things, that life, brings, and all that, constitutes life, it will be summed up, in these words, vanity.

And that's what, is being taught, I believe, to a certain extent, throughout the scripture, and certainly, even it's told, definitely in the scripture, but here, without the Lord, nothing really works.

[17 : 19] And so, we find that this woman, she comes to Jesus, persuaded, that he, is able to deal with her. And, so, she reaches out, and touches.

But the important thing is this, although it was only, the fringes of his garment, and there's a lot of things, we could talk about, and spiritualize, not going to, just now, we're just going to move on. The important thing was this, that she, made living contact, with the living Christ.

And that's what's important. That is the message, above all. Living contact, with the living Christ. Let me ask you, have you, made living contact, with the living Christ?

Have you? That's the most personal, question. And it's the one that, needs to be answered. Well, this woman, this woman did.

And we find that, Jesus, pulls her out, from the crowd. and he begins to, to speak to her. And, it was important, for that woman.

[18 : 26] You see, this woman thought, that she could just, come quietly, without anything, and slip away. Just reach out, by faith, and slip away. Jesus wasn't going, to allow that, to happen.

Here, this woman, it's very hard, maybe for us, to understand, but as a hemorrhaging woman, she would have been, so many, prohibitions, would have been, against her.

But here now, is this deliverance, where Jesus, sets her free. But in, but Jesus, brings her forward. And I think, this is so important.

So that a confession, is made. A confession, of faith. That's what she makes. Jesus, brings her, he doesn't let her go. And that's what, Jesus wants, everybody.

Who comes to him, by faith, to do. Because we are told, that it isn't just, the believing in the heart. But it is also, the confessing, with our mouth.

[19 : 24] Let's remember that. That is what, salvation is. It's an imperative, part of it. It would be, worthwhile, sometimes, to go, sometime, to go through the Bible, and see, the number of times, that confession, with our mouth, is required.

Because it's something, sometimes, we overlook, and think, I can just, it's just me, myself, and I'll keep this, to myself. That's not what the Lord, asks from us.

It's not what the Lord, wants. And it was for the good, of this woman. It was necessary, for her growth, for her faith, and it was necessary, for her well-being. Because once, she was declared, healed.

then, these prohibitions, ceremonially, would have been lifted, from her. She would have, a new standing, a new status. And so, a confession, of faith, is so important.

And that's what, Jesus gets, from her. And so, he says to her daughter, your faith, has made you well, go in peace. And as Jesus, is speaking, these words, of comfort, to this poor woman, somebody, comes running to Jairus, and he's saying, you know, it's too late.

[20 : 37] Your daughter, is now dead. There's no point, in Jesus coming. Don't trouble the teacher, anymore. That word, death, is an awful word.

Your daughter, is dead. What heartbreaking news. What heartbreaking news. Death, is that, fearful enemy, that comes in, and tears, and breaks up, and ruins, life.

The one thing, we'll say about death, let us thank the Lord, today, that somebody, came in, to deal with death. Because we can't. That's Jesus.

That's why he came. And Jesus, is in this incident, giving us, a little insight, into his own power. Because Jesus, is himself, the resurrection, and the life.

On another occasion, standing with a family, that he loved. He made that declaration, saying, I am the resurrection, and the life. How awful, life would be, if God, had left us, to ourselves.

[21 : 49] If all that life, was just to live it, and then to die, and be lost. Christ. But God, is going to reclaim.

He's going to renew. In fact, he's making everything, even more glorious, and wonderful, than ever it was. Although, this world, will see death, and decay.

It will see destruction, and things, that are awful. Yet that's not the end. Because Jesus, he came to die, in order to beat death.

And that is why, for the Christian, we're able to say, in the face of death, Oh death, where is your sting? Oh grave, where is your victory?

Isn't that wonderful? Because Jesus, has won victory, over death, and over the grave. The empty tomb, where is Jesus? He's ascended, in his body, resurrected body.

[22 : 52] Death, couldn't hold him. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, were all involved, in the resurrection, of the Lord Jesus Christ, who sits in triumph, and that is what, separates the Christian faith, from every other faith, in this world.

Is that the one, that we follow, is risen, in body. And he is the one, who sits triumphant, over all, ruling over all. He is a personal guarantee, that what happened, to him, will happen, to us also.

And Jesus, gives us a little glimpse, of that. And there's these, wonderful words, that he speaks, to Jairus. He says, to Jairus, and poor Jairus, he's in, in this awful state, and he said to him, do not fear, only believe.

and these wonderful words. And I don't know, your situation today, some of you, might be going through, very painful circumstances, personal to you.

But my dear friend, whatever pain, you might be going through, you take it to Jesus. And if you take it to Jesus, and hand these things, to Jesus, he is saying to you, fear not, do not fear, only believe.

[24 : 13] Sometimes it's hard, to believe in the darkness. Sometimes it's hard, to believe in the pain. Sometimes it's hard, to believe when nothing, makes sense. But that's where faith, comes into exercise.

And so, we find that, Jairus, and there's still faith, because Jairus, goes along with Jesus. 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 the mother.

And you see, there was all this weeping, but Jesus said, she's not dead, she's only sleeping. You know, it's one of the great descriptions, that's what I love, about in the Bible, it speaks, because death, as we know, is that awful thing.

And where we have to put our way, from us, those whom we have loved, those whom we've laughed with, those whom we've shared with, we have to put away the body. And that's one of the horrible things of death.

But you know, the Bible talks about those, who die in Christ, that they sleep. Makes it just so different, to sleep in Jesus. And when you sleep, it's only for a wee while, because when you get up from your sleep, you're refreshed, you're renewed.

[25 : 34] And that's how it will be. Because, as we said, Jesus is the resurrection and the life. And when we rise, and remember, everybody is going to rise again.

When we rise, just as Jesus spoke to this child, and he said to her, child, arise, a voice is going to thunder. And every grave will open.

And there will be a response, in every grave, to the summons. There will be a response, for every grave will give up. The sea will give up its dead.

All will arise. Some, as we're told in Scripture, to honor, and some, to dishonor. But for those who sleep in Jesus, their bodies will rise, renewed, refreshed.

Glorious bodies, to be reunited with our soul, into the new heavens, and the new earth, that will be provided, and made. It's a wonderful concept.

[26 : 42] And this is what it is. Sometimes, as we're so grounded, in the here and now, and in the earthly, it's hard for us to understand. But as sure as we're here today, all that is going to take place.

And every single one of us, will be part of what's going to take place. Nobody, will be missed out. You'll be there, and I'll be there. All of us, will be there.

And Jesus, takes Peter, James, and John. These three were witness. For instance, they went with him, further than the other disciples, in Gethsemane. They were the three, who were with him, on the Mount of Transfiguration.

Because these three, were the prominent leaders, although James, was soon to be executed. Prominent leaders, in the early church. And they were the ones, who were going to witness, what others weren't.

Because their mission, and their ministry, was going to be, so powerful, in the spread of the gospel. The others didn't get in, to watch what had happened, because, they laughed, they laughed at, they mocked Jesus.

[27 : 46] They laughed at him, knowing she was dead. They didn't believe. So they were excluded. But Jesus took in, the father, the mother, and Peter, James, and John.

And he took the young girl, by the hand, and he said, to her child, arise. And her spirit, returned, and she got up at once.

And he directed, that something, should be given to her, to eat. And her parents, were amazed. It's quite extraordinary. It's one of these scenes, that it defies, it defies almost, words.

I don't think anybody, would be able to, paint the picture. Anybody would be able to, put together, in song, or in verse, or even convey, by word. But this child's, parents would have felt, as a child, was returned, to them.

My friend, as we, journey through life, and every day, takes us closer, to our death. Are we ready, for that, time, when we will close, our eyes in death.

[28 : 59] We're always putting it, away from us. But it's going to come. When we die, where are we going? That's a very, very important question. Don't, don't turn away from it.

Think about it. Where are you going? Well, if you put your trust, trust in Jesus, if you have this faith, in him, if you come to believe, in him, then you're going to go, with him, forever, and ever, and ever.

If you don't want, Jesus here now, you certainly won't want him, throughout an eternity. Because that's the way, it works. What you desire, what you want, here, is what you're, desiring, and choosing, for eternity.

Have you thought of that? What you desire, and choose, now, in time, is what you're desiring, and choosing, eternally.

If you are desiring, Christ, now, then your desire, will be fulfilled, and you will have him, and you will be with him, forever. If you're pushing him away, think of what you're doing.

[30 : 09] you're pushing him away, for eternity. Don't do that. While it is time, get right with God, in Jesus Christ.

Let us pray. O Lord, O God, we pray, that as we, have again, come unto the word, that the seriousness, that the solemnity, that the challenge, of the word, may enter, into our heart.

Lord, may we not, just walk away, from it, but may we be touched, and affected. May our trust, be in the Lord. O Lord, bless us, and pity us.

Shine thy face upon us, do us good, and keep us safe. Bless our homes, our families, our loved ones. Take away from us, all our sin.

In Jesus name, we ask it. Amen.