

# Out Of Hopelessness And Desperation

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[ 0 : 00 ] Well, good morning. Today we're going to talk about desperation. I want to ask you to raise your hands, but ever been a time where you felt desperate or hopeless?

Yes. We're going to actually look at the dictionary definition just to make sure that we're on the same page because we're going to meet two people today that were both very desperate and impacts the story greatly.

So we should understand what this is all about. So on your notes, you have this there. It's the loss of hope. That's kind of a familiar idea here. Hopelessness and desperation kind of go hand in hand. So it's someone who's experiencing a loss of hope and a surrender to despair. Not a good place to be, is it?

A state of hopelessness leading to rashness, rash decisions, rash, impulsive decisions, choices. And again, we see that with the two people that we will meet today who approach Jesus and both are very desperate and both very rash in their coming to meet Jesus.

[ 1 : 31 ] So before we dig into the story, quick recap that you don't have on your notes, Jesus. And this is a recap of faith so far. This is Lucas emphasizing throughout the gospel.

Now, the first three chapters are a lot of introductory information about the birth and the lineage and so on and so forth. In chapter 4, we start getting into the story in terms of his ministry.

Early on, he goes to his hometown. And what does he discover in his hometown is they don't have it. They don't have faith in Christ. And the results of that, you can go back and read from Luke chapter 4.

Luke chapter 5, we find out about four friends who definitely have faith in Christ and bring their paralyzed friend to Jesus and find very creative and maybe even destructive way coming through the roof of a house of a stranger to get to Jesus so that he could be healed.

Luke chapter 7 is the story of a centurion, a Gentile, an enemy of Israel, and yet he very much has faith in Jesus, so much so that Jesus was amazed by his faith, a faith that he had not yet seen in Israel.

[ 2 : 53 ] So that's interesting. Another interesting character, the woman at the end of chapter 7, who we might label as a prostitute.

It doesn't say that, but lots of folks kind of think that this is where she was coming from. She definitely also has faith. And so then Jesus tells the story of the four soils.

And sometimes people with a soil that's very receptive to Jesus doesn't look like that at the beginning. Like, for instance, the centurion, this woman.

But people with good soil to receive the word, they have it as well. The disciples in chapter 8, verses 22 through 25, when they're on the boat and the sea is raging and they think they're about to die and talk about desperate.

But even though they've seen all of this, they've witnessed all of this to this point, they don't have it yet. But Jesus asks them, where is your faith?

[ 4 : 05 ] Interesting. And then last week, actually two weeks ago, we met this naked, disgusting, self-scarred, demon-possessed, lived in the tombs.

In other words, he slept in these caves where dead bodies had been placed on like shelves that had been carved out of the rock. And was very vicious and beat the tar out of people.

I mean, this is a man who, yeah, he had it. He has faith. And today we're going to meet these two new people here that give us examples again of what this faith looks like.

Both of these people, very desperate. And that's about all they have in common. We don't know the background, particularly of the woman that we're going to meet.

But two very different people, very different socioeconomic, religious. All their backgrounds are different here. And yet, it's interesting what they share in terms of their faith.

[ 5 : 26 ] Now to the story here. Luke chapter 8, beginning in verse 40. We meet the first fellow. Now when Jesus returned, this is from the coast where the Decapolis is at across the Sea of Galilee.

He's come back home now. So they told him to leave. And he and the disciples have come back to Capernaum, which is kind of his home base during his earthly ministry in Galilee.

So when Jesus returned, the crowd welcomed him, for they were all waiting for him. Now again, I don't know how this works. They didn't have social media back then or TV or whatever.

So how'd they get the word that Jesus was coming back? We don't know that. Maybe someone went ahead. Jesus is coming back. And there came a man named Jairus.

I want to pronounce his name correctly here because this AI diphthong. I know it's actually a grammar thing. The A and the I form a diphthong.

[ 6 : 27 ] I think that's true in English grammar. It's definitely true in Greek. I'm getting the signal from Brett that I'm on solid ground even though he's a math teacher. So what does he know? But he's telling me I'm good.

So I'm going with it. Okay. So it's Jairus. I've heard preachers call him Jairus. And you look at the spell. That's not it.

It's Jairus. So I'm off my little soapbox pet peeve now. I'm okay. All right. I'll get over it. So this name Jairus, who was a ruler of the synagogue, So this is a man who's very religious, very well respected in the community.

This is the guy who's calling the shots in the synagogue. He's determining kind of the preaching schedule. Who's going to, of the rabbis who are coming, and maybe there's visiting rabbis that are coming in, and he's going to determine who's going to read what on any given week, who is going to expound on the scriptures on any given week, and other activities that are happening in the synagogue.

He's the guy with the keys. I don't know if they had keys back then, but with the keys to the door, and he's locking it up, and he's taking care of it and providing for it.

[ 7 : 42 ] And he's in charge of the synagogue. He knows very well that the rabbis, the leaders in the synagogue, are not enamored with this man, Jesus.

They've already determined they don't like this guy, Jesus. He's probably heard the discussions about what we're going to do about this Jesus. Okay?

He gets that. So when you come to verse 42, and falling at Jesus' feet, he implored him to come to his house.

And I can imagine that some of the rabbis, some of the leading people in the synagogue, they might have been on him about this. If they knew he was about to do what he just did, that you're going to go fall at the feet of Jesus.

Now remember, in their culture, no paved roads, no closed shoes. It was sandals and dirt roads, and you can imagine the dirt, the mud, the animal, whatever, you can figure that out.

[ 9 : 02 ] And he's falling at his feet. It was not a posture of, I don't like this guy. I think he's wrong.

I think he's a false teacher. He is coming before Jesus in a posture of utmost respect and honor, knowing he needs Jesus because of this.

For he had an only daughter, about 12 years of age, and she was dying. Now, this man has a measure of faith.

Whether he was familiar with the story of the centurion, the previous chapter, we don't know, but the centurion, remember, the centurion said to Jesus, hey, you don't need to come to my house. You just got to give the word.

And I know, because I'm a man under authority too, I know that if you just say the word, it happens. You have people under you and it's just going to be done. I get that.

[ 10 : 03 ] And Jesus is amazed by this man's faith. Jairus, on the other hand, says, no, I need you to come to my house, which is another interesting twist in this because the fact that he's inviting Jesus to come under his roof, that's also, I mean, this man is taking a huge risk in terms of his standing in the community, his standing in the synagogue, his standing among the rabbis, all of it, he is setting that aside because he's got a daughter who's 12 years old, and she's dying.

So he's a desperate man willing to set all of that aside for the sake of his daughter. And Jesus went. Jesus agreed to go to this man's house.

And as he went, the people pressed around him. The crowds are so thick at this point that there's just a throng of people that are trying to get as close to Jesus as they possibly can.

And that's an important aspect of this story as we continue. So imagine a huge crowd, and as you get closer to Jesus, the crowds are packed in and pressed in as tight as they can be as they are going to be going on the way to Jairus' house.

Now, if you're in a situation like Jairus, I don't know if you have daughters or not. I've got two daughters. And if one of my daughters was sick to the point of dying, that's going to make you pretty desperate, right?

[ 11 : 54 ] And if my daughter was at home sick and I knew that she was in trouble and I'm loading her in the car to get to the hospital, am I paying real close attention to the traffic laws?

Forgive me, if, you know, for police officers or... No, I'm not really paying attention to the posted speed limits or even to red lights.

I'm going as quickly as I possibly can because my daughter's life is in jeopardy. And if for some reason there is a delay in my journey, how are you going to feel about that?

Let's say that, for instance, they've decided to post a drunk driving thing where they're checking every driver.

I don't know if they even do that in this area. But in some parts of the country they do stuff like that, right? They just post a spot and they pull over all the traffic and they ask a few questions and see how people are doing.

[ 12 : 59 ] And my guess is that if you're in that line waiting to go through because they've stopped traffic for whatever reason, that's not sitting too well with you.

You're upset. You're angry. You're confused. And you just know I've got to get my daughter to the hospital.

This is what this man is going through. His daughter's been sick for some time and he's just now gotten up the nerve to lay aside everything that's important to him and now he doesn't care anymore and I'm going to see the one man who possibly could do anything to help my daughter. You get that, don't you? If you're a parent, you get that. So this idea of this crowd pressed around him, at this point Jairus is like, come on Jesus, we've got to get going.

And people, don't you know that my daughter's in trouble? Just back off. And I don't know if he's hand gesturing or if he's motioning or if he's doing anything, but he just needs Jesus to come with him, come with him now.

[ 14 : 26 ] But there's another aspect to this story that changes things. There was a woman there who had a discharge of blood for as long as Jairus' little girl had been alive.

She was 12 years old. This woman had a discharge of blood for 12 years. Now, let's not misunderstand.

Let's be, if I can, be as frank as I possibly can without, this is a period. This is a woman's time of the month.

This is, but it's not stopping. It is a constant flow of blood that just doesn't go away. It doesn't come and go on a monthly basis.

It's just there and it happens. Now, again, in this culture, this is a big deal. Because if you know anything about the Old Testament law, there's actually some prescription.

[ 15 : 33 ] There is actually a way for them to handle this particular aspect of a woman's life and existence. So Leviticus chapter 15, you look there and you see all the ways that when a woman is having her time of the month, it makes her ceremonially unclean.

We've talked about lepers being unclean and people with pigs being unclean and all these different ways that people could be made unclean and how they had to rectify that in order to be able to go to the temple and worship or go to synagogue or to meet with people in public.

And here she is, 12 solid years being unclean. You say, well, how does that impact life?

It impacts life because she's permanently unclean because of this. Her husband probably divorced her. That's what you would do in that culture.

Because for a woman to be permanently unclean like this meant that God was judging her for something. she must be guilty of something in order for God to bring this about in her life.

[ 17 : 03 ] That's what they thought about leprosy. It's what they thought about an issue like this. So for 12 years, she's not allowed to go around people.

She's probably lost her family. And we find out that though she had spent all her living on doctors, on physicians, she could not be healed by anyone.

What a situation for this woman to be in. Now, I can't, obviously, I can't relate to this, but you ladies, you understand more about how this could impact her life.

And so she had this issue going on for 12 years and it's been a constant theme for her. It's overtaken her life. And so now she's going to approach Jesus in this crowd.

So she came up behind Jesus. Now remember, the law, Leviticus chapter 15 says that anyone who touches this woman is also unclean.

[18:21] So for her to be in the crowd with people pressing around, how many people will have she touched or touched her? But she's desperate.

She doesn't care about that. she's just trying to get to Jesus. And she touched the fringe of his garment.

They would wear these religious ceremonial garments, a robe that would have fringe or actually more like little tassels that would be sewn in around the hem on the bottom of Jesus' robe.

So she's just, picture this in your mind's eye, this huge crowd of people and she's trying to get through because she thinks if I can just touch his garment, if I can just grab a hold of a tassel, if I could just, I believe I'll be healed because of this Jesus.

And so she touched the fringe of his garment and immediately, immediately, immediately, she's not going to therapy, she's not getting medical treatment, she's not getting prescription drugs, she's just immediately healed.

[19:50] And she knows it. Again, I don't understand that, maybe ladies you could relate to this, but immediately her discharge of blood ceased.

and Jesus is like, okay, who touched me? And that's how the people in the crowd responded to his question.

Who is it that touched me? Because Jesus could tell, wait a minute, you've got a ton of people touching you. You've got people pressing in all around, Jesus, what are you talking about?

So, when all denied it, Peter said, wait a minute, master the crowds, and again, don't you know Peter, master the crowds surround you and are pressing in on you.

This time Peter gets it right. He is right. Master, there is a crowd of people pressing in around you. There's a bunch of people that have touched you.

[20:54] What are you talking about who touched me? How, how, how can you say such a thing? But Jesus said something that, frankly, I'm not sure I understand.

I'm not sure any of us can fully understand what this means, but Jesus said, someone touched me, for I perceive that power has gone out from me.

Now, the 13-year-old boy in me is picturing at this point a power ranger. Like, power has gone out from me. You know, that's not, okay, that's not, not that I put that image in your head, but that's not what this is.

Okay? This is Jesus in his deity understanding that however you describe the power that comes from him to provide healing, he knew that that's what happened.

He could have, just as she knew that she was immediately healed, Jesus knew immediately that someone had tapped into this power that he has for healing.

[22:15] And when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling. do you think she wanted to be found out?

Ladies, would you want to be found out? Put yourself in her sandals. And yet, Jesus is insisting here.

What is this about? what is he doing? So she comes because now she knows, she wants to come in quiet. She doesn't want the crowd to know that this unclean woman has been in their midst and touching them and reaching for Jesus.

She doesn't want them to know. But now, Jesus knows. And so she comes and I can kind of in my mind's eye picture the crowd kind of parting and her coming and trembling and falling down before him again.

Second time now, first Jairus, the synagogue leader, and now this woman with the issue of blood. Falling down before him declared in the presence of all the people why she did it.

[23:52] Do you think she wanted to have this testimony time right now? Jesus, why are you doing this? Declared in the presence everybody knows.

she and Jairus are from the same town. If she had been able to go to synagogue, she would know who Jairus was.

Maybe he's been around long enough that they know each other. But she's not able to go to the synagogue and Jairus would have understood why.

The people would have been judgmental of her because she hasn't been to the synagogue. And oh, why is it because she's unclean? Well, why is she unclean? Because she has this issue of blood because God judged her.

We don't know what it was, but it was something. And it wasn't insignificant. That's how the people thought. So in the presence of all the people, she told them why she had touched him and how she had been immediately healed.

[ 25 : 10 ] I want you to see the words of Jesus to this woman.

And I'm taking it apart very slowly. This is a very short verse, but we're going to look at just a few of the words. Because he says to this woman, daughter, family, loved one.

It's the only time that Jesus does this up to this point where he says to this woman, you're not some to-be judged outcast of a woman who doesn't deserve to be around people or get to go to synagogue your daughter.

I accept you as family. You're mine. In the same way that Jairus would have felt about his daughter, Jesus is saying, this is how I feel about you.

You are a daughter. a daughter. And then he says to her, let's not mistake how this happened.

[ 26 : 37 ] This is your faith that has made you well. It's not some lucky tassel on the hem of my garment.

It's not some piece of cloth you might get in the mail. this is your faith. Your faith, your belief, your trust in me, in Jesus.

That is what has made you well. And don't forget the significance, don't miss the significance of this last phrase.

he tells her, go in peace. Before the confrontation, before the conversation, would she be able to go in peace knowing that she's got this secret?

knowing the underhanded way in which she went about getting her healing? Hiding it?

[ 28 : 01 ] No. Now everybody knows. And because everybody knows, it makes all the difference in the world for her.

And she's able to go in peace. We take a pause in the story to examine this little conversation. And the way that you have it written on your notes is this way.

Why was this conversation between Jesus and this woman so stinking important? Because I want you to, at this moment, put yourself in the shoes of Jairus.

What's important? my daughter's dying. We got to get there. This woman has come along.

This woman who is not deserving because she's been judged by God for this. And now not only is the commotion stopping, not only is the forward progress to my house where my daughter is stopping, Jesus is asking, who touched me?

[ 29 : 17 ] Seriously? I got to wonder, and we are kind of left to wonder what's going through the mind of Jairus at this point, but I can't imagine he's real pleased with this little interchange just because of how much time from Jairus' perspective is being wasted.

my daughter's life is at stake. I need you to get to my house, Jesus. Please understand. And Jesus is in total control.

He gets this. He understands where Jairus is at. He understands where this woman is at. He gets that. But let's talk about why this conversation is so important.

So stinking important. first of all, Jesus would not allow for this woman to receive some sort of second-class healing. And if she had gone away without being found out, if she had been able to sneak away, that's what it would have been, at least for her.

It would have felt that way. You know, I kind of got this underhanded. No one knew about it. No one has to know about it.

[ 30 : 37 ] That's kind of how we think, right? Just let me sneak in and sneak out. But for Jesus, no, no, no, no, no, no.

You get my full attention. Not on the sly. Second thing, Jesus would not have us mistake the real cause of this woman's healing.

Remember, he said, it is your faith, not the fact that you touched my tassel. There's the way that Jesus healed people.

I don't know if you recognize this in the Gospels. It seems like it's different every time. And knowing us, if we could have found a pattern for how Jesus would heal people, we'd be like banking on the pattern.

we'd be counting on the process. We'd be like, oh, man, he spit in the mud and in the dirt and made some mud and rubbed the guy's eyes.

[ 31 : 40 ] So let's do that. So you're going to church services and spiritual healer conferences and boom, they're spitting in dirt. But it's different almost every time because we need to remember that it's not how it happened.

It's who it is. It's Jesus. And in this instance, because there are instances where the person doesn't even know that he's about to be healed.

And so it's not their faith, but it's the faith of, I don't know if you could say the faith of Jesus or in the book of Acts, the faith of the apostles. But it's Jesus.

And it's faith in Jesus. And it's not how much or how it happens. It's the person of Jesus. It always comes back to the person of Jesus.

That's what matters. And Jesus doesn't want people to misunderstand, doesn't want the woman to misunderstand. Jesus did not want this woman to experience the guilt for stealing a healing.

[ 33 : 01 ] Right? It's that underhanded saying. It's, no, you needed this, you received this healing, so let's talk about this.

Let's talk about how this happened. And then finally, Jesus would not allow this woman's faith to be anonymous. Now, in one sense, we don't know her name.

I mean, we've been going for 2,000 years since this happened and we still don't know her name. I'm guessing in heaven we'll know her name, but until then we're not going to know her name.

But we know her circumstance because we can all relate to her. Maybe not her particular illness, but we can relate to being desperate.

We can relate to wanting to be anonymous. We can relate to, I need Jesus to come through for me and I don't want to talk about it.

[ 34 : 08 ] I think we all can relate to that. We're going to talk more about that idea a little bit later. for now, let's get back to the story.

Let's get back to Jairus. While Jesus was still speaking, someone from the ruler's house came and said, your daughter's dead.

Now again, put yourself in his shoes. What do you do when you hear this news?

How do you respond to this? What do you do? Is Jairus tempted to blow up? Because Jesus, if you wouldn't have spent this time with this woman, maybe, how do you think?

How do you respond? What do you do? And their counsel is don't trouble the teacher.

[ 35 : 28 ] Don't trouble the teacher. Now, their view of who Jesus is is he's a teacher. not the Lord, not the promised Messiah, the teacher, the rabbi.

Do not trouble the teacher anymore. We don't need him anymore. We got it from here. It's just, at this point, planning a funeral.

We'll have that set up and ready to go by the end of the day. That's what you need. But Jesus on hearing this answered, do not fear.

You receive the news that your daughter is dead. Is fear what you're experiencing? I struggled with this a bit.

Do not fear. perhaps his worst fear all along is that his daughter is going to die. Right? That's his worst fear all along up until this point.

[ 36 : 42 ] His worst fear is so much so that he's willing to lay out his reputation and his position and just throw it at the feet of Jesus and say, I don't care anymore.

Jesus, come and heal my daughter. Only believe. faith. Now, this is the same Greek word. We've talked about this before, right? That faith, belief, trust, three English words, every time you see them in the New Testament, it's all just the one Greek word.

It's either, and don't chuckle when I say this. Again, middle school me would chuckle at this. The Greek word is pistos or pistou. That's the verb form. The noun form and the verb form, but it's the same word, whether it's faith, whether it's belief, whether it's trust.

Only believe, Jairus. Just trust me, Jairus. She will be well.

Wait a minute, they just told me she's dead. How do you go from dead to well? And when he came to the house, another interesting part of this story, he only allowed the three disciples, it's the first time we see kind of a separation here of his, how do you call it, top three, his closest three, the three that he's building, he's building into all twelve, but he brings along three even more closely to himself, Peter, James, and John, and the father and mother of the child.

[ 38 : 24 ] Now put yourself in the mother's shoes, shoes, she's been left at home, your husband has gone out to find Jesus, you don't know how you feel about this Jesus guy, you've heard the stories, but you've heard the stories, you've probably heard both sides of this, what do you do?

And she's there at the house, and all were weeping and mourning for her, don't you know in this culture they had professional mourners, they would go to people's homes when someone died and begin to professionally mourn, and they would get paid for it, and it was just to set the mood, it was just to make sure that everybody understood what was going on, and honoring the deceased, and all of this, people, but he says to these people, do not weep, for she is not dead, but she's sleeping. Now, how many of you are not a doctor, but how many of you can tell between a dead body and a sleeping body?

So what was their reaction? They laughed at them. They knew she was dead. She was dead. And they laughed. They laughed. They scoffed. Would not be the first time Jesus experiences this. [ 40 : 09 ] Taking her by the hand, he called, saying, child, arrive. anyways. Anybody guess what happens next?

You probably know what's coming, right? And her spirit returned. She was dead. And she got up at once.

And he directed that something should be given her to eat. 12 years old, I'm guessing mac and cheese, or chicken nuggets. I don't know. I mean, what will your kids eat when they're 12 years old, right?

And her parents were, here again is Luke's favorite word, amazed. I mean, what would your response be?

Amazed. God's And he charged them to tell no one. What? Why? Again, I struggle with this because in just the previous story, same chapter, right?

[ 41 : 26 ] He tells the man who'd been healed from all this legion of demons who was now well and in his right mind and cleaned up and properly dressed and seated in front of Jesus.

Jesus, can I come with you? No. Instead, I want you to go into your town and tell everyone what God has done for you.

remember that when Jesus went to this area known as the Decapolis, which is partly Jewish, partly Gentile, kind of a mix, and you've got pigs, which the Jews weren't supposed to eat.

Were they eating the pigs anyway? Or were they selling to the pigs? Or not selling to the pigs, but selling the pigs to the Gentiles? And when I say pigs, think bacon. That's what we're talking about here, right?

Ham. And the news of Jesus had not spread there. Not yet. Not like this.

[ 42 : 37 ] Not like what was about to happen with this man who'd been healed of these demons. And so the instruction is, go let people know. He's back on his home turf now in Capernaum, where people have already heard and seen and heard more and seen more and been there and witnessed it and everybody's talking about it.

And people are already kind of made up their minds. Are you for him or a genum?

and here's a guy, Jairus, who most likely was against him until it was he that was desperate.

Now I'm imagining that this man is a great cheerleader for the son of God. But Jesus says, nope. Let people sit with where they are, with what they think of me.

So there's two more examples for us to learn from here. And with that, a quick reminder of where we've been on faith, all these people are examples of faith.

[ 44 : 14 ] Now we have Jairus and the woman, what shall we call her? The woman with the issue of blood? I mean, is that how you want to be known for eternity? But for now, that's how we refer to her.

And they both have it. Perhaps different amounts of faith, again, that's not the issue, it's who your faith is in, and different expressions of how they went about expressing that faith.

That didn't matter. It was who their faith was in. That's what mattered. So we have to understand, and I already skipped through it here, faith is, on your notes, much more than a church experience.

How often do people come to church and have a church experience, believe, something, believe what the preacher was preaching about, the issue that has to change in my life, and I need to trust Jesus, but I leave here, and I go get some lunch, and I go about my day, and what's really different. Faith is more about where the rubber meets the road. Faith is more about how you live your life on the daily basis.

[ 45 : 46 ] That's what matters. Not the experience that you have in a church service or a concert, something like that. You can get emotionally ginned up and feel in your heart, oh, I praise the Lord, but if your life is the same three days later, what good really was that experience?

What matters is carrying that faith out throughout your life. Again, here's another aspect of this. Faith is more than intellectual belief.

We talked about this a few weeks back with the demons. They know that God is one theological concept, but they tremble at the idea. They got all the intellectual knowledge about who Jesus is and who God is and their standing before him and we saw that expressed in the demons and the man in the previous story, the legion of demons.

They understood who Jesus is. They knew that their time was up. They just got it. They understood. Didn't do them any good.

So just, well, I believe that God is. I believe in God. Great. How has that changed your life? This intellectual belief, does it really do anything in your life or is your life different because of what you believe, because of your faith in him?

[ 47 : 25 ] that's what matters. Faith is an action. You might write here faith is a follow through.

Faith is how you live it out or it's not faith. Again, you can say that you have faith, but if there's no living it out, if there is no evidence of that faith in the way that you live, what's the point?

That was James' argument in his letter. What's the point of that? There isn't. And here's an important one that we're going to spend a little bit more time on.

We're getting close to the end here, but hang with me. Faith is the key to both forgiveness and freedom. And at church, we talk a lot about forgiveness, so we're not going to dwell here, but when you put your faith, your trust in Christ to save you, you are forgiven of your sins.

But you are also set free. You are set free from those sins. Think about this in the context of the woman with the issue of blood.

[ 48 : 42 ] Not only was she forgiven, but now that conversation, that stinking conversation that just had to happen, there's a reason for that.

Again, put yourself in her shoes. Does she want to have that conversation? Does she want to be brought out in the public? Does she want people to know her junk, her past?

Absolutely not. Let's talk about this. Finding freedom from our past. Now, I'm going to say a couple things, especially here toward the end, that I know some people are going to be mad at me for saying.

Okay, I can live with that. Be mad at me. If you want to come at me at the end, I'm kidding about that. But you might be a little bit peeved, but hang in there with me when I say these things.

Okay? On your notes, we cannot be truly accepted. And let me say that when I look at our world around us, we long to be loved, long to be accepted.

[ 50 : 05 ] Do people love me for who I am? Do people love me as I am? I want to be accepted. But what I want to say is we cannot be truly accepted until we are truly known.

How can someone accept me if they don't know who I am? If they don't know about me? If they don't know what I've been through, what I've done, this is hard.

This is the woman with the issue of blood. Could she be fully accepted without being fully known? Can you be accepted without being fully known? God that's a hard thing.

Let's talk about that. We talk about our past. There's some things that are true about our past. My past, your past.

[ 51 : 20 ] one thing here is that it is the truth about us. It's just true. The stuff I have in my past, I can't say it's a lie, I can't deny it.

It happened. I did those things. And the interesting thing, we're told, and you have some notations toward the bottom of this part about passages in scripture about Satan, because Satan loves to do this stuff with our past.

And Satan is a liar, but I've got to tell you, Satan doesn't really have to come up with many lies about my past. Right? Because I did that.

He doesn't need help with that. I did that. I'm my own worst enemy when it comes to my past. Right? You might be able to relate to that with some of your past. Right? Satan doesn't need to come up and say, hey, Rich, you remember that time you bought that huge bag of cocaine, and then you shivved that guy because you didn't want to pay him?

You remember that? You remember when you did that, Rich? Yeah, I never did that. That's a lie he's not going to try to pull over on me because he's got plenty of ammunition without the big lie like that.

[ 52 : 29 ] And some of you are like, Rich, really? No, I didn't do that. But that's the point. Satan doesn't have to make up stuff about you.

You've done it all your own. All your own junk. And you know that's what hits you. I don't feel bad about buying that big bag of cocaine because I never bought that big bag of cocaine. Right? But I did do some other stuff. And I hate that about me. You guys relate to that? And that's what Satan does.

Hey, Rich, you're getting up to preach a sermon. man, how can you? You know what you did. Ah, now here's the kicker.

You know what you did 30 years ago. Now, I know what I thought last week. It wasn't good.

[ 53 : 32 ] And maybe I only think it, but Jesus reminds us, these scenarios that you've got playing around in your head, yeah, that's sin too. And I know what kind of a person I am on the inside.

You know, you're the same way. The way that we judge people, the way that we criticize, the way that we just assume the worst about a person, snap thoughts in our head, and then we let them come back.

That's why the past is such a struggle, because it's true. Here's another thing that's true about it. It will be used against us. This is a fact of life, isn't it? if you did some terrible things on the job, and you were fired because of it, and now that might stick with you, every time you go for a new job interview, application, whatever, yeah, sometimes your past will, if you committed some sort of crime and there was a consequence to that, you'd be forgiven.

You can be spiritually set free, but there might be some consequences to that from a civic perspective that you have to take care of, that you have to pay for.

[ 55 : 15 ] So there is a real sense where your past can come back to haunt you from that perspective. Okay? That's troublesome.

It can be used against us. it can rob us of our future.

This can happen in a number of ways, a number of relationships, but let me tell you where I see this play out perhaps the most is in a marriage.

When one person in the marriage can't be themselves because they're too busy hiding something from their past.

Thinking, if I bring this up, if I let this out of the bag, if I am found out, it's going to ruin the relationship, he or she will break up with me, it's, so it's dating, it's marriage, it's all of the above.

[ 56 : 35 ] Absolutely, it can rob you of the intimacy, the connection that God created for us in marriage.

That's why you can't have secrets. Secrets are the killer of intimacy. Let me give you a couple other for instances here.

Hang with me. John chapter 4, the woman at the well. The woman at the well, this is the wrong kind of woman in every way you can imagine, right? Her past, her past relationships, wrong.

Her ethnicity, wrong. Everything about her, wrong. and she comes to the well in the middle of the day when people don't come to the well and Jesus is there and it's a divine appointment.

He knows that he's about to have this conversation with this woman and he tells her that if she would just trust him, if she would come to him, that he would give her water that would never run out, living water.

[ 57 : 47 ] And she says, oh, sir, give me, I want some of this water. And Jesus pulls out the first dagger. Yeah, go get your husband before we give you some of this water.

Go, go, let's go bring your husband. Oh, I don't have one of those. That's right. Because you've had five.

And the guy you're with now is not your husband. And then what was her response to that?

Let's play religion. Because I don't know which mountain are we supposed to wear? And Jesus is having none of it. And he says, listen, I just want you to worship in spirit and in story.

Your excuses, your reasons for hiding it. No. to worship in spirit and in truth.

[ 58 : 59 ] How can God accept our worship if it's coming from somebody who's trying to hide? And what was her response?

She skedaddles back to town and she starts telling everybody, I just talked to a man who knew all about me. And the people in town were like, yeah, we know about you.

You know, husband number one, husband number two, number three, number four, number five, and the guy now. He knew all of it. And I've been forgiven.

And I've been set free. have to hide anymore. it's done because I have a Lord who has loved me and has accepted me.

Peter, the night that Jesus was betrayed into the next morning, denied knowing Jesus three times.

[ 60 : 10 ] Even to the point of cursing. Little middle school age girl comes along, oh, weren't you with them? Ah, yes, you were. And Peter's like, blankety blank.

No, I don't know that blankety blank. He's cursing, the Bible tells us. When Jesus is resurrected, he's like, hey, go tell Peter and the rest because Peter needed to hear it more than any of them.

And then when Jesus and Peter are finally able to have a one-on-one moment on the beach, right?

Jesus asks Peter, first dagger, Peter, do you love me?

Second, Peter, do you love me? Third time, Peter, do you love me? And who do we find out from the people who were doing it in the first place?

The Bible is full of failures. People with pasts who would be ashamed, right? You think, we don't know the name of the woman at the well, or the woman with the issue of the blood.

[ 61 : 29 ] We're going to know them in heaven, right? Do you think they're going to run and hide from their past? Or do you think they're going to celebrate because Jesus forgave them?

See, your past can also be God's greatest tool. Can you imagine the ministry that these women would have had to other women?

Get a load of this. This is on your notes listed there. If you look it up, 1 John 1.9, if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, dot, dot, dot.

A lot of times we just stop there, dot, dot, dot. He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to what? Cleanse us. Cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

This woman with the issue of blood, the woman at the well, Peter, all of us, would be able to say, you know what? I can be honest about my past. This is who I was. That's not me anymore.

[ 62 : 51 ] I've been cleansed. I've been washed away. Paul in 1 Corinthians chapter 6 lists all of these terrible sins, right?

And at the end of that list, he says this, and such, were some of you. I imagine we could do the same thing in this room. We could just go through a list of sins, and we could have people, yep, that's me, oh, yep, yep, that's me, right?

Such were, past tense, some of you, but you were washed. you were sanctified, set apart from it. It doesn't identify who you are anymore. So even though that story is a part of my past, that's not my identity. I have been set apart from that.

And I have been, according to the law, justified, not because of me, but because of him. He took my place.

[ 64 : 06 ] He took my sin. And I get his righteousness in response. Now, I'll leave you with this question. You can kind of chew on this over lunch, shall you?

Because this might make some of you upset too. Okay? That rich, I can't believe he said that. Jesus came to bring us spiritual freedom. That's why he came.

Now, he did a bunch of other stuff while he was here, but the reason he came was to go to the cross and pay the penalty for our sin, that we could be forgiven and made righteous, set free from all of that.

Question, why do we get so hung up on the lesser miracles? Oh, Rich, you shouldn't be calling them lesser miracles. I'm going to call them lesser miracles. You tell me.

The lesser miracles, the physical healings, the material blessings, right? We have whole quote unquote Christian networks dedicated to let's get everything that you can and your healing will be yours if you just send in 995 or if you just have faith to believe, oh, it didn't work for you, your fault, you didn't have enough faith.

[ 65 : 17 ] All of this kind of stuff that we see, we get so focused focused on the lesser miracles.

Notice I'm still using the word miracle here.

God still does miracles. God still does heal. God still does provide. Just not in the way that you see so often depicted.

We get so focused on that. forget about the greatest miracle. Been forgiven.

Been set free. Let me ask you a question. What would happen to this woman with the issue of blood if she had been healed of the issue of blood but was never saved?

Was never a believer in Jesus Christ, trusting in Jesus to save her? Great.

[ 66 : 22 ] She may have gotten a few more decades of healthy living and then die and go to hell.

Great. That's wonderful. Right? No. That's lousy. Same thing with Jairus' daughter.

Even though she's young, if she never comes to I did it myself. Jairus' daughter I caught that Barb.

She caught me. That's good. Jairus' daughter, if she never comes to faith in Christ, great. She

doesn't die at 12. Imagine the conversation with that 12-year-old girl about what happens in the meantime.

Right? She died, Jesus brings her back. What was that like? You want that conversation? Maybe we'll see that in heaven. But if she never has faith in Christ, what good would it have done her?

To have 80, 100 years, 120 if you're doing really, really, really good, and then an eternity apart from him?

[ 67 : 33 ] let's focus on the thing that really matters. Lord, we love you and we praise you and we thank you that when you forgive us, it is complete, it is whole, and it is freedom, and I can be set free from my past, while at the same time, letting it out of the bag, and not hiding from it, because it's what I once was, and look at what you've done in my life, why would I want to hide that?

thank you, Lord, for how good you are to us, that you wouldn't let this woman hide, be in secret, and still have guilt and shame, thank you for what you've done for Jairus, for his daughter, Lord, you are so good, I pray that our faith would be evident, that it would be real, that it wouldn't be ginned up or manufactured because it's Sunday morning and we're at church, but that it would be something that we take with us to work and into our families, into our relationships, Lord, may our identity be wrapped up in you, it's how you made us, it's how you designed us and created us to live in relationship with you, that's what matters, help us to see that, take hold of it, we love you, we praise you, and we ask it in Jesus' name, amen.

Thank you all for coming, have a great week.