

Healed by Faith

Bible Background • MATTHEW 9:18–26; MARK 5:21–43; LUKE 8:40–56

Printed Text • MATTHEW 9:18–26 | Devotional Reading • PROVERBS 3:1–8

Aim for Change

By the end of this lesson, we will EXAMINE the nature of the faith involved in the healings of the woman and the girl in this passage, SENSE the power of God to bring life and healing to our loved ones, and REJOICE in the healing power of God as manifested in our own lives.

In Focus

Even after Pastor James retired from the pulpit, he felt called to minister to people in need. He volunteered for the prayer line at a local TV station. While answering the phones, he received a call from a young woman by the name of Sandra who was contemplating suicide. Sandra told the pastor about her past abusive relationships and how she consistently failed at everything she attempted. She didn't see any reason to keep going in this world.

Pastor James listened and was overwhelmed with compassion for Sandra and wept for her as he began to pray. He decided to personally follow up on Sandra by phoning her. He received no answer and grew concerned. He prayed much harder. On his fourth try, Sandra answered. She told the pastor she was very depressed and wanted to commit suicide. She also mentioned she had told God, "If you are real, have someone call and pray for me."

"That's just what God laid on my heart to do," Pastor James said. Because of his compassion, Pastor James was able to bring Sandra to a decision for Christ.

Jesus always responds to those who are desperate, who confess their hopelessness and helplessness. How do you communicate your hopelessness? How do you respond when people share their hopelessness with you?

Keep in Mind

"Jesus turned around, and when he saw her he said, 'Daughter, be encouraged! Your faith has made you well.' And the woman was healed at that moment" (Matthew 9:22, NLT)

Words You Should Know

A. Tempest (Matthew 8:24) *seismos* (Gk.) — To agitate or shake; specifically, an earthquake or violent windstorm

B. Marvelled (v. 27) *thaumazo* (Gk.) — To wonder, be awed, or struck with admiration or astonishment

Say It Correctly

Jairus. JEYE-russ.

Melancholy. MELL-an-KOLL-ee.

Hemorrhage. HIM-ridge.

KJV

Matthew 9:18 While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live.

19 And Jesus arose, and followed him, and so did his disciples.

20 And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment:

21 For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole.

22 But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour.

23 And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise,

24 He said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn.

25 But when the people were put forth, he went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose.

26 And the fame hereof went abroad into all that land.

NLT

Matthew 9:18 As Jesus was saying this, the leader of a synagogue came and knelt before him. "My daughter has just died," he said, "but you can bring her back to life again if you just come and lay your hand on her."

19 So Jesus and his disciples got up and went with him.

20 Just then a woman who had suffered for twelve years with constant bleeding came up behind him. She touched the fringe of his robe,

21 for she thought, "If I can just touch his robe, I will be healed."

22 Jesus turned around, and when he saw her he said, "Daughter, be encouraged! Your faith has made you well." And the woman was healed at that moment.

23 When Jesus arrived at the official's home, he saw the noisy crowd and heard the funeral music.

24 "Get out!" he told them. "The girl isn't dead; she's only asleep." But the crowd laughed at him.

25 After the crowd was put outside, however, Jesus went in and took the girl by the hand, and she stood up!

26 The report of this miracle swept through the entire countryside.

The People, Places, and Times

Jairus. Coming to Jesus on behalf of his beloved daughter, Jairus oversaw the administration of the synagogue at Capernaum. This was an elected position and a powerful one. Jairus was a devout Jew and leader. He was the father of a 12-year-old daughter whom he loved deeply. Jairus showed strong courage by going to Jesus, who was hated by the religious elders. However, because of his deep love for his daughter and his belief in Jesus, he approached Christ with humility, worship, and faith.

Background

Matthew writes a cluster of miracle narratives, one healing narrative inside the framework of another. First, there is the desperate cry of a synagogue ruler for the life of his daughter. Next, there is the hopelessness of a woman with a 12-year bleeding disorder. Both stories tell of desperation, and each one can stand independent from the others. These narratives demonstrate the authority, power, and compassion of Jesus. His fame had spread throughout the region, and thousands of people were following Him because everywhere He went He cured every disease and sickness (Matthew 9:35).

Today there are many reasons people follow Jesus. Maybe it is what their friends are doing, or maybe they simply want to receive a blessing. The scribes and Pharisees (religious rulers), however, followed Jesus to test the validity of His being the Son of David, the Messiah. Jesus was their king but they would not acknowledge Him. They were trying to discredit Him and find a reason to put Him to death. The Pharisees went so far as to say He casts demons out of people by the power of the ruler of demons (v. 34). But the people were saying, "It was never so seen in Israel" (v. 33). Jesus is moved to deep compassion by what He sees people confused, leaderless, scattered, and dying in their sins!

At-A-Glance

1. Compassion for the Hopeless (Matthew 9:18–19)
2. Compassion for the Helpless (vv. 20–22)
3. Compassion for Healing (vv. 23–26)

In Depth

1. Compassion for the Hopeless (Matthew 9:18–19) Jairus, a leader from the synagogue, interrupts Jesus as He speaks to John the Baptist's disciples. Jairus falls down before Jesus and makes a desperate request for Him to raise his 12-year-old daughter from the dead. The father says, "But if you will come and lay your hands upon her, she shall live" (v. 18–19). This is also the only reference in the book of Matthew regarding the laying on of hands. We see Jesus and His disciples immediately got up to follow Jairus (v. 19). God immediately responds to genuine faith because He desires that we should trust and depend on Him. Being interrupted and delayed by the ailing woman could have easily discouraged Jairus. Although the worst had happened, the Son of God has authority over death and the power to restore life. Jesus is touched by the faith

Jairus displays. Jesus knows what is best for us, and we must trust Him to touch our needs. Jairus is an example of how our leaders should approach Christ: in humility, worship, and faith. Most of us have experienced loved ones dying, so we can understand the desperation Jairus felt.

In times of hopelessness, do we ask Jesus for His touch?

2. Compassion for the Helpless (vv. 20–22) A woman with a chronic bleeding problem touches Jesus' clothing and is healed by her faith in Him (vv. 20–22). Matthew uses the phrase "And, behold," to interrupt the story about the dead girl to introduce the hemorrhaging woman. She was considered to be unclean, contaminated, and unworthy. According to the Mosaic law, she was to be cut off from the Jewish community and ostracized. The woman was desperate and unable to help herself. But she purposed in her heart that if she could just touch the hem, the fringe, the tassel of Jesus' garment, He would never know and she would be healed.

Desperation and faith stir Jesus to compassion, for He who knows all can help all! This poor woman had been cut off from society and family according to Jewish tradition. Jesus turned and saw her, for her faith had touched Him (Mark 5:32). Faith will never go unnoticed or ignored by Christ. Pointedly, Jesus commends this woman's faith and calls her "daughter," even as He makes His way to heal Jairus' daughter. To God, we are each His daughter or His son, each dearly loved, and always welcome in His presence with any of our many needs.

What do we need for Jesus to touch for us? Cancer? Depression?

3. Compassion for Healing (vv. 23–26) By the time Jesus arrives at Jairus' house, the girl's funeral has begun. The musicians (v. 29) were a Gentile custom. They would play melancholy tunes to stir up the grief and mourning of those in attendance. Jesus sends away all the noisemakers, keeping only those who have faith that Christ can perform this miracle. Despite the hopelessness of the crowds, Jairus' faith called Jesus to his daughter's deathbed, and that simple, yet bold, the request is enough to change the outcome. As Jairus asked, Jesus lays hands on his daughter, and she lives!

Jesus' acts of healing and resurrection were not just personal but restored the woman and the girl to the whole community. Indeed, word of the girl's resurrection goes out to the entire region. When we act on faith and receive God's blessing, it builds the faith of everyone in our community who witnesses our blessing.

How has an act of faith in your community made surprisingly wide ripple effects?

Search the Scriptures

1. What did the Jewish leader ask of Jesus? (Matthew 9:18)
2. The mourners reacted to Jesus with scorn. How did Jesus respond? (v. 25)

Discuss the Meaning

1. Jesus' compassion is seen in His response to the Jewish leader and the hemorrhaging woman. How should we respond to Jesus and His commands knowing He is full of compassion?

2. What should the role of faith be in today's medical practice?

Liberating Lesson

Many people in our society are hopeless, helpless, and desperate. Some are drug addicts, prostitutes, alcoholics, and some are just homeless. Many believers avoid these people and have a difficult time ministering to them, because of fear and lack of willingness to be compassionate. How do you think Jesus feels about this avoidance? Where would we be if God had not shown us His mercy? How could you, your Bible study group, or your church show radical compassion like Jesus did?

Application for Activation

Almost every family is directly or indirectly touched by some form of substance abuse. Many organizations, such as hospitals, halfway houses, and soup kitchens, need volunteers. Right in our neighborhoods and communities, we can make a difference. This week make a special effort to show your faith that God can heal these people. Observe and study people and allow God to demonstrate His mercy through you for their physical and/or spiritual needs.

Follow the Spirit

What God wants me to do:

Remember Your Thoughts

Special insights I have learned:

More Light on the Text

Matthew 9:18-26 **18 While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live. 19 And Jesus arose, and followed him, and so did his disciples.** An official of the synagogue comes to Jesus and tells him that his daughter has just died. Matthew does not give much detail about who this man is, but we read from other Gospel writers that his name is Jairus and he is a ruler in the synagogue, a leader in the local assembly (Mark 5:22; Luke 8:41). He comes in respect, and even "worshipped" Jesus. The Greek word here, *proskuneo* (pro-skoo- NEH-oh), is common outside of religious worship, referring to people bowing down, whether to God or rulers. Still, Jairus takes time to bow to Jesus, acknowledging who He was before he made his request. He comes in faith, clearly expecting Jesus would raise her from the dead. He goes even so far as to tell Jesus how to do it: "Lay thy hand upon her," he said, "and she shall live."

This man has lost his daughter. Research has shown that the loss of a child is the most devastating death to cope with. No parent ever expects to have to bury their child. But this official does not come asking Jesus why his daughter died. This is the question we are all tempted to ask at times like these. We ask, but we usually get no answer, because the only answer is the one Jesus gives His disciples shortly before His arrest: In the world we will have tribulation (John 16:33). Jesus responds to the official's faith. He always responds to our faith too. He loves the kind of faith that gives people the boldness to come and ask and to believe He can do something to remedy the situation. Jesus and His disciples begin to follow the official to his house.

20 And behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him and touched the hem of his garment: 21 For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole. Jesus and the disciples don't get very far before they encounter a woman, another person in need of healing from Jesus. She has been suffering with a hemorrhage for twelve years. It is easy to read that in black and white, but imagine going day after day for twelve years experiencing a serious medical condition.

Jairus had shown boldness to approach Jesus and ask for healing. He might have suffered backlash from the Jewish religious leaders for seeking out Jesus. He simply approaches Jesus in the middle of His teaching and asks Him to perform an unprecedented miracle. The woman with the issue of blood, however, is not bold in the same way that Jairus is bold. She does not approach Jesus directly, but still she approaches. It was taboo for a menstruating woman to touch a man; she was considered unclean. So she has to overcome that barrier as she comes up behind Him and touches the hem of His garment. She had been convincing herself all the way, as she maneuvered through the crowd, "If I can just touch His garment, I shall get well." The "hem" of Jesus' robe referred to the word used for the tassels Jews are instructed to wear on their clothing at all times as a reminder to keep the Law (Number 15:37-41). Reaching out to touch the tassel expressed the woman's faith in the power of Israel's God to heal as well as faith in Jesus as the one sent from God. Her faith in Jesus' holiness is also on display here. Priests were not supposed to touch unholy things or they would become unholy themselves. This woman is unclean because of her sickness, but when she touches Jesus, instead of Jesus becoming unclean, she becomes clean. Others later took up this approach too, touching Jesus' robe to be healed (Matthew 14:36).

The word for her healing is worth noting here. The Greek word (sozo, SODE-zoh) translated "to be or be made whole" (vv. 21-22) is elsewhere translated "to save." Matthew's previous uses of this word were when the disciples were afraid they were going to drown in a storm at sea (Matthew 8:25), and the angel's announcement that Jesus would save the people from their sins (Matthew 1:21). It is most often used in the New Testament to refer to eternal salvation, but it is telling to see how salvation is understood as the same word is used to refer to physical healing and to being whole, intact, and perfect.

22 But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour. Jesus recognizes, responds to, and rewards that faith. He first tells her to “be of good comfort” (Gk. tharseo, thar-SEH-oh). This word is the verb form of the noun “courage.” It is the positive command to counter “Fear not” (cf. Matthew 14:27). Often parents are instructed to tell children what they want them to do, rather than only scolding them for doing something they were not supposed to do. As Jesus calls this woman “daughter” then, it is no surprise that He acts as the parent, telling her that she should have courage, rather than telling her she should not be afraid. Then He gives her the joyous news that her disease has been cured. Her faith makes her well, from that very hour. It is almost as though she is raised from the dead; she certainly has new life after her encounter with Jesus.

Sometimes we have to come to Jesus just like this woman. We have to make our way through the crowd and other obstacles, perhaps crawling, getting to Him any way we can. We need to have the kind of faith that keeps us going, knowing if we can just touch the hem of His garment, Jesus can bring healing and new life into our situations and circumstances.

23 And when Jesus came into the ruler’s house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise, 24 He said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn. When Jesus arrives at the official’s house, He finds they have already begun to mourn. The musicians have been hired and there is a crowd loudly grieving the loss of this girl. In their minds, it is settled—the child is dead. There is nothing left to do but go through the motions of bereavement. Seeing all these people carrying on, Jesus tells them to “give place” (Gk. anachoreo, ah-na-khoe-REH-oh). He is not gentle with them as He was with the hemorrhaging woman, to whom He spoke courage. These people, He says, should just go away—far away, as the word is used to speak of people leaving the country. He speaks the truth to them all, saying that the girl is not dead, but asleep. The text says “they laughed him to scorn,” jeering and mocking Him. It must have seemed ludicrous, this prophet coming into a house of death and saying these ridiculous things. It seemed just as ridiculous to them then, as it might to some today.

Sometimes the things we believe by faith seem ridiculous to others. When we tell them what we are praying for or believing in, they might laugh us to scorn. But faith in Jesus is no laughing matter. Laughter and disbelief cannot coexist with faith.

25 But when the people were put forth, he went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose. 26 And the fame hereof went abroad into all that land. The people who laughed are “put forth” (Gk. ekballo, ek-BALL-low). Like Jesus’ command for them to go away, this action is forceful. They have to be removed from the house, “thrown out” even. The word is also translated “cast out” like demons (9:33-34). Only then does Jesus perform the miracle; when unbelief is not present. He takes the little girl by the hand and she arises. It is touching to note that Jesus is asked to lay hands on the girl, but when He comes, instead of the authoritative and priestly stance of laying hands on her, He instead chooses simply to hold her hand, bringing her gently back to life.

There is surely a lot of sickness, and many accidents claim the lives of people we love, at all ages. It seems we can come to terms better with the loss of someone older, but no matter how young or old the person is, those left behind experience a lot of pain and grief. We need to be aware that Jesus weeps with us, just as He wept at the tomb of Lazarus (John 11:35). Jesus knows and feels our pain. He is with us to assure us, just as He assured Martha, that He is the Resurrection and the Life (John 11:25). Jesus has won the victory over death. Because of that, we can know that our loved ones live on in His kingdom, and we can be reunited with them one day. So let us not grieve as those who have no hope (1 Thessalonians 4:13). Let us instead look forward to the kingdom where every tear will be wiped away, and there will be no more death, sorrow, or pain (Revelation 21:4).

The news about Jesus continued to spread. This is truly the Gospel, the Good News Jesus said He was anointed to preach. It is the same Good News we should be spreading today: Faith in Jesus makes you whole.

Daily Bible Readings

MONDAY

Fringe, Aid to Remember God's Commandments
(Numbers 15:37-41)

TUESDAY

Disciples and Family Witness Girl's Healing
(Luke 8:40-42, 49-56)

WEDNESDAY

Woman Testifies to Jesus' Healing Touch
(Luke 8:42-48)

THURSDAY

Jesus Opens Eyes of the Blind Man
(Matthew 9:27-31)

FRIDAY

Jesus Restores Speech to Mute Man
(Matthew 9:32-34)

SATURDAY

Join the Lord's Harvest Today
(Matthew 9:35-10:1)

SUNDAY

Faith in God Heals Many Ills
(Matthew 9:18-26)