

Matthew 9:18-26: While he was saying these things to them, behold, a ruler came in and knelt before him, saying, "My daughter has just died, but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live." ¹⁹ And Jesus rose and followed him, with his disciples. ²⁰ And behold, a woman who had suffered from a discharge of blood for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment, ²¹ for she said to herself, "If I only touch his garment, I will be made well." ²² Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, "Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well." And instantly the woman was made well. ²³ And when Jesus came to the ruler's house and saw the flute players and the crowd making a commotion, ²⁴ he said, "Go away, for the girl is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him. ²⁵ But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose. ²⁶ And the report of this went through all that district.

Intro: Have you ever been hopeless and depressed? Have you ever been overwhelmed with sadness and despair? Have you ever faced impossible situations in which you thought there was no answer? Jesus can help!

Our God is the God of hopeless, impossible situations. We see this most clearly at the cross. If you were a Jew, expecting this great Messiah to come in power & conquer all your enemies, it seems like a hopeless situation when this Messiah is killed on a cross. Yet it's through this seemingly greatest of all hopeless situations that the greatest cause in all the universe was secured in victory! Jesus lost it all so that He might gain it all back & a whole lot more! In Matthew 9 today, we see foreshadowings of what Jesus would do: conquer all disease & even death itself!

1. The Great Need And The Great Faith Of A Ruler

Matthew 9:18-19: While he was saying these things to them, behold, a ruler came in and knelt before him, saying, "My daughter has just died, but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live." ¹⁹ And Jesus rose and followed him, with his disciples.

a. This world is full of great suffering/need: V 18: "My daughter has just died"; Friends/mother – in hospital

News Article: Thomas Reese's wife and four children were killed in a house fire Saturday . . . Reese's wife Quaniece and their children, 9-year-old India, 5-year-old Jacob, 4-year-old Thomas, and 19-month-old Shirley all died from smoke inhalation, according to authorities.

What is your great suffering? What will you do with that great suffering? Run to Christ or run from Him?

b. This ruler ran to Jesus Christ: V 18: "behold, a ruler came in and knelt before him" (Mark) A ruler of the synagogue. Most of these rulers would have been intensely opposed to Jesus! This one comes with respect!

c. This ruler risked it all: John 9:22: His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.

d. This ruler believed Jesus could help: V 18: "My daughter has just died, but come & lay your hand on her, & she will live." What great faith! He believed Jesus could raise people from the dead – do the impossible? Do you?

e. Jesus will always be with you and help you in just the right way: V 19: And Jesus rose and followed him, with his disciples.

I've heard a testimony once of a hardened person who read the Gospels and saw the love, mercy, kindness, compassion, and tenderness of Jesus – and it melted his heart!

2. The Need And Faith Of A Woman

Matthew 9:20-21: And behold, a woman who had suffered from a discharge of blood for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment, ²¹ for she said to herself, "If I only touch his garment, I will be made well."

a. A suffering woman – she was unclean: Leviticus 15:25: If a woman has a discharge of blood for many days, not at the time of her menstrual impurity, or if she has a discharge beyond the time of her impurity, all the days of the discharge she shall continue in uncleanness. As in the days of her impurity, she shall be unclean.

James Boice: She was unclean . . . she was isolated . . . she was incurable . . . [people] could not even lie on a bed where she had lain or sit on a chair where she had sat. No one could touch her, and she was not allowed to touch other people. Sadly, her bleeding would have destroyed her chances for marriage, or, if she were married, it would have precluded all sexual relations with her husband. She must have been very, very lonely.

b. She came up behind Jesus and touched the fringe of His garment: What is the significance of her touching Jesus' garment? First, Jesus could have gotten really mad – “You made me unclean!” But not Jesus! Secondly:

(1) Their garments were to remind them of their commitment to God and His commandments and identify them as God's people: Numbers 15:37-41: The LORD said to Moses, ³⁸ "Speak to the people of Israel, and tell them to make tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and to put a cord of blue on the tassel of each corner. ³⁹ And it shall be a tassel for you to look at and remember all the commandments of the LORD, to do them, not to follow after your own heart and your own eyes, which you are inclined to whore after. ⁴⁰ So you shall remember and do all my commandments, and be holy to your God. ⁴¹ I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God: I am the LORD your God."

(2) Covering another with your garment was a sign of ownership: Ezekiel 16:8: When I passed by you again and saw you, behold, you were at the age for love, and I spread the corner of my garment over you and covered your nakedness; I made my vow to you and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Lord GOD, and you became mine.

Ruth 3:9: He said, "Who are you?" And she answered, "I am Ruth, your servant. Spread your wings [corners of your garment] over your servant, for you are a redeemer."

(3) Others sought healing by touching Jesus' garment: Matthew 14:35-36: And when the men of that place recognized him, they sent around to all that region and brought to him all who were sick ³⁶ and implored him that they might only touch the fringe of his garment. And as many as touched it were made well.

(4) Her faith was not weak or superstitious, but grounded in God's promises: Malachi 4:2: But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings.

Article: The Jews in Jesus' day were familiar with this Old Testament background. Indeed, the Pharisees wore elaborate tassels on the corners of their garments so that people would regard them as closely identified with God (Matthew 23:5). As a devout Jew, Jesus may well have worn tassels, though His would not have been elaborate showpieces like those of the Pharisees. When people reached for the corners of Jesus' garment, it was in many cases more than a grab for the most accessible part of His person. It was a sign that they wanted to identify with Him. There was nothing magical about the cloth that brought healing. It came by faith as people publicly aligned themselves with Jesus. As He told the woman with a discharge of blood, “Your faith has made you well” (Matthew 9:22). Perhaps Malachi 4:2 was even in her mind as she reached out and thought, “This is finally the one with healing in His wings.” Though Gentile believers today don't afford the same significance to garment corners, knowing this detail adds a layer of richness to the Gospels. And it calls us to imitate the faith of those who reached for Christ's clothing—faith that He brings blessing and help to those who identify with Him as Lord and Savior.

(5) She touched the clothes of God Himself, Who possesses all glory, splendor, and majesty: Isaiah 6:1: In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train [hem, fringe, outer edge] of his robe filled the temple.

Calvin: Almost all the commentators understand by this the fringes of his robe

John 12:41: Isaiah said these things because he saw His [Jesus'] glory and spoke of Him [Jesus].

3. The Love, Mercy, Compassion, And Power Of The Everlasting Father

Matthew 9:22: Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, "Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well." And instantly the woman was made well.

a. Jesus is a loving, merciful, and compassionate Savior: Jesus stopped! Jesus loved this woman; Jesus said "Take heart!"; "Daughter!"

David Platt: Even in a crowd, Jesus gives hope in the midst of despair. What good news to those who are hurting, to those who are walking through pain or struggling in some area of life. You are not lost in the crowd before Jesus. He is intimately aware of every single detail of your life. He knows your struggle, and His love for you is extremely personal. In the middle of the crowds, you have His attention, though not in some self-centered way, as if the world revolves around you. But because you are a child of God, Jesus is attentive to your deepest needs, and you have His affectionate attention.

b. This woman is Jesus' daughter – Jesus is the Everlasting Father: Isaiah 9:6: For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

God the Son and God the Father are not the same Person: John 1:1-3: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God.

John 8:17-18: In your Law it is written that the testimony of two men is true. I am the one who bears witness about myself, and the Father who sent me bears witness about me.

Though God the Son is not God the Father, God the Son cares for His people like a father:

Carl Robbins: (1) Like a father, Jesus is the head of a great family: Jesus is the Last Adam

(2) Like a father, Jesus' image – the family image – is being stamped on all of His people:

Romans 8:29: [we're being] conformed to the image of the Son

(4) Like a father, Jesus is a provider for and protector of His people:

Matthew 1:21: you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.

(3) Like a father, Jesus understands and treats His followers as His children – our passage today!

c. Healing and justification is by faith alone: V 22: "your faith has made you well."

Romans 4:5: And to the one who does not work but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness

d. Jesus is a powerful Savior: V 22: "And instantly the woman was made well."

James Boice: (1) Sin makes us unclean: Isaiah 6:5: Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!

(2) Sin makes us isolated: Isaiah 59:2: but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.

(3) Sin renders us hopeless and incurable: Ephesians 2:1-3: And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience - ³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body¹ and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

GOSPEL: Ephesians 2:4-9: But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ - by grace you have been saved - & raised us up with him & seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

4. The Love, Mercy, Compassion, And Power Of The Only One Who Conquers Death

Matthew 9:23-26: And when Jesus came to the ruler's house and saw the flute players and the crowd making a commotion, ²⁴ he said, "Go away, for the girl is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him. ²⁵ But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose. ²⁶ And the report of this went through all that district.

a. The mourning crowd: Dead is hard for family & friends; Professional mourners were often hired too.

b. Jesus' instruction and proclamation: V 24: "Go away, for the girl is not dead but sleeping."

1 Thessalonians 4:13-16: But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. ¹⁴ For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁵ For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

Colin Nicholl: Paul refers to Christians who have died as being "asleep" which reinforces his main point that they will awake from the grave at the second coming. The metaphor is not intended to deny that the dead are in conscious fellowship with God in the intermediate state. Referring to death with the metaphor of sleep is simply suggested by the physical condition of those who sleep. It gains appropriateness from the fact that all who have died will rise at Christ's return.

c. They laughed at Jesus: V 24: "And they laughed at him."

d. Jesus raises up a dead girl: V 25: "But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose."

Just as we saw you can't fast in the presence of the great Bridegroom, you can't die in the presence of the great Bridegroom either! He came to conquer death! He came to banish death! He took her by the hand, but He didn't become unclean, she arose! This is a little foretaste of what He would do in His own death and resurrection!

Canadian scientist G. B. Hardy: When I looked at religion I said, I have two questions. One, has anybody ever conquered death, and two, if they have, did they make a way for me to conquer death? I checked the tomb of Buddha, and it was occupied, and I checked the tomb of Confucius and it was occupied, and I checked the tomb of Mohammed and it was occupied, and I came to the tomb of Jesus and it was empty. And I said, There is one who conquered death. And I asked the second question, Did He make a way for me to do it? And I opened the Bible and discovered that He said, "Because I live ye shall live also."

John 11:25-26: Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

e. Jesus' fame spread everywhere: There is no one like Jesus! And no one can heal, help, & save like Jesus!

Thomas Watson: Has God taken away your only child? He has given His only Son. This is a happy exchange. What need does he have to complain of losses who has Christ? He is His Father's brightness (Hebrews 1:3), His fullness (Colossians 2:9), and His delight (Proverbs 8:30). Is there enough in Christ to delight the heart of God? And is there not enough in Him to ravish us with holy delight? He is wisdom to teach us, righteousness to acquit us, sanctification to adorn us. He is that royal and princely gift. He is the bread of angels, the joy and triumph of saints. He is "all in all" (Colossians 3:11). Why then are you discontented?

This is amazing indeed! The infinite, everlasting, all-mighty, all-knowing, all-glorious God of all the universe has been absolutely satisfied with Christ in the fellowship of the Holy Trinity from all eternity. Is Christ, then, not enough for us, mere finite vapors? Christ must be all! If He is enough to satisfy the infinite, then He is enough for you, no matter what you lose in this life or no matter what you don't have.

May God use us to spread the fame of Jesus to those around us and around the world!

Unlike the woman in our passage today, Jesus' blood flowed out until He was dead. For us! What love! And He arose!

Christ Jesus Is The Sun Who Rose
With Healing In His Wings – His Clothes
In Love And Mercy Turns And Slows
Our Everlasting Father Shows
Compassion To His Daughter Flows
And Though They Laughed He Onward Goes
To Raise The Dead Girl Death's Foreclosed
For He Would Die And Bear Our Woes
His Precious Blood To Interpose
Enduring Wrath And All Our Throes
Then Rise Again Alive Arose
There's No More Death To Hell It Goes
He Sends It There With All Our Lows
He Conquered! Reigns! Defeats Our Foes
By Faith Alone We're Numbered Those
God Justifies And Deeply Knows
For We're The Ones He Loves And Chose
A Party Now For Us He Throws
Where Everlasting Joy Grows!