

The unfolding of your words gives light.

## To Seek and to Save

### *An Exposition of the Gospel of Luke*

<sup>40</sup>And as Jesus returned, the people welcomed Him, for they had all been waiting for Him<sup>a</sup>. <sup>41</sup>And there came a man named Jairus, and he was an official of the synagogue; and he fell at Jesus' feet, and *began* to implore Him to come to his house<sup>b</sup>; <sup>42</sup>for he had an only daughter, about twelve years old, and she was dying<sup>c</sup>. But as He went, the crowds were pressing against Him.

<sup>43</sup>And a woman who had a hemorrhage for twelve years, and could not be healed by anyone, <sup>44</sup>came up behind Him and touched the fringe of His cloak, and immediately her hemorrhage stopped.<sup>d</sup> <sup>45</sup>And Jesus said, "Who is the one who touched Me?" And while they were

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<sup>a</sup> 8:40 **as Jesus returned, the people welcomed Him, for they had all been waiting for Him.**

Jesus returned to Capernaum after the incident with the legion of demons on the other side of the lake. Matthew says that Jesus had just told the people that you cannot put new wine in old wineskins.

The people missed Him. It is possible that this was the morning after the storm and the encounter with the demoniacs. He had only been gone a few hours and crowds in Capernaum were getting nervous. They were used to His presence and His resolutions of their ills. They had not only heard of the works of Jesus, they had seen the works of Jesus. Here it was that Peter's mother-in-law was healed, where a miraculous catch of fish was witnessed, where a man with a withered hand was healed, where a paralytic let into Peter's house through the roof was both forgiven and healed, where a demon was driven out of a man in the synagogue and where the centurion's servant was healed. Now new people were coming to town. Jesus repeatedly demonstrated His kingdom rule over the natural and supernatural world in Capernaum. Now things were looking like a sin-cursed world again. Like Mary and Martha, some of the people must have been thinking, *If Jesus had only been here...*

<sup>b</sup> 8:41 **there came a man named Jairus, and he was an official of the synagogue; and he fell at Jesus' feet, and began to implore Him to come to his house.** Jairus would have been on very familiar terms with Jesus because Jesus had taught so often in the synagogue where Jairus served as an elder. Here is a dignified man behaving in an undignified manner because he had no hope other than Jesus.

<sup>c</sup> 8:42 **he had an only daughter, about twelve years old, and she was dying.** Compare this to Luke 7:12 where the dead boy Jesus raised was "the only son of his mother." The grief at losing a child is multiplied when you have only one.

Luke says the girl was dying. Mark records that the father said, "My little daughter is at the point of death." Matthew (9:18) records: "My daughter has just died; but come and lay Your hand on her, and she will live." There is little difference between "at the point of death" and "dead," particularly in the absence of medical instruments.

<sup>d</sup> 8:43-44 **a woman who had a hemorrhage for twelve years, and could not be healed by anyone, came up behind Him and touched the fringe of His cloak, and immediately her hemorrhage stopped.** Mark (5:26) tells us that this woman had "endured much" from physicians and had spent all her money in hope of a cure. Cultural historian Alfred Edersheim says that some of the treatments for a malady such as this woman had would have been "the ashes of an Ostrich-Egg, carried in summer in a linen, in winter in a cotton rag; or a barley-corn found in the dung of a white she-ass."

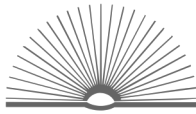
This is a brief glimpse at the kind of clothing Jesus wore. The "fringe of His cloak" is likely a reference to the tassels strict Jewish men in obedience to Numbers 15:38-41 (also Deuteronomy 22:12):

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all denying it, Peter said, “Master, the people are crowding and pressing in on You<sup>a</sup>.”<sup>46</sup> But Jesus said, “Someone did touch Me, for I was aware that power had gone out of Me<sup>b</sup>.”<sup>47</sup> When the woman saw that she had not escaped notice, she came trembling and fell down before Him, and declared in the presence of all the people the reason why she had touched Him, and how she had been immediately healed<sup>c</sup>.<sup>48</sup> And He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace<sup>d</sup>.”

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Speak to the sons of Israel, and tell them that they shall make for themselves tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and that they shall put on the tassel of each corner a cord of blue. It shall be a tassel for you to look at and remember all the commandments of the LORD, so as to do them and not follow after your own heart and your own eyes, after which you played the harlot, so that you may remember to do all My commandments and be holy to your God. I am the LORD your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt to be your God; I am the LORD your God.

Understand that aside from the physical weakness of such a condition, Leviticus 15:25-30 says that the woman would have been ceremonially unclean and unable to participate in worship at the temple in Jerusalem until the condition cleared up. Not wanting to physically contact Jesus, she reasoned in faith that touching the tassel on the corner of His garment would bring her into contact with His power.

Warren Wiersbe points out the great contrast between Jairus and the woman. He was a leader among the Jews; she, anonymous. He was a synagogue official; she, ceremonially unclean. He was pleading for his daughter; she, for herself. His daughter had been healthy for 12 years; she, sick for 12. He had a public need; she, a private one. But both knew where their help came from.

<sup>a</sup> 8:45 **Jesus said, “Who is the one who touched Me?” And while they were all denying it, Peter said, “Master, the people are crowding and pressing in on You.”** The people may have thought Jesus was annoyed at being touched. Peter, never one to worry too much about his words, pointed out that nearly everyone was touching Him.

<sup>b</sup> 8:46 **I was aware that power had gone out of Me.** Jesus clarified His question. This touch was the touch of one reaching out in despair to Him as her only hope of healing. This was a touch of faith and “it worked.” He worked.

<sup>c</sup> 8:47 **When the woman saw that she had not escaped notice, she came trembling and fell down before Him, and declared in the presence of all the people the reason why she had touched Him, and how she had been immediately healed.** The explanation she was forced to give shone the light on the power of Messiah.

<sup>d</sup> 8:48 **Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace.** Remember that the real story here is not the woman’s faith but where she placed it. The same amount of faith reaching out to Peter would have left her in her illness.

How can one person sit at a conference or a Bible study or a church service and be abundantly energized and blessed while another can’t wait to get home and eat? A whole bunch of folks touched Jesus that day, but only this one was healed. Jesus did not say, “Daughter, your *touch* has healed you,” but “your *faith* has healed you.” According to Hebrews 11:6, “without faith it impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.”

Faith can be trusting God to reward your obedience because you know He always keeps His word. Faith can also be trusting God to do a merciful act because you know He always acts according to His character. This latter type of faith is what the woman exhibited.

It is a matter of faith that some say with the Emmaus disciples, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?” while others say, “What’s for lunch?” God rewards those who earnestly seek Him. That is why this humble woman was blessed in a way no one else was.

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<sup>49</sup>While He was still speaking, someone came from the house of the synagogue official, saying, "Your daughter has died; do not trouble the Teacher anymore<sup>a</sup>." <sup>50</sup>But when Jesus heard *this*, He answered him, "Do not be afraid *any longer*; only believe, and she will be made well<sup>b</sup>." <sup>51</sup>When He came to the house, He did not allow anyone to enter with Him, except Peter and John and James, and the girl's father and mother<sup>c</sup>. <sup>52</sup>Now they were all weeping and lamenting for her; but He said, "Stop weeping, for she has not died, but is asleep<sup>d</sup>." <sup>53</sup>And they *began* laughing at Him, knowing that she had died. <sup>54</sup>He, however, took her by the hand and called, saying, "Child, arise<sup>e</sup>!" <sup>55</sup>And her spirit returned, and she got up immediately; and He gave orders for *something* to be given her to eat<sup>f</sup>. <sup>56</sup>Her parents were amazed; but He instructed them to tell no one what had happened<sup>g, h</sup>.

<sup>a</sup> 8:49 **While He was still speaking, someone came from the house of the synagogue official, saying, "Your daughter has died; do not trouble the Teacher anymore."** Think about the urgency of this situation and how you would take an interruption like that of Jesus talking to the sick woman. We say, "What a horrible time for a traffic jam" when the timing could not have been better orchestrated by our sovereign God.

<sup>b</sup> 8:50 **Do not be afraid any longer; only believe, and she will be made well.** Jesus did not give Jairus time to fret. He comforted him with words so applicable to any turmoil of life. Jairus was being asked to believe what Jesus said against very grim prospects. The woman believed not in His word but His character. Despite all the differences in Jairus and the woman, they found common ground by faith in Christ.

<sup>c</sup> 8:51 **He did not allow anyone to enter with Him, except Peter and John and James, and the girl's father and mother.** The so-called "inner-three" disciples witnessed more things than the other nine. Jesus was unveiling His character to those He wanted to see it. He was not interested in becoming a circus sideshow.

<sup>d</sup> 8:52 **they were all weeping and lamenting for her; but He said, "Stop weeping, for she has not died, but is asleep."** Remember this is the description Jesus gave of Lazarus to describe his death (John 11:11).

<sup>e</sup> 8:53-54 **they began laughing at Him, knowing that she had died. He, however, took her by the hand and called, saying, "Child, arise!"** People laugh at odd times. Maybe this was nervous laughter or even angry laughter. Either way the people scoffed at what they considered an obvious error on Jesus' part. You do that too.

Dr. G. Campbell Morgan, a capable Bible teacher in England early in the twentieth century, commented in his later years on this text of Scripture:

I can hardly speak of this matter without becoming personal and reminiscent, remembering a time forty years ago when my own first lassie lay at the point of death, dying. I called for Him then, and he came, and surely said to our troubled hearts, "Fear not, believe only." He did not say, "She shall be made whole." She was not made whole, on the earthly plane; she passed away into the life beyond. But He did say to her, "Talitha cumi," i.e., "Little lamb, arise." But in her case that did not mean, "Stay on the earth level"; it meant that He needed her, and He took her to be with Himself. She has been with Him all these years, as we measure time here, and I have missed her every day. But His word, "Believe only," has been the strength of all the passing years.

<sup>f</sup> 8:55 **her spirit returned, and she got up immediately; and He gave orders for something to be given her to eat.** Eating would be proof positive that she was not only alive but well.

<sup>g</sup> 8:56 **Her parents were amazed; but He instructed them to tell no one what had happened.** Again, Jesus was interested in showing Himself to these specific people at this time, not everyone.

<sup>h</sup> 8:40-56 Take note that in this passage Jesus was met by two desperate people, two people who had no other options. Neither thought it beneath their dignity to fall at Jesus' feet (one when he begged and the other when she worshipped).

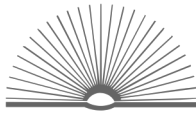
In this brief section of Luke you see that Jesus' timetable is very different than the people around Him. He returned to Capernaum after ministering on and beyond the lake. The people

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would have had Him stay. The father would have never wished for his daughter to become sick after twelve years of health. The woman would never have asked to be ill for twelve years. But the ruler of the universe had this all mapped out. Here is why God's timing is far superior to yours:

1. When you are looking for ways to be made comfortable, He is finding ways to make you useful. Consider all the uncomfortable situations Jesus put the disciples in: stormy seas, demon-possessed madmen and crowds of people begging for help (and more to come by Luke's record). For instance, you assume that after a hard day, unruly children and a crabby spouse are in your way. In truth they are an opportunity from God to serve, change and grow.
2. When you most crave relief He most desires His own glory. There was nothing wrong with the father wanting Jesus to heal his little girl and nothing wrong with the woman wanting a release from her sickness. But we should remember that the end Jesus had in mind was much bigger than the healing He brought. He wished to show Himself to the people and sometimes He does that in ways other than giving you relief.
3. When you think all hope is lost He actively does His most awesome work. Death is a barrier very few people ever pass and come back to tell the story. Medicine is a wonderful gift from God, but frequently medical options reach an end. Then what? God is glorified in weakness because it is then He shows Himself most glorious (2 Corinthians 12:9-10).

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