

REACH OUT

Mark 5:21-43

The Gospel of Mark reveals that Jesus treats adults as ...well ...adults. That is, Jesus holds people accountable for their actions. To those who come to Him with an open heart and mind, Jesus responded with grace and healing and compassion. But to those who were unreceptive and close minded Jesus responded with correction and rebuke. In this passage we see both as Jesus ministered to a desperate father and a desperate woman.

A desperate father reached out to Jesus (5:21-24)

Mark 5:21-24 (ESV)

²¹ And when Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered about him, and he was beside the sea. ²² Then came one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name, and seeing him, he fell at his feet ²³ and implored him earnestly, saying, "My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well and live." ²⁴ And he went with him. And a great crowd followed him and thronged about him.

Upon returning to Capernaum from delivering the demoniac from Legion (5:1-20), Jesus was met by Jairus, a father desperate to save his little girl. Jairus fell at Jesus' feet and and repeatedly begged him to come heal his daughter who was deathly ill (lit. "at the end"). Jairus was a respected citizen of Capernaum, one of the elders who lead the local synagogue. Jesus consented and, with a large crowd pressing Him, followed Jairus to his home.

A desperate woman reached out to Jesus (5:25-34)

Mark 5:25-34 (ESV)

²⁵ And there was a woman who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years, ²⁶ and who had suffered much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was no better but rather grew worse.

In the crowd was a woman who had been sick for twelve years. For twelve years this woman had suffered not only physically, but socially. She likely suffered from a menstrual disorder that kept her in a perpetual state of ceremonial uncleanness and social isolation (cf. Lev. 15:19-30). In addition, she had been impoverished by ineffectual physicians.

²⁷ She had heard the reports about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment. ²⁸ For she said, "If I touch even his garments, I will be made well." ²⁹ And immediately the flow of blood dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease.

Undoubtedly embarrassed by her condition she hoped to be healed inconspicuously. Perhaps she was one of the thousands that, having heard of Jesus' healing powers, had come from a distant part of Israel. Her faith became reality; as soon as she touched Jesus' robe she felt the healing in her body. Perhaps weeping quietly with joy and relief, she waited for the crowd to flow past but to her chagrin it stopped.

³⁰ And Jesus, perceiving in himself that power had gone out from him, immediately turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my garments?" ³¹ And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing around you, and yet you say, 'Who touched me?' " ³² And he looked around to see who had done it. ³³ But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling and fell down before him and told him the whole truth. ³⁴ And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease."

John Mark emphasized that Jesus was being pressed on all sides by the crowd (5:24, 31). It was only the touch of this woman, in faith, that elicited healing power. I believe Jesus stopped and sought her out to commend and encourage her faith. It reminds us of what we studied in Hebrews 11:6.

Hebrews 11:6 (ESV)

⁶ And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

Is there any doubt that Jesus was pleased by her faith? He is tender – He calls her "daughter" – the same term Jairus used for his little girl. He rewarded her faith. Jesus did not intend to embarrass her, but to honor her faith and give her His blessing. This was a very heart warming exchange between Jesus and this dear woman.

In the mean time, a crisis of faith was brewing in Jairus.

Jesus reached out and restored Jairus' daughter to life (5:35-43)

Mark 5:35-43 (ESV)

³⁵ While he was still speaking, there came from the ruler's house some who said, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?" ³⁶ But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the ruler of the synagogue, "Do not fear, only believe."

There was a limit to Jesus' power or so people thought as reflected in the messenger's statement. Now that she was dead, Jairus' daughter was beyond Jesus' help; Jesus was able to heal, but not raise the dead. Jesus comforted Jairus not to believe these assumptions, but to believe in Jesus' ability to handle the situation. Jesus didn't turn back but continued to Jairus' home.

³⁷ And he allowed no one to follow him except Peter and James and John the brother of James. ³⁸ They came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and Jesus saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. ³⁹ And when he had entered, he said to them, "Why are you making a commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but sleeping." ⁴⁰ And they laughed at him.

Upon arriving at Jarius' home, Jesus selected Peter, James and John to accompany Him inside presumably to be eyewitnesses to what was to follow. There are few tragedies as painful as the death of a child. Hopes were dashed when Jairus failed to bring Jesus back in time to heal the little girl. Perhaps they were still laying out her body when Jairus and Jesus arrived. We can picture Jairus holding the lifeless body of his daughter sobbing uncontrollably. The pain was palpable.

Jesus sought to speak a word of comfort and hope when He asked, “Why are you making a commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but sleeping.” He could wake her – bring her back to life – restore their joy.

But how did they respond?

It turned ugly.

Instead of being comforted, they were incensed. They laughed at Him. This was a laugh of scorn, of derision, of mockery. Their minds were fixed; Jesus did not have the power to restore the dead. How dare He give such false hope.

And so Jesus kicked them out.

If, after all they knew about Him, they still wouldn’t even give Him the benefit of the doubt then they would not have the privilege of witnessing what Jesus was about to do.

But he put them all outside and took the child’s father and mother and those who were with him and went in where the child was. ⁴¹ Taking her by the hand he said to her, “Talitha cumi,” which means, “Little girl, I say to you, arise.” ⁴² And immediately the girl got up and began walking (for she was twelve years of age), and they were immediately overcome with amazement. ⁴³ And he strictly charged them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.

Jairus, his wife, Peter, James and John were the only witnesses to what took place in that room. Very simply Jesus took the little girl by the hand and commanded her to arise and she did. Jesus has the power to restore life.

Then He strictly charged Jairus, his wife, the little girl, Peter, James and John that no one should know “this”. Obviously “this” could not refer to the little girl being alive; everyone was going to see that. What was not to be made known was *how* the little girl was alive.

Those who scorned Jesus were to be left to wonder. It was a rebuke by Jesus of their lack of faith in the face of months of ministry He had conducted Capernaum. They were without excuse for not at least giving Him the benefit of the doubt. Their scorn was completely inappropriate.

What could have been a tremendous faith building experience was forfeited.

Was not this what Jesus warned:

Mark 4:24–25 (ESV)

²⁴ And he said to them, “Pay attention to what you hear: with the measure you use, it will be measured to you, and still more will be added to you. ²⁵ For to the one who has, more will be given, and **from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.**”

THINGS TO PONDER

- It pleases Jesus greatly when we reach out to Him in faith. Not just for justification salvation, but for daily needs. Picture Jesus with His arm around the woman in the crowd as He honored her faith and blessed her. It really pleases Jesus when we trust Him.

- Jesus holds us accountable to reach a decision about Him. He is willing to be put on trial for awhile, but there comes a time when the evidence is in and we need to reach a verdict. Jesus held His disciples accountable (4:40) and He held the people of Capernaum accountable (5:39-43). How about you? Is it time for you to make a decision and put your trust in Jesus to save you from your sin and from God's judgment?
- Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life!

Every human being will be resurrected; either to life or to judgment (John 5:24-29).

John 5:24-29 (ESV)

²⁴ Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.

²⁵ "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. ²⁶ For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. ²⁷ And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. ²⁸ Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice ²⁹ and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.

You *are* a soul and you *have* a body.

Your soul is who you are. It includes your mind, consciousness, memories, unique personality traits etc. Your soul is immaterial, but it is real.

Scientific research affirms the existence of the soul as distinct from the body.¹ In other words, you are not just your body. There is more to you than just your body.

This is what the Bible has always revealed. When the body dies we continue to exist. There is an afterlife.

And Jesus teaches us that all of us will be resurrected, that is, we will all receive a new body in the afterlife, but we will not all have the same experience. Those who have done evil in this life will be resurrected and judged at the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:11-15). All will be found guilty and sentenced to the Lake of Fire.

All of us start out as those who do evil. All of us have sinned against God and deserve death (separation from Him). Out of love for us, God sent Jesus to take the death penalty for us on the cross. After paying the penalty for our sin, Jesus was resurrected to life. If we, by faith, will put our confidence in the death of Jesus for our sin, we will be completely forgiven. God will come live in us. And when this body dies we will receive a resurrection body and live with Jesus for all eternity.

This is why the death of a Christian is so different; though there is sadness for the temporary separation there is joy in knowing they were with Jesus.

Do you have that assurance and hope?

¹ Cf. *The Case for a Creator*, chapter 10, "The Evidence of Consciousness".