

Lamentations 3:22-33

Psalm 30

2 Corinthians 8:7-15

Mark 5:21-43

Sermon June 27th, 2021

God's Healing Is for Everyone

In our gospel this morning, Jesus encounters two people who are in need of God's healing. A wealthy religious leader named Jairus whose daughter is deathly ill. And a woman who has been suffering from bleeding for a very long time.

Two people in need of God's healing. Two people who come from opposite ends of the social order. Jairus, a person with authority and wealth (**Image**). A person who stands at the front of the line when needing something, but rarely finds himself in a position of need. A person with all this authority who still recognizes the authority Jesus possesses. This is probably one of the reasons why he humbly begs Jesus to come to his daughter's aid.

And then there is the woman, who is left unnamed, suffering from a condition that keeps her from becoming a full participant in the community (**Image**). In fact, any kind of bleeding made one ritually unclean until their bleeding stopped, which meant they had to be isolated from the community until they were made clean. She is marginalized from the community. This is why she has to sneak through the crowd to get to Jesus.

Both people understand their social status, and what it takes for them to access Jesus. Jairus is probably aware that Jesus spends a lot of time with the people who are marginalized by the system Jairus is a leader in. This could be another reason why Jairus is so humble when he approaches Jesus. Didn't Jesus come for the poor?

For the woman, she has been living with restrictions throughout her illness. She is used to people telling her she is not welcome. And yet, she has not let this deter her from seeking out someone to heal her. Doctor after doctor she has visited to see if they can heal her. She does not give up, as she is desperate to reconnect with her community. Remember her illness is as much a social illness as it is a physical illness. As this illness makes her ritually unclean. Keeping her from being a full participant in her community.

This is why she feels the only thing she can really do to access Jesus's power is to sneak up behind him and swipe at his cloak. If she approaches Jesus like Jairus does, she might get turned away.

Well, in both cases Jesus responds to their plea. For Jairus, Jesus feels compassion for him, and agrees to go see his daughter.

For the woman, Jesus feels power leave him when she touches his cloak. Jesus could choose to ignore it, and keep on going. But, instead, Jesus stops, and calls the person forward who decided to impede on his personal boundaries.

After a moment of murmuring among the crowd, the ritually unclean woman comes forward, and tells Jesus everything. Jesus affirms her healing. Jesus has made her clean. Jesus welcomes her back into the community (**Image**).

Now remember, Jesus is on his way to try and save a little girl from dying. What is happening to Jairus' daughter is an emergency. Jesus doesn't have time to stop to see who touched him. But, Jesus knew that the person who touched him was probably someone who lived on the margins of the community. Jesus wanted to make a clear statement to his disciples, to the crowd, to us, that everyone has access to God's healing through Jesus. It doesn't matter what your status is. It doesn't matter if you are ritually unclean. If you need healing Jesus will respond to your need.

Can you imagine the ambulance stopping to tend to someone else in need while you are in there having a heart attack (**Image**)? This is a dramatic moment that brings life to Jesus' mission. Jesus' love is impartial. God's healing is impartial. Jesus will even stop on the way to a rich man's house to affirm the healing of a poor woman.

So, there it is. Two people in need of healing. Two people who believe that if they go to Jesus, Jesus will heal them from their suffering.

One who humbly steps down from his authority to reach out to Jesus, a son of a carpenter.

Another one who pushes the boundaries. Who takes a chance despite what society is doing to restrict her? Whose only opportunity for healing is to touch the edge of the cloak Jesus is wearing.

Two people who come from different ends of society, and yet, two people who both have to wait for Jesus. Or in other words, two people who see that their healing happens on God's time, not theirs (**Image**).

For the woman, she waits a very long time to finally be healed from her suffering. She waits a very long time before finally being labelled clean. She waits a very long time to reconnect with her community.

For Jairus, he finds out that his daughter is dead. Jesus' detour to help a ritually unclean poor woman ends up being a fatal one. But, as Jairus grieves the news of his daughter's passing, Jesus invites him to believe.

Jesus takes a few of his disciples with him, and raises Jairus' daughter from the dead. Jesus invites them to give her food to prove that she is now alive. Not just a spirit.

God's healing is impartial, and does happen. Unfortunately, sometimes we have to wait to experience this healing.

So, whether our suffering leads to social consequences, or is debilitating and long lasting, or is even fatal, we bear witness today through the gospel that we all have access to God's healing through Christ Jesus. Whether people in our society think we deserve this healing or not.

All we need to do is reach out and touch the cloak that Jesus is wearing, and Jesus will respond to our needs (**Image**). All we need to do is believe, and even in death we will experience God's healing.

We may have to wait longer than we want, but in God's time we will experience God's healing. We will experience the resurrected life God has promised us through Christ Jesus.

As it says in the book of Lamentations: The Lord is good to those who wait for the Lord.

Let us pray, God our healer, give us patient hearts to wait for you when our suffering feels like forever. Give us faithful hearts to trust in your promise that we will experience your healing and redemption. No matter where we stand in society. No matter how long we have to wait. Even in death. **Amen.**

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