

Healed by Faith

It's so good to see you smile," said Keisha.

Precious blinked and smiled wider. The two women and Precious's 1½ year-old son, Kasen, were sitting in a booth at a sandwich shop.

"We haven't had any time together in a long time," said Precious.

"I understand. You're a new mom," interjected Keisha, and stopping herself from saying what she was thinking.

After giving birth, Precious had gone into a deep depression. Her husband and family thought she would grow out of it after several weeks. However, the postpartum depression had lasted until about two months ago.

"Looks like you want to say something," nudged Precious.

"Did you get some prescribed medicine to help with the depression?" asked Keisha.

"No, although there is nothing wrong with that," answered Precious. "I prayed continually for the Lord to lift me up. I could see what the depression was doing to me and my family."

"It was about three months ago when I began praying for deliverance," she continued. "I wanted to be a good mother and wife, and I couldn't do that in the grips of depression. I know God loves me, and I knew He wanted me healed."

"I'm so happy for you, Precious," Keisha said.

"I'm so grateful to the Lord for healing me," Precious said. "Now I can get going on the young mother's ministry that I've talked to Pastor about."

1. *Describe a time when you reached out to Jesus and He blessed your life.*

2. *Do you tend to reach out to Christ more when your life is going well or not going well? Explain your answer.*

3. *When you reach out to the Lord, how does He transform your life?*

The Synagogue Leader's Request

Matthew 9:18-19, KJV

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.

Matthew 9:18-19, NIV

¹⁸While he was saying this, a synagogue leader came and knelt before him and said, "My daughter has just died. But come and put your hand on her, and she will live." ¹⁹Jesus got up and went with him, and so did his disciples.

An anxious local official came and prostrated himself in Jesus' presence as a sign of deep respect. The Gospels of Mark and Luke also have an account of this story, and they both mention that the man's name was Jairus.

When Jairus fell at Jesus' feet, he acknowledged in a dramatic, moving way that he was pleading before a person of unusual power and social standing. This was a remarkable public demonstration of both Jairus's need and his recognition of Jesus' amazing aptitudes and abilities.

Mark and Luke's longer accounts note that while Jesus was accompanying Jairus, messengers came from his house to say the girl had died (Mark 5:35; Luke 8:49). In Matthew's condensed version, the story begins with Jairus falling before Jesus and saying, "My daughter has just died. But come and put your hand on her, and she will live" (Matt. 9:18). Jairus believed that Jesus could restore his daughter's life. At this moment, Jesus had been sitting, the normal posture of a Jewish teacher while giving instruction. Jairus's remarkable display of faith was enough to move the Savior to get up with His disciples and go with this official.

4. *What prompted the religious official to come to Jesus for help?*

5. *How did Jesus respond to the religious official's request?*

The Healing of a Hemorrhaging Woman

Matthew 9:20-22, KJV

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.

Matthew 9:20-22, NIV

²⁰Just then a woman who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak. ²¹She said to herself, "If I only touch his cloak, I will be healed."

²²Jesus turned and saw her. "Take heart, daughter," he said, "your faith has healed you." And the woman was healed at that moment.

While Jesus and His disciples were accompanying Jairus to his house, within the crowd was a woman who suffered from some sort of bleeding problem. The underlying Greek verb likely indicates the woman was plagued by chronic hemorrhaging, which had lasted for 12 years.

The woman's physical discomfort wasn't the only pain she had to endure. She also would have had to withstand rejection from her fellow Jews. This is because the law excluded someone with her sickness from religious ceremonies and social events. Added to the problem of isolation and loneliness was the financial drain of medical bills.

As Jesus made His way to the home of Jairus, the woman reasoned that He was her only hope of being healed. So, in a bold act of faith, which defied the contemporary norms of behavior, the woman came up behind Jesus and touched His clothing.

The woman believed that, as a result of her action, she would be "healed" (vs. 21). The underlying Greek verb refers to being delivered. It is the same term used in the New Testament for those who are rescued from turmoil,

along with others who are saved from sin. Most likely, Matthew had both connotations in mind with respect to the woman. Her encounter with Jesus resulted in the woman being restored both physically and spiritually.

Both Mark (5:30-33) and Luke (8:45-46) add the poignant scene in which Jesus asked, “Who touched me?”—which was followed by His statement, “Someone touched me; I know that power has gone out from me” (Luke 8:46). The woman, realizing that she could no longer remain hidden, fell frightened and trembling at Jesus’ feet (Mark 5:33; Luke 8:47).

Jesus responded to the woman with kindness and grace. He reassuringly addressed the woman as “daughter” and encouraged her with the words, “Take heart” (Matt. 9:22).

Next, Jesus declared that the woman’s faith had healed her. The same Greek verb used in verse 21 occurs again in verse 22. The outtake is that the woman’s healing affected her entire self.

6. *Why did the woman approach Jesus?*

7. *What response from Jesus did the woman receive?*

The Restoration of a Dead Girl to Life

Matthew 9:23-26, KJV

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.

Matthew 9:23-26, NIV

²³When Jesus entered the synagogue leader’s house and saw the noisy crowd and people playing pipes, ²⁴he said, “Go away. The girl is not dead but asleep.” But they laughed at him. ²⁵After the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took the girl by the hand, and she got up. ²⁶News of this spread through all that region.

By the time the group arrived at the home of Jairus, a group of professional mourners had gathered to wail and play dirges on their “pipes,” or flutes. Indeed, so many mourners had come to the house that the commotion became quite “noisy” (vs. 23). They may have been chanting and clapping, or pulling their hair, tearing their clothes, and beating their chests.

In keeping with the custom of the day, these mourners would accompany a funeral procession to the burial site of the deceased. Also, those who could afford it would pay individuals to deliver eulogies all along the route to the grave. These practices were considered the proper way to pay respect for the household’s lost family member.

Jesus questioned why these people were making such a commotion, especially since the parents’ daughter was “not dead but asleep” (vs. 23). The mourners ridiculed Jesus, perhaps concluding that He was crazy. The Greek word translated “laughed” (vs. 24) is used only here and in the parallel Gospel accounts in the New Testament. But Jesus was not crazy; He knew the girl’s condition was only temporary.

Jesus “put” the mourners “outside” (vs. 25) of the house before He went to see the dead girl. According to Mark 5:40, Jesus took the girl’s parents, along with Peter, James, and John, into the room where the corpse lay. There, Jesus grasped the girl’s lifeless hand and she got up, alive.

As with many of Jesus’ miracles, it was impossible to keep “news” of what happened from spreading through the “region” (Matt. 9:26). While Jesus had done things so far that other prophets had done (for example, Elijah raised the widow’s son—1 Kings 17:17-24), Jesus would shortly give sight to the blind (Matt. 9:27-31) and speech to the mute (vss. 32-33), so that He could later prove to John’s disciples that the Messiah had indeed come (11:4-5).

8. What did Jesus do with the crowd of lamenters He encountered?

9. How did Jesus restore the girl to life?

Come to Jesus

When you open the New Testament, the first words you read were penned by Matthew, who was an eyewitness to the earthly ministry of Jesus. At the time of their first meeting, Matthew was a tax collector, an occupation loathed by the Jewish community, particularly because tax collectors were in service of the Roman government and most of them were corrupt in their dealings with the Jews.

Quite possibly, Matthew was wealthier than most other Jews and enjoyed luxuries unavailable to them. His privileged status could have further alienated him, and when he became a follower of Jesus, the other disciples, no doubt, initially regarded him with suspicion and disdain.

As a disciple of Jesus, Matthew no longer focused his life on money and on dreams of living affluently. Instead, he became dependent on the charity of others while living with others with whom he would never have socialized. Matthew was now learning and sharing the teachings of his Master, Jesus. Before, Matthew worked for himself; now, he lived a dynamic life with a divine purpose.

Not surprisingly, therefore, Matthew filled his Gospel with stories of people from all walks of life who reached out to Jesus and found a new life in Him, just as he had. His Gospel and the stories he tells impress upon us that reaching out to Jesus not only is an expression of our need for Him but also that we have a marvelous life in Him when we do.

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened,” Jesus said to Matthew and us, “and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28).

10. *What compels people to want to reach out to Jesus?*

11. *Why do you believe Jesus beckons us to reach out to Him?*

12. *When we do come to Jesus, why do we invariably live a new life?*

Help!

This week's Scripture focused on two people who sought Jesus' help. One was a father who asked Jesus to heal his daughter. The other was a woman who didn't verbalize what she wanted from Jesus but believed by touching His cloak that she would be healed from her physical affliction. Both possessed remarkable faith in Jesus, and in both cases, His healing power was demonstrated. Such help from the Lord tells us that He truly cares for us and has the authority to change our lives in miraculous ways.

► *Describe a situation in which you need to reach out to Jesus and will do so this week. Describe the situation and write your prayer for reaching out to Him.*

KEY VERSE

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.

—Matthew 9:22, KJV

Jesus turned and saw her, "Take heart, daughter," he said, "your faith has healed you." And the woman was healed at that moment.

—Matthew 9:22, NIV

DAILY BIBLE READINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S LESSONS

Week of June 21 through June 27

(See *The Quiet Hour* and *Cross* devotionals on these passages.)

Mon. Isaiah 38:16-20—Let's Sing of the Lord's Faithfulness.

Tues. Matthew 14:1-12—The Baptist Dies for the Faith.

Wed. Leviticus 13:1-8—Symptoms and Treatments of Leprosy.

Thurs. 2 Kings 7:3-11—Lepers Share Their Good News.

Fri. John 4:39-42—Many Samaritans Believe in the Savior.

Sat. Luke 17:1-10—Doing What Needs to Be Done.

Sun. Leviticus 13:45-56; Luke 17:11-19—Cultivate Gratefulness for Acts of Healing.