

In their wisdom, Jon and Terry have asked both Carol and me to speak

AT THE SAME TIME on this passage.

And what an awesome passage of scripture it is.

Those of you who know either of us will be aware that studying God's word is a passion, for us both. And today, God's power, His compassion, and His love are so very clear.

Our story begins as Jesus arrives from the other side of the lake. The Sea of Galilee.

He had just released a legion of demons into a herd of pigs. Who had then run off over the edge of a cliff and drowned in the water; this had frightened the people so much they'd asked him to leave. His enormous power was too much for them.

On his arrival to the other side of the lake, (probably Capernaum), crowds of people have gathered, waiting for him. He climbs out of the boat.

Before his feet have stopped dripping, a man falls at his feet. Desperate and pleading.

Jairus is an important man. He is the elected leader of the local synagogue which often meant strong links with the Pharisees. And we know they did not like Jesus. He was threatening their influence and power.

So, we can safely assume that Jairus would have been warned to steer clear of Jesus. To fall, kneeling, at his feet was a daring act of respect and worship.

He was taking a huge and dangerous **risk**.

Then we meet the woman - my heart always goes out to her. Not only had she suffered from constant bleeding for 12 years which must have left her tired, weak and anaemic but the passage tells us that she had also suffered at the hands of the very doctors - who she had gone to for help - and had been bled dry of all her finances and ..to cap it all ..we are told the condition continued to get worse.

In Leviticus chapter 15 Jewish law decreed that women were deemed unclean whilst they were bleeding and then had to wait 7 whole days after they had stopped - before being permitted to offer sacrifices in the synagogue. Anyone who came into contact with her or touched her would also be immediately rendered unclean until the end of that day.

So not only was she isolated from practicing her faith and taking part in any form of worship - she was also totally isolated from society. Her affliction impacted and dominated every single area of her life.

She had heard about Jesus – by this time in his ministry he had healed hundreds if not thousands of people. She had not only heard about him but she believed and had faith in what she was hearing. But she didn't think someone like her could actually ask Jesus for help!

Just by being in the crowd she risked being recognised and driven away, no-one would have wanted to come into contact with her.

Jairus's daughter was dying. She was only 12. On the verge of womanhood.

And her Dad was beside himself.

I am sure some of us have an understanding of witnessing our children very sick.

It is terrifying. You would do anything to help them. The stress is acute. Nothing else matters but getting them well.

Jesus is Jairus's **only hope** for his only daughter. (Jesus is the miracle maker.)

The woman believed that if she could just touch Jesus' robes she would be healed and then she could slink off and disappear – he was her **last hope**. And it happened, the moment she touched his cloak she was immediately healed and she felt well – no pain, no bleeding - for the first time in 12 years.

But she hadn't expected what came next. Although she had only touched his robes in the same way that many other people must have been doing in that jostling crowd surrounding him – Jesus had felt the power leave him and heal her. He could have said nothing and blessed her with this private healing.

But he had a purpose for her. He wanted to make clear that there was no real connection between the touch and the cure. And if he had allowed her to melt away into the crowd would those around her really accept her back into society and believe she had been healed?

But just imagine how she was feeling – having been rejected for 12 years and now finally feeling whole again – what would he do? Would he take the healing back? Was he angry? It took great courage to step forward and tell her whole story in front of the crowd.

But he spoke so tenderly to her – using the term Daughter rather than Woman – explaining it was her faith that had healed her not the touch. The phrase he used for “made well” in the original Greek is *sozo* – meaning spiritually well or saved from sin. So, as well as being physically healed she had also been spiritually healed and could truly “go in peace”.

Jairus was frantic! Why was Jesus stopping to help someone else?

Jesus come on!! Please come and save my daughter!

But, back at the house.

The mourners are already weeping and wailing.

No weeping and wailing was a disgrace and showed disrespect, so many families paid professionals to make a noise.

Its too late. She is dead.

But with Jesus there is never a late arrival. He will act in the right way at the right time.

Verse 36 ‘**Don’t be afraid. Just believe.**’ Words of hope and promise.

Words to hang onto when we are overwhelmed with fear and hopelessness.

Jesus is the source of all hope and promise. He cares. He loves us and wants to help us.

Of course, Jesus saying she is asleep makes the people laugh and ridicule him.

But what did he mean?

Jesus was indicating that this was a temporary situation. She would be restored.

And he does. He heals her. He raises her from the dead.

He has power over nature, spirits, and death. He has more than enough power to go round.

These people he had healed were considered unclean. But Jesus reached out and helped anyone.

Here are several things to think about..

The **risk** - Jairus and the woman took huge risks in asking and believing that Jesus could help them. And Jesus took risks every time he healed. He knew it was winding the authorities up. But His love for us and His compassion never fails.

It makes me wonder if we should be taking risks. Not risks in our safety but more with our reputations.... What would people say? What would people think? If we help this person. If we talk with this person??

We are to have the heart of Jesus. He has compassion for all. Whatever any one thought. Whatever it looked like.

Let’s not worry about others opinions. Let’s go where the Holy Spirit leads us.

Jairus and the woman had **faith**. They believed Jesus could help them.

Their faith was put into action.....Jairus fell at Jesus' feet. He didn't let the laughter of others put him off. He took Jesus to his daughter.

And the woman demonstrated that each one of us can have faith – it doesn't matter how long you've been a Christian or how much you know or read or study – faith is faith is faith. He can hear even the quietest voice and detect the gentlest of touches – we just need the faith to reach out to him.

We don't have to push through crowds to secretly seek Jesus' help.

God hears our calls and our distress.

We do not see with our eyes on this earth his endless compassion and love for us.

But it is there.

We have constant access to God through his son Jesus Christ who died for us.

Call on Him, plead with Him, trust him.

Don't be afraid. Just believe.

Prayer

Merciful and life-giving Lord help us to believe. To trust in your awesome power.

To put our faith into action.

And Father, let us not worry about what others might think, but to serve and share your love where and with whom you direct us.

Amen

Gilly Robinson & Carol Elsasser