

Mark 5:21-43
June 27, 2021

Grace and peace be with you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

How annoying is it when you're visiting someone and they aren't fully present. They are there, but they aren't really there. That drives me crazy.

I would go out to dinner with my cousin, and she would constantly be on her phone. When she had time, she would acknowledge me, but it wouldn't be long before she was back on her phone.

Has that happened to you? It doesn't make you feel really good, does it? It makes you wonder why you're even there. Being alone isn't nearly as bad as being ignored.

The good news for us today is that, unlike our otherwise occupied friends and family, Jesus focuses on us when we go to him. When we go to Jesus for healing, he puts all of his attention on us, as we see in our Mark 5 reading today.

I find that to be so comforting - to know that when we go to Jesus for healing, Jesus focuses on us and our wellbeing. Jesus is able to cut through all of the noise and put his attention on those who go to him for help.

In today's Gospel reading, Jesus was surrounded by hundreds of people, but when Jairus came to Jesus, Jesus' focus was totally on him and the healing of his daughter.

After the woman with no name touches Jesus' clothing from behind so that she can be healed, Jesus turns his full attention to her.

And after Jesus brings Jairus' daughter back to life, he only cares that the girl is fed and taken care of.

Jesus doesn't get caught up in all of the distractions. He doesn't focus on the noise of the crowds or the dismissal of the disciples, and physically he sends naysayers away.

Jesus' focus is on those who need him; those who seek him out for healing. And the healing isn't just physical – the healing is emotional, relational, and spiritual.

In the healing of the woman who was hemorrhaging and the raising of Jairus' daughter from the dead, Jesus is doing more than just restoring their bodies.

With the woman who had been bleeding non-stop for 12 years, Jesus not only makes her body well, but he also enables her to re-enter society and the temple, which went hand in hand.

Blood was considered to be a pollutant and anyone who would touch the woman would be made unclean, unable to go to the Temple for worship without going through a ritual cleansing that would take a few days. So, people would avoid her at all cost and make sure not to touch her.

Can you imagine not being touched for 12 years?

Knowing that she is considered unclean and contagious, she doesn't dare to actually touch Jesus, that could lead to her being stoned to death, so she just reaches for the fringe of his outermost garment, and that's all it takes.

Seeking healing from Jesus, the woman is healed. She is restored, and then to top it all off, Jesus sees her. It's relational. He won't let her leave without knowing that she is known and loved.

Can you imagine the courage it must have taken for her to show herself to Jesus after he asked who touched him? And so she falls at his feet, perhaps expecting a reprimand, but instead is encouraged and even praised.

The woman had faith. She sought her own healing, and she was healed.

Sandwiched in the middle of Jairus' story, we have this story of a woman seeking healing and it being granted to her.

Jairus was seeking healing for his beloved daughter. A woman without a name is healed by Jesus and he calls her daughter. God's love for us is like Jairus' love for his daughter. He only wants wholeness for us all – wholeness physically, emotionally, spiritually, and relationally.

Walking side by side with Jairus, Jesus heals a woman not known by the crowd, but known by him, as he goes to heal Jairus' daughter who is beloved by her father. These two stories go hand in hand.

Jesus heals the unnamed woman. He heals Jairus' daughter. And, he heals Jairus as well. Physically, emotionally, spiritually, and relationally – Jesus heals all who seek his healing – for themselves and for the ones they love.

Mark makes it clear to us that Jesus loves all the children – all of God’s children – Jairus, the unnamed woman, and Jairus’ daughter, and his mercy and compassion cannot be dissuaded by others. Jesus cannot be distracted from God’s mission of love and salvation by noise, doubt, being made fun of, or even the cross.

Bleeding on the cross, Jesus is one with the hemorrhaging woman. Dead in the tomb, Jesus is one with Jairus’ daughter. Weeping at Lazarus tomb, Jesus is one with Jairus.

Jesus has compassion for us, because he knows everything we go through first hand, so we should never be discouraged from going to Jesus for healing – for our own and for others. And the cool thing is that when one is healed, the many are healed.

The woman was able to return to the relationships she had with others. Jairus’ daughter was returned to her family and friends. And Jairus himself had his family reunited.

God is not a god of wrath and punishment, but the God of grace, mercy, and love.

God is that loving parent, like Jairus, who only wants the best for us.

When we seek Jesus out or when someone seeks him out on our behalf, because we are not able to, Jesus focuses on us and restores us to life. Just as he is risen from the dead, so he raises us to eternal life with God our loving parent.

Jesus calls to each of us - talitha cum – little girl get up – child of God get up, and be restored to life.

You are a beloved child of God and nothing can distract Jesus from getting that message to all people. That’s why the church exists.

Thanks be to God. Amen.