

Daily Bread with Brother Hwa-chi (Not reviewed by the speaker, for personal use only)

Mark 5: 21–28

Peace to you, brothers and sisters, this is Hwa-chi. It's our Bible reading time again, and we will continue to read Mark Chapter 5, verses 21-28.

Jesus took His disciples to the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee, to the place of Gladsen, to save the unclean man who was possessed by an unclean spirit. But the whole city begged Jesus to leave in order to preserve their unclean business; Jesus agreed to leave quietly and at the same time, He encouraged the demon-possessed man to testify to his relatives about what great things the Lord had done for him.

This is how Jesus works while He carries out His earthly ministry. He doesn't care about the crowds, whether they welcome Him or disagree with Him. In order to save a man, He could take His disciples across the Sea of Galilee just to save Him, and return, for He knew deep down that a truly repented and blessed person would be much more effective than a large crowd. When a person has experienced the transformation of his life, he can truly preach his testimony as the gospel to those in need. And this man who was once demon possessed, we don't even know his name, he obeyed Jesus' command and was sent by Jesus to witness for Jesus in the vast Gentile region of Decapolis, and all were amazed.

Verse 21: “And when Jesus went on the boat and crossed over to the other side, a great multitude came to Him and gathered to Him; and he was on the shore of the sea. “

Jesus took the twelve disciples into a boat and crossed the Sea of Galilee, presumably back to Capernaum, the center of Jesus' work in the region of Galilee. In this city, Jesus' reputation is already well known. As a result, as soon as He came ashore, many people gathered to Him. Jesus was like a superstar and had many fans pay attention to His every move, and they often crowded around Jesus. Modern

evangelists like to create such an atmosphere, using all kinds of propaganda techniques, market means, and to increase their exposures to call on the masses; But when Jesus was ministering on earth, He didn't care about the crowds at all, because He knew that those who were gathered around Him today, even those who shout Hosanna, would be the ones who would cry out about His crucifixion tomorrow. Jesus didn't care about the crowds, but Jesus always cared about one or two who really needed Him, especially those who were willing to follow Him wholeheartedly.

Verse 22: “And behold, one of the rulers of the synagogue came, Jairus by name. And when he saw Him, he fell at His feet. “

And there was a man in charge of the synagogue, Jairus was his name. The word Jairus means ‘whom God enlightened’. This synagogue was supposed to be the synagogue in Capernaum, which was the center of worship for the Jews at that time. The man in charge of the synagogue, who presides over all matters of worship, was the recognized religious leader of that city. The rulers of the synagogue were of high standing among the Jews, and Jesus preached and taught in the synagogue of Capernaum, where He cast out an unclean spirit. Perhaps it was at that time that Jairus was enlightened by God. He knew that Jesus was a mighty man, and because of his social standing, the crowd would have move out of the way and let him come straight to Jesus. And when he came to Jesus, he immediately fell on his face and knelt at Jesus’ feet. He was a man with high esteem in the society, what made him so humble to willingly bow down at the feet of Jesus? At this time, Jesus was only a young man in his early 30s, and Jairus should be a highly respected middle-aged man, what did he want?

Verse 23: “and begged Him earnestly, saying, ‘My little daughter lies at the point of death. Come and lay Your hands on her, that she may be healed, and she will live.”

We see that Jairus really humbled himself and begged Jesus because his little daughter was sick and dying, and he pleaded Jesus to heal her. I think anyone who has been a parent can understand and empathize with him. Seeing his beloved child suffering and yet powerless made Jairus completely let down his dignity and fall at Jesus' feet to ask for help. He begged Jesus to lay His hands on her so that she might be healed. Jairus was the leader of Judaism so he had religious knowledge about Jesus and he knew the religious methods to lay hands on people to heal them. He came to Jesus as he knew Him in his concepts, but he did not truly know Jesus: Jesus did not need to go to the house of Jairus and put His hands on his daughter; He only need to say a word and his daughter would be healed. He also did not know that the religious knowledge and methods he adhered could not save her, otherwise his daughter would not have almost lost her life.

Verse 24: "And Jesus went with him. Many people followed, crowding Him. "

When Jesus heard Jairus' supplication, He went with him. Jesus had just returned at this time, and He must be tired. He could say a word, and it would be done. But Jesus was willing to go with Jairus; Jesus humbled himself to Jairus' position: according to Jairus' knowledge, according to Jairus' way, He went along with Jairus to his house and heal his daughter. What a sympathetic and considerate person Jesus was. Dear brothers and sisters, often times we ask God to do things according to our will because we do not have complete knowledge of God; and God is willing to do accordingly, what a grace! Of course, when we grow in life, we will slowly learn to just bring our burdens to the Lord, and He knows the best way for our situation; far better than what we think we know. However, it is also a learning process. When Jesus followed Jairus to his house, the multitude followed and they crowded Jesus all the way.

Verse 25: "Now a certain woman had a flow of blood for 12 years"

Another woman came along, and this woman was also in need: she had been suffering from a flow of blood for 12 years. In God's wisdom, He put these two events together and describe them cross-sectionally, so that we can see that they are actually of the same issue: both were dealing with the loss of life, and they needed the same healing; that is the provision of life from Jesus. But because this happened to two different people and two different environments, there was tension between them. This was the best teaching material for Jesus' discipleship.

The Bible does not tell us what disease the daughter of Jairus had, but the father openly prostrated himself to Jesus for his daughter's illness and the people were moved to see the father's love for her. But this other woman, the woman with the blood leak, was completely different situation. According to Leviticus 15:19-24, we see that woman's menstrual period is unclean, and this woman with the flow of blood, she continues to have discharging of blood, so it's unclean as well. In Leviticus 15:25-30, it is recorded that during this period of blood discharge, not only was the woman unclean, but the bed on which she lay and everything she touched was unclean. Touching her, and touching the things she uses, will also be unclean.

This woman has been suffering from this for 12 years, she should have been a healthy and beautiful woman, but because of long-term blood loss, her life drains out bit by bit, her face was no longer ruddy, and her body became weak. Not only that, because the law of Moses condemned the discharge of blood to be unclean, she could not be with people; everything or everybody came in contact with her would become unclean.

Because of this disease, she had to leave her family and lived alone and she's isolated from the society. She was lonely, without companions, without friends and she could not go to the synagogue to worship God. She experienced the pain of physical weakness, the loneliness of her soul, and the loss of even the right to go to the synagogue and worship God. She was really tortured in her spirit, soul, and body; she was really miserable. She definitely has asked for help for the past 12 years.

Verse 26: “She suffered much at the hands of many physicians, and spent all that she had, and she did not get any better, but rather grew worse.”

She had seen many doctors and spent everything she had, but she didn't get better. Now she has no money and her illness got worse. Mark's account is peculiar in that she suffered a lot at the hands of the doctors. Doctors are meant to help people but because of their incompetent, perhaps not professional enough, or dedicated enough, they not only fail to help her, but they make her suffered a lot.

Dear brothers and sisters, in the church life, God will also let us meet many people who are in different kind of situations; I hope that we will not be like those doctors who caused men to suffer, just like what they did to this woman; she has exhausted all her health, and has tried every means, yet her illness has not improved. Therefore, when facing people's needs, we must realize that by ourselves, we really cannot help others. We can only bring people to God; only God has the power to heal, and only God's help is real help. When we can help people to turn to God that's the best help we can give to others.

Verses 27, 28: “When she heard about Jesus, she came behind Him in the crowd and touched His garment. For she said, ‘If only I may touch His clothes, I shall be made well.’ “

This woman, who had the flow of blood, now had nothing, and in her despair, she heard about Jesus, and she wanted to come to Jesus. But the discharge of blood was unclean, and according to the Law of Moses, she should not have come to the crowd at all. So some Bible commentators think that she was not from Capernaum, otherwise those who knew her would know that she was unclean, and she would not be able to mingle with the crowd. We saw two instances and both of them needed of life-saving treatments.

When the daughter of Jairus was sick, he could openly and generously ask Jesus. Everyone also looked at him with sympathy and affirmation. On the contrary, this woman who had flow of blood did not dare to let people know otherwise she could

not come to Jesus openly like Jairus. And actually, in this large crowd, with her weakened body to approach Jesus was not easy at all for Jesus was moving forward with Jairus and the multitude were crowded Him. So for her to not only keep up with the pace of the crowd, but also to get closer to Jesus was truly not an easy task. Here we also see that the crowd is always a hindrance to those who are really seeking. She finally came to Jesus, but she did not dare to ask Jesus, for fear that others would know that she was unclean and that she had violated the law of Moses. So instead, she touched Jesus' garment secretly.

In the parallel verse, Matthew 9:20, "a women who had a flow of blood for 12 years came from behind and touched the hem of His garment." The hem of the robe is where the tassel was sewn. She did not dare to touch Jesus, even to touch His garment she did only touch the edge of the garment. Maybe then no one would notice it. But she thought to herself, "If I can touch His garment, and I will be healed". She didn't have the religious knowledge as Jairus, and she didn't know the religious methods that Jairus knew, but she had faith that Jairus didn't have.

These two examples of healing were recorded staggered together, so that we can see Jesus' love and mercy; a broken and a contrite heart, He will not despise. Whoever seeks Him shall find Him. Therefore, no matter what kind of situation we're in, with what kind of difficulties, we can bring them all to Jesus Christ.

Let's pray: Lord, thank You, You are full of mercy and grace. You said, whoever labor and are heavy laden can come to You and You will give us rest. Help me to be able to bring all things to You. On the one hand, like Jarius, can ask for Your help openly before men. And even when we're too weak, like the woman, we're willing to do our best to get to your side. Give us the same faith as she has; know that as long as we touch you, all our problems will be resolved because nothing is too difficult for You. Lord, help me learn to bring all things in my life to You, big or small; and help me through this experience, my life can grow and my faith in You can increase. Know that you love us and are willing to bear the burden for us. Help me to be able to give my whole life unto Your gracious hands. Bless my days ahead and keep my feet on your path; pray in the holy name of Jesus Christ!