

Two Daughters

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[0 : 0 0] You all know this probably, they know these passages really well, these stories about Jesus' healing. It's interesting, the older I get and probably the longer in the tooth spiritually as well at one level, the more I realise how little I know and how much I'm still learning about God's Word. These are really well known stories, but I really pray that tonight as we spend a few minutes together looking at them that you'll see something fresh, that you'll see something fresh. I hope that over the course of studying I've seen a few things that are fresh to me, always amazed at the new things that you learn from God's unsearchable truths. But I'm only really going to scratch the surface for a few minutes.

I hope that you'll go back and think about it and then you'll also be able to think about things for city group as well. What I really want to deal with is the individuality of the way Jesus deals with people, how perfectly He deals with individual people. And I want you to think about that for yourselves, how you individually deal with other people and how you share the good news with them as people, because nothing matters more for you and for me. Nothing matters more than how we do that in our lives. And of course Jesus is our great example, more than that of course. But Mark is just setting the scene about the character of Jesus in these early chapters and he's really beginning to unfold the authority and the majesty and the character and the power of Jesus. We've had the calming of the waves.

We've had a variety of miraculous healings, legion. And now we come to this chapter where there's two more healings and they're really speaking about who Jesus is and why He's come and the end game of actually why Jesus has come, which affects us all, the whole reality of His power, sovereignty and healing in our lives. But it's also, while it's doing that at kind of macro level, it's also unbelievably personal and very real in ordinary people's lives. So you've got the famous stories, haven't you? You've got Jairus who comes, he's a well-to-do synagogue ruler and would have been well-known public figure whose daughter is dying and he's desperate. And he comes to Jesus and he flings himself down at Jesus' feet in front of everyone and just pleads for Jesus to come and heal his daughter. Jesus agrees.

And on the way there, there's big crowds following Jesus by this time. They've heard about all the things that have gone on and they're all coming together and pressing on Him. And as they do so, there's this woman in the crowd, very anonymous woman who comes and says, all I need to do, I've heard about this Jesus. If I just touch the hem of His garment, I'm sure I'll be healed of this disease of bleeding that I'd left are unclean for, said them only unclean for 12 years, probably unable to work, probably poverty stricken, we're told that he should spend all our money trying to be healed. She was desperate for Jesus to do his healing work. And of course, she touches him or the hem of his garment and he's healed. She's healed. And it doesn't stay there, of course, as we'll see as we move on. But she's healed. Jesus moves on. If someone comes from Jairus's house, they don't bother the master anymore because your daughter has died, devastating words. Jesus ignores them and says, look, don't be afraid, just believe. And then he goes into the house with Peter, James and John and the parents and takes her by the hand and restores her life. And that's the story, brilliant story, isn't it? Tremendous insight into the character and into the majesty of Jesus. I just want to make a few points for you to take away and mull over and think about and discuss together. The first is to remember that these events were 12 years in the making. I think there's a lot of significance in that. The events were 12 years in the making. This grown woman, I don't know what to call her, mature woman, a lady. We're not giving her names. So this grown up woman, I've always envisaged her being an old woman, but I don't know why. There's no reason for her being an old woman at all. But she's this grown woman and she's had 12 years of suffering and pain and misery and very probably unanswered prayers, at least from her viewpoint. Doubtless she

would have been lonely. She would have been, as I said, ceremonially unclean, isolated. Maybe 12 and maybe more years of broken dreams that take her to this point, 12 years in the making. And the little girl also was 12 years old. And her life had presumably been very, very different. We don't know much about her. We don't know anything about the illness. We don't know whether it was sudden or whether it had been with her for a long time. But she was surrounded by love and care and by a secure family and by a father and a mother, although we're not told much about the mother, but they were there at her bedside and the father had completed for her health. 12 years in the making for her also. And yet in the urgency of this moment, Jesus was able to stop and before going to the daughter's house take time to focus on the woman, the mature woman, the grown woman who was in great need.

[6 : 34] And I think within that, there's a great message for us that God's timing was absolutely right for both of them. 12 years in the making. Now, I believe entirely in the historicity of this account that she was 12 years old and the woman had suffered 12 years. But I also think that there is symbolism within that also because 12 is a significant number of biblical, it's a number of God's perfection of completeness. It's often used in connection with God's sovereign power and authority. And that links in with what Mark is unfolding here about the character and nature of Jesus. And it's just saying that for both of these people, the time was absolutely right. God's timing was perfect. Seemed a long time to be praying that woman 12 years, seemingly heavens as brass. And you know, there's no telling what the 12 years of that young daughter of gyros was like, how beautiful and happy and joyful it had been. And yet at this point, she dies. And we're always faced with lots of questions about God's timing, God's sovereignty, God's involvement, particularly in suffering and death and disease and illness. And yet we're reminded God's timing as we pray is always perfect. And so in applying that, I want you to always be aware of the importance of keeping praying, not just for ourselves, but keeping praying also for unbelievers and for God's timing to answer our prayers on their behalf. And pray also for discernment as to his answers and what his answers will look like. Because very often his answers to our prayers, the displays of his power will be in direct reality to our own weakness and need. And remember that his perfect timing for us will always bring perfect healing, ultimately. And that is a very important message to remember that our salvation and our sanctification will always lead to perfect healing eternally for us. Because these miracles are pointing to that God's timing within this sphere of life is always right. Keep praying. Don't ever give up. Don't ever give up praying for the impossible as well as for the seemingly unanswered requests that we have. So that's the first point I want to make, that these events were 12 years in the making. The second is that we don't know in our lives in whom

God is working. Okay? So here's two different people. We've got the woman in the crowd who's completely anonymous really within the crowd. Nobody really noticed her. Nobody seemed to care about her. She had no one to bring her to the Lord. She had to come on her own and plead on her own behalf. There was no one really who was able to represent her before the Lord. And nobody seemed to think that Jesus would be interested in really anyone specifically in that crowd as he turned round. Jairus was a synagogue ruler, very public figure, belonging to a group of people who weren't known for their sympathies with Jesus and who wouldn't necessarily have wanted to associate themselves with a rebel teacher.

But both of them had very deep heart-rending need for divine help. Who would have known? Who would have made that choice between an anonymous woman in the crowd and this respected religious family man? I wonder if we would have chosen them as the ones in whom God was working because that's a lesson I think we should learn. That we don't make the judgments about the ones in whom God is working in our sphere among the people that we associate with. It's easy for us to judge, isn't it? And pass by someone and think, they're so anonymous there's no way, you know, there's no way God will be working in that person's life. Who is it that's in our crowd that we don't notice? That we have presumed God will not be working in their lives? We presume we won't be interested. Who maybe seems to have it together? Who might be even religious? Who might be part of the church even? And

I think it's important to remember that we don't make the judgments about that. And I would love us to pray and I would love myself to be praying much more for a change in my prayer so that I'm asking the Lord, will you please give me the discernment to know and lead me to the people in whom you're already working? However unexpected that might be, maybe the people at your work who castigate your faith most, who swear most and who are most kind of outwardly rebellious

against it, or others that maybe are high flying and doing very well and have got that family and everything seems to be together and they seem wanting nothing, lacking nothing. Don't presume that they don't need or don't crave after pleading for God to intervene in their lives. You might be the person that God will use to bring them to Jesus. Pray that we will somehow get underneath the surface of people's lives to see their need and to see that they may be the people in whom Jesus is working.

This is the second thing. Third thing is about faith because this is also very much a story about faith and how faith changes everything in people's lives. And it should be something that changes in our own lives as well. And I don't want us to lose sight of that. There's one or two things here that reveal the difference faith makes in our lives. First of all, what it does, I think, is it, and I'm thinking of this in relation to sharing our faith with others as well as remembering who we are as Christians. It brings people into His family.

[13:43] That's what coming to faith is. It is beautiful here in verse 34. We have Jesus' response to the woman when she says who she is. He says, daughter, your faith has made you well.

Go in peace and be healed of your disease. How powerful would that word have been to that woman? Remember her? She was kind of anonymous. She was afraid. She wanted just quietly to touch his garments and walk away again. Nobody would know anything about it. And she would just happily go and live in quiet submission because she was worthy of Jesus. She wouldn't have been worthy to be in his company or to speak to him or ask him for anything. Just touch the hem of his garment. The isolation, loneliness. And yet he says to her the very word she needed to hear, daughter, your daughter of the King, immediate belonging and identity and peace and a future. Tremendous that that's how Jesus, he kind of acts like the father here, God the Father. And he says, daughter, words of great healing and great comfort to her. She needed to know that belonging. And then he goes to Jairus and he goes and goes into the room with Jairus and his wife and the close disciples and Jesus and having pushed everyone else out who was laughing at him. And when he speaks to her, this little girl of 12 years old who was dead, he says, Talitha kumai. Now I'm no linguist, but I know people who are and who say that that is just a very fatherly, parental way of gently waking up a child, darling, get up or honey, get up, babe, get up. Just colloquial way of just gently waking up a child just as any parent would. And here for this little girl, not wanting to make her afraid, not wanting to make a drama, he just reminds her as if he's a parent, waking her up in the morning and giving her something to eat. So there's great language here of faith bringing and reminding those involved here that faith brings us into a family. There's great fatherly glimpses here, the authority of his love. And that when we as Christians, and when we're sharing our faith, we're inviting people into a family.

We're inviting people to belong. We're inviting people to become sons and daughters of the king, however we explain that, however we find that significant for people today. And I think that's hugely important in sharing our faith. It's not a bang, bang, bang of moral imperatives. We're inviting people to know their father, their creator, their Lord, their judge, their Savior, their Redeemer. So it brings us into his family. And that's one of the elements of faith. Also, it can't be kept secret. Faith in this chapter is very clear that our faith and anyone's faith can't be kept secret. This woman, as we said, she believed in Jesus. She so believed in him, she just thought she was unworthy to meet him face to face, just touched his garment. Now, just before you say anything about that, don't think that's magic. It's not like Jesus' garments had special powers. And if you just touched him, you'd be healed. It wasn't like that. Because, you know, the disciples say, there's a whole lot of people pressing about you in the window, people all getting healed, in some kind of magic way. It wasn't that it wasn't to do with this garment or some kind of magic potions of idea. It was just this faith that she had in his character that she knew he was so important and so glorious and so great. She only needed to touch him and she was unworthy. And she just, again, because of her unworthiness, just wanted to slip away. And yet when he turned around and said, who touched my garment? She was afraid, but confessed. And of course, Jesus says these great, great words, daughter, because he wasn't giving her a rebuke. He wasn't saying, oh, come on, who touched my clothes here? He wasn't giving her a row. He was wanting her to confess because she now had dignity in front of all of that crowd. And he wanted to say that she belonged and in the confession and in the publicity of her public coming to faith in this Christ, he wanted to declare that dignity in front of others and expose her unworthy unworthiness. She wasn't unworthy and he called her daughter. And you know, the same is true of Jairus, isn't he? He's already counted the cost because he's fallen on his

knees in public pleading for help. But he too was afraid when he heard that bad news. But Jesus says to him, don't be afraid, just believe and keep following me in this way. And so both of them are brought into the public and their faith is a confessional faith and their fears have to be overcome. Now, every one of us is like that, isn't it, aren't we? Well, I certainly am. There's fear in my confession. There's fear of being known as a believer. And yet faith can't be kept secret. We are called to confess and believe and declare the praises of Him who we believe in. And that applies to you all in your own workplaces and in your own lives. You can't be a secret Christian. Jesus calls us publicly to declare His name and to belong to Him and to say we are His children. And that's a challenge that you maybe go out with as you leave this evening. And that's the challenge you need to bring to others in the Christian church in St. Columba's. Maybe who you know are Christians, but I've never professed or confessed that or who are content to be secret Christians. God says, no, that you're my son, you're my daughter. [20 : 32] It's like being ashamed of your own family. If you have a family that you love and care for, you don't want to know I'm a sinner. It's a nightmare. But this is with the eternal kind of kings. The great glorious God. Can't be kept secret. And also we see clearly that faith, nearly finished, faith leads to worship versus 22 and also versus 33, where we have the same kind of words both times where she is the one who, or Jairus is the one who fell at his Jesus feet and implored him earnestly. And then she before Jesus says the woman knowing what had happened to her fell, came in fear and trembling and fell down before him. It's the same kind of picture both times that faith that they had led to worship. And it's just a reminder to us, isn't it? When we're speaking to people, we're not inviting them to a club or a philosophy or a morality. We're inviting them to worship, to come and in an active worship to their king, their God and their savior, and that in order to do that, they need to come to him in faith to believe that he exists and that he died for them. And he will often use our weakness and our suffering to bring us to a point of worship. And our own family just now, Katrina's, my nephew's little boy is in Glasgow having contracted

E. Coli and he had a stroke, he's only two. Now our great prayer for that family is that through the suffering and through the hardship that there's people all over the country praying for Callum. And we want that suffering to bring them to worship, to bring glory to God. Through that suffering that they will see healing and that they will see God's fatherly touch and that they will come to faith. And this isn't that awful, none of us look for that, none of us want that. But God will use that, that struggle and that battle that we face to enable us to fall on our knees and say, Lord Jesus, please help me. Please heal me. Please redeem me. And it leads to worship. And it leads to public worship. I think public worship is really important for Christians. It's been such a hard 18 months, isn't it, with evidence going on, but we mustn't lose sight of the importance of gathering in public worship, confessing His name. And the last thing, so faith has these elements and many more of course. But I think faith pleads on behalf of others. We see that particularly with Jairus, don't we? The grown woman came on her own accord. But Jairus, it's about the faith of Jairus, not about the faith of the little girl in this account. But he was pleading on behalf of his daughter. And faith does that, doesn't it? That's what we're believing, that's why we pray for the loss because God uses us to plead for other people.

What a duty we have to do that. For all of you here as parents, what a duty for your children, covenant children, pleading on their behalf like Jairus did for his daughter. Pleading, what a great privilege. But children here pleading for your parents, or individuals here praying for your brothers or sisters or for your colleagues or for people whose names will never be brought before a throne of God if you don't bring them. Again, that faith pleads on behalf of other people because we know what we have and we know what they don't have. And pray that we will be able to introduce people to Jesus in the way Jesus introduced himself to them. You know, as the God of the universe, God the Son, it's an amazing concept. The

God of the universe as Jesus dealing with one sick anonymous woman and one 12 year old girl whose family was in crisis. That's how personal it gets with God. That individuality, that care, that insight, that discernment, that willingness to notice, that willingness to stop, to be taken outside of your routine to understand. Now we're not Jesus, I know that, but we're His people. And likewise we're called to fall in His, to fall in our knees, to worship Him and strive to be more like Him. In the way we understand ourselves and His dealings with us, but also in the way we understand our dealing with other people as Christians, the individuality and the concern and the non-making of judgments about who we think God is likely or unlikely to work in. And that may be a challenge for

us, particularly in our lives.