

## The Amazing Power of Christ

Luke 8:40-56 (07-21-19)

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We have a wonderful portion in Luke's Gospel to consider this morning. Jesus came back from an excursion across the Sea of Galilee. He showed us His amazing power and authority over the storm at sea and over the demons on the other side. He did what only God could do, thoroughly transform that poor demon-infested man into a submissive, believing, spiritually-hungry follower. But the locals, frightened by His power, begged Him to go away.

When Jesus and His men return to Capernaum, the people welcome Him like a rock star. Luke 8:4, "And as Jesus returned, the people welcomed Him, for they had all been waiting for Him." Jesus is in His popularity in His Galilean ministry. Almost immediately a synagogue official comes up to Jesus begging Him to come to his house because his twelve year-old daughter is dying. He believes Jesus can heal her. So off they go together. But on the way, a lady with a twelve-year flow of blood comes up to Him, fully believing He can heal her.

So what do we have here? This is a picture of the human condition that only God can fix. Ever since sin entered the world, people experience sickness, diseases, and death. We don't have to look far in our world. Just this week there was a funeral for the three-year old Dill child who was left in a hot car and perished. How tragic; what heartache. A family from northern Indiana was on a cruise ship last week when their one-year old daughter fell from the eleventh level to her death. Mason Leaf's mom is fighting right now for her life at Vanderbilt. She had breast cancer twenty years ago and the treatment took its toll on her heart. We could go on and on. But here comes Jesus, the one and only hope for this dying world.

In this story in Luke 8, there are two sufferers: one a leader and one an outcast. Both of them are suffering under the curse of sin in a broken, dying world. This is reality in our world. These two sufferers could have gone on in their pain and distress. Then Jesus comes, bright with hope for sufferers. Jesus gives us a preview of coming attractions, coming good things. We won't suffer forever. Death will be swallowed up in victory. The time will come when there will be nothing but sheer joy and life and pleasure in God's presence forever. This time of disease and death is brief. It's like a morning mist, a vapor soon to be gone.

We know good things are coming because we've already seen them in Jesus, our great Physician and Redeemer. He knows what we're dealing with. He knows our weaknesses. He knows us inside and out because He became one with us. Isaiah 53:3 says our loving Savior is a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He understands and goes with us through our heartaches and pain. He has purpose in our heartache and pain. And though we may hurt and face pain, disease, and death like these two sufferers did, we need to build up our faith and hope in Him. We don't need to sink into despair. We don't need to nurture a cynical, bitter, angry heart toward our circumstances, which is really toward God who is sovereign over all our suffering.

So let's watch Jesus give hope and eternal encouragement as He meets up with two sufferers today – the woman with the flow of blood and a couple with their dying daughter.

### **Jesus has an open ear to sufferers.**

*Luke 8:41-42, And there came a man named Jairus, and he was an official of the synagogue; and he fell at Jesus' feet, and began to implore Him to come to his house; 42 for he had an only daughter, about twelve years old, and she was dying. But as He went, the crowds were pressing against Him.*

Jairus was an important leader at the synagogue. He was responsible to arrange synagogue services, who would lead in prayer, read Scriptures, and preach. He had to keep everything decent and in order. He's what we'd call today an administrative pastor.

Jairus and his wife had one daughter whom they loved. She was close to becoming an adult and of marrying age. She was their sunshine, but she'd been deathly sick. In fact, she was close to death as Jairus came rushing to meet Jesus. He obviously believes Jesus has the power to help. He had seen or heard of other miracles of healing. He falls at Jesus' feet and begs Jesus. There are masses of people around, many people needing help in their fallen condition, but look what Jesus does. "As He went." He went on beside Jairus. He has an open ear toward sufferers.

Let's take a deeper look. What is Jesus doing here? Remember, Jesus is God incarnate. He's truly God and truly man, two natures, one Person, that hypostatic union. He was born humanly through the line of David which goes all the way back to Adam. He became one of us. He's as much an historical human being as Martin Luther or John Calvin or George Washington.

He is demonstrating through these amazing displays of power who He is. He is compassionate and caring and feeling with these people who are suffering under the curse of sin. But He is also showing us that He is unique among all men, with power and authority to reverse the curse of sin. He demonstrates through these displays of power over disease and death that He really is the Messiah, the great Physician, able to do what no other human being can do. He is the exclusive Savior and Redeemer of the world.

**Jesus takes time to minister to the least as well as the important.** Status, power, wealth are all irrelevant to Christ. And He is not misogynistic. Luke makes sure we get that. Luke refers to women almost more than Matthew and Mark combined. So here comes a woman with a major problem. Does Christ have time for her?

*Luke 8:43-44, And a woman who had a hemorrhage for twelve years, and could not be healed by anyone, 44 came up behind Him and touched the fringe of His cloak, and immediately her hemorrhage stopped.*

As Jesus made His way toward Jairus' house, vs. 42 says the crowds were pressing, crushing against Him. In the crowd was this woman with a twelve-year discharge of blood. The law in Leviticus 15:25 considered a woman with a discharge of blood as unclean. No one was to touch her. She couldn't worship with others. She's been completely isolated for twelve years. This is one lonely, hurting woman. She's tried every doctor in the region and no one could help her. Mark 5:26 says she had endured **much** at the hands of **many** physicians, and had spent **all** that she had and was **not helped** at all, but rather grew **worse!** What a statement. Luke doesn't tell us all this, but then again, Luke is a doctor!

This woman was a sufferer living in a broken body in a broken world. We are faced here with an impossible situation. The best of medicine couldn't cure her. Pliny, a Roman statesman of the first century, says one remedy in his day was a poultice of donkey dung soaked in goat's urine. With these kinds of remedies, no wonder she got worse. What a dismal existence she lived. But this day she's on a mission. She silently by herself but with faith in her heart, angles her way through the press of people determined to do one thing. Matthew 9:21 says she was thinking as she was moving closer to Jesus, "If I can just touch the hem of His garment." Jesus had a square garment thrown over His shoulder with a tassel hanging down. She's like a running back looking for an opening to get to the goal line. She sees an opening, rushes in, reaches out her fingers, and makes contact with the Lord of the Universe. It was the touch of faith, maybe mixed with superstition, but her heart had true faith, and that amazing power of Christ poured into her!

Immediately she is cured. Immediately! Instantly! And she knows it. Mark 5:29 says immediately the flow of her blood was dried up and she felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction. Instantly she is healed. Freely she is healed. After all that money she spent on all those doctors, she is healed instantly and freely by the pure grace and power of this God-Man Jesus.

Isaiah 64:6 says all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment. We are unclean in our sin and no doctor, medicine, philosophy, religion or any human efforts can cleanse us. People look in vain for heart peace, for true forgiveness, which they can only find in Jesus by simple faith. The moment you reach out

in faith to touch the promise of salvation in Christ alone and by grace alone, you are freely and instantly cleansed. You are instantly justified. You are instantly made a new creation in Christ. You are instantly adopted into God's family. You are instantly, immediately baptized into Christ forever. The moment you trust Christ, even if your faith is weak, and you don't know everything about Jesus, immediately God saves you and you are as ready for heaven that moment as you'll ever be, because you have been cleansed from your sin and guilt in Christ. Romans 10:9-10 says if you confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

*Luke 8:45-4, And Jesus said, "Who is the one who touched Me?" And while they were all denying it, Peter said, "Master, the people are crowding and pressing in on You." 46 But Jesus said, "Someone did touch Me, for I was aware that power had gone out of Me." 47 When the woman saw that she had not escaped notice, she came trembling and fell down before Him, and declared in the presence of all the people the reason why she had touched Him, and how she had been immediately healed. 48 And He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace."*

Jesus stopped and looked around at the crowd and asked, "Who touched Me?" Everyone denied it. "I didn't do it. Not me." And of course, Peter tries to help Jesus out of an embarrassing situation. I can just see him siding up to Jesus and whispering, "Master, don't embarrass yourself here. All kinds of people are pushing up against you."

But Jesus knew someone touched Him with the finger of faith. She felt instant healing and He was aware power went out of Him. I don't know what that means except He knew power had gone out of Him. And the dear lady knew He knew who she was. In His mercy Jesus called the lady out so everyone would know she was no longer unclean. She'd been instantly cleansed. She comes forward, falling down in front of Jesus and confessing to all the people why she had touched Him and that she had been immediately healed. What a touching, powerful moment this was.

Jesus blesses her with the title "Daughter." He praises her for her faith. It wasn't perfect, but He knew her heart. He assured her she was saved and could now enjoy the peace of God. How kind and compassionate and powerful Jesus is here. He reaches down to the outcast as well as to the more important people. Here is one lady going to bed that night in a totally different world, her heart full of thanks to that Man Jesus.

### **Jesus is always aware and responsive to your situation.**

Meanwhile Jairus must be squirming with impatience because if Jesus doesn't get to his house soon, his precious daughter will perish! "Please hurry, Lord. Please hurry." Then he got the bad news.

*Luke 8:49-50, While He was still speaking, someone comes from the house of the synagogue official, saying, "Your daughter has died; do not trouble the Teacher anymore." 50 But when Jesus heard this, He answered him, "Do not be afraid any longer; only believe, and she will be made well."*

Now watch how alert and quick Jesus is to comfort Jairus. "Don't be afraid! Only believe. She'll be made well." What a wonderful promise to Jairus. Again, when human resources are at an end, when all human hope is gone, God says your hope is in the Lord. "Believe Me, Jairus. I can do what no one else can do. She will live, I promise." So off they go to Jairus' house.

The reality is that death sometimes comes to the young as well as the old. I hope everyone here has faced your mortality head on and realized, only Jesus can bring hope to sinful dying people. Jerome, translator of the Latin Vulgate, supposedly kept a skull on his desk to remind him of the brevity of life and his coming death. Al Mohler has a replica of one on his desk as well. "Lord, the reality is that I am going to die. Am I prepared for this?"

### **Jesus' amazing hope-giving power reaches right into death.**

*Luke 8:51-56, When He came to the house, He did not allow anyone to enter with Him, except Peter and John and James, and the girl's father and mother. 52 Now they were all weeping and lamenting*

*for her; but He said, "Stop weeping, for she has not died, but is asleep." 53 And they began laughing at Him, knowing that she had died.*

These professional mourners are howling and wailing and playing dolorous tunes with their flutes, clapping hands and making a cacophony of noise. Jesus tells them the girl is sleeping. From His standpoint she is. They know she is physically dead, so their mourning immediately turns into laughing at Him. Get that? They laughed at Him. They go from wailing to laughing at Him. The world laughs at us when we say we believe Jonah got swallowed by a whale, or Noah got all those animals in the ark. The world laughed at Jesus on the cross. They mocked Him. "Look at Him. There's your king! Hanging on a Roman cross." The laughter will end; you can be sure of it. Every knee will bow to our Lord. Mark says Jesus threw them out of the house, the same word used of His throwing out the bad guys at the temple.

*Luke 8:54, He, however, took her by the hand and called, saying, "Child, arise!" 55 And her spirit returned, and she got up immediately; and He gave orders for something to be given her to eat. 56 Her parents were amazed; but He instructed them to tell no one what had happened.*

In He goes with his three disciples and mom and dad. Yes, the daughter is dead. But Jesus has power beyond death. He says to her, "Child, wake up." Her spirit returns, and notice this, she got up. But how? Immediately! That's how Christ does stuff. Immediately. We need a whole sermon on that one word, "Immediately." Luke uses it over and over. Christ never does things halfway. He never fails at what He does. When He said, "Let there be light," how long did it take? When He turned the water into wine, how long? So here again, immediately she got up. Imagine the joy in this house. Mom and dad were amazed, which literally means to be blown away. She had been sick before dying, but immediately she is a healthy twelve-year old and Jesus is so thoughtful. While the parents are standing there hugging her and rejoicing, Jesus reminds them to give her something to eat. She needs some mac and cheese or a peanut butter and jelly sandwich or chicken nuggets or whatever she likes.

Then He told those in the room to tell no one. Now that almost seems humorous. However, Jesus is saying enjoy your daughter here in the home. Don't go parading her out there with the laughers. Jesus didn't want her to be a spectacle. And He's not trying to draw a crowd just for His miracles.

## **SO WHAT?**

We live in a sin-riddled world, a world of suffering, of death, disease, often heart-ache. Until Jesus comes back, it won't get better. But God is telling us in these power-displaying accounts of Christ walking among us, that He is our Hope. Our only hope. And our sure hope. The good things are coming. He's going to give you a new body! As 1 Corinthians 15:51 says, we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed (that's our nursery slogan) in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Instantly. Immediately.

Jesus Christ, the God-Man who joined us here on earth, joined our race, suffered with us and for us, did everything required to deliver us out of the curse and guilt of sin and deliver us from all suffering forever! That's our future in Christ. Do you believe that?