



THE LORD'S FLOCK GROWTH DIGEST

PASTORAL GROWTH SERIES

Prayer Changes

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It is true that Prayer Changes Things and Prayer Changes Us: our health, our circumstances, our situations.

The topic today will be on two persons in the Bible with inter-woven stories: Jairus and The Bleeding Woman

Readings: Mark 5: 21-43 and Luke 8: 40-56

FOUR PRINCIPLES of FAITH

I. Faith was born out of need.

- These two persons were dealing with sicknesses and wished for healing.
- Jairus, a leader in the synagogue, was a distressed father whose daughter was dying. In an hour of extreme need, he went to Jesus, humbled himself and begged Jesus to come to his house to heal his daughter. Jesus will always respond to our needs. So, He set out to go to this man's house.
- Along the way, Jesus met a woman who was afflicted with hemorrhage for 12 years, an abnormal bleeding from the womb. During those times, bleeding was considered a plague just like touching the dead and leprosy. She was separated from her family and friends, became an outcast in society, and was driven away from the places of worship.
- She was growing weaker, no one could heal her; she was losing hope, and feeling bitter with her circumstances.
- Today, we are experiencing a similar desperation: fear of the virus, no employment, no salary, lack of food, churches are closed, declining health conditions. People are being angry, frustrated, and asking: "Why is God allowing these circumstances". Some people are alone, isolated, and feeling lonely at home.

II. Faith demands a response (Lk8:44, Mk5:27-28)

- When the woman heard about Jesus, she made a decision to go see Him. She had already

suffered greatly at the hands of many doctors and had spent all that she had, but she only grew worse. Her faith was strong, she believed that if she could just touch His clothes, she would be cured.

- Today, you know Jesus, you already listen to Him, but sometimes you still waver because of circumstances. But, it is precisely at this point in your life that you should hold on to your faith.
- Faith comes from hearing the word of God (Rom 10:17). True faith demands a response. When you pray, have faith in Him (Mk 11:24). It is not enough to hear it, you should obey. Fear not, I am with you (MT 28:10). This is the time that we have to show people our faith.
- When you pray, be persistent. To act on her faith and to touch Jesus, the woman had to overcome many obstacles:
 - 1) She had to overcome her physical weakness. It must have been difficult to get up from her bed because of her bleeding and weak body.
 - 2) She had to face her own hopelessness and despair.
 - 3) She had to overcome the press of the crowd around Jesus. She had to force her way carefully without drawing attention to herself.
 - 4) She had to overcome the social and religious stigma. So she just touched His garment secretly from behind. And she was immediately healed, her bleeding stopped. With a touch of faith, she drew power from Jesus.

Reflection:

- What is blocking you from the touch of Jesus? Is it pride, shame, fear, despair, hopelessness?
- What should we fear? We should fear only one thing - that we will let Him pass by without responding in faith and reaching out to Him. He is here and yet we are not doing anything. Let us not waste time. This is the opportunity to be closer to Jesus, to seek Him more, to know Him more through the Bible.

III. Faith cannot remain anonymous

- Jesus asked: "who touched me?" Is it possible that He did not know? Of course He knew what

had happened. He asked the question so that the woman will come out of hiding. Jesus persisted, “someone touched me because I perceived power going out from me.”

(“Ginosko” – literally means He knew and she knew). Jesus looked around and scanned the crowd, looking for her. She did not expect to be recognized; she knew the penalty of touching Jesus. She was trembling, but she came forward, and fell at His feet. She admitted that she touched His garment. She wanted to be healed by touching, and despite all the obstacles, she did it and was healed.

- Why did Jesus want her to testify in public? It was not the miracle that He wanted to make public. He wanted to show the woman’s faith for the benefit of others. Faith is not intended to be a private matter (Ps 10:15).
- How often have we heard someone declining to share? Some people justify that faith is a personal thing. They do not want to speak up about their spiritual life. But, faith in Christ is not intended to be personal. Jesus still requires a testimony. “Whoever therefore shall confess me before men, then him I will confess also before my Father, who is in heaven” (Mt 10:32). Thus, let us all witness for the Lord.

IV. Faith Rebuilds

- Faith is rebuilt by the result. He told the woman: “Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace” (Mk5:34).
- Faith goes on when reason says give up (Lk 8:49-50).
- The healing happened on His way to the home of Jairus. Jairus was getting upset with the interruption. His daughter was an emergency case. While Jesus was still speaking with the woman, Jairus’ servants came, bringing Him bad news, “do not bother the master, because your daughter is dead.” So, the hope for his daughter was gone. The delay caused by the woman resulted in the daughter’s death. But Jesus assured him, do not be afraid, only believe that she will be made well.
- In our lives, sometimes there are delays also. We get impatient, we want Him to hurry up But God has a purpose when He delays something. We struggle to understand God’s

timing. Are we also struggling with the question – how long will this lockdown last? When will this pandemic end? God has a season for everything (Ec 3:1).

- There are so many cases in today’s crisis where the dead were not seen by their family because of the virus. Faith needs trusting in God’s care and His timing.
- Faith is not the belief that we will get what we want, but the belief that God knows what is best.
- Jesus assured Jairus. Do not be afraid. Believe and she will be well (Lk 8:50). Jesus allowed only Peter, John and James, and the parents to enter with Him. He rebuked the mourners: she is not dead, but sleeping. The crowd ridiculed Him because they knew she was dead. He cleared the room of all the skeptics. He left them outside. Will Jesus today invite you to go in?
- Inside the room, He performed a miracle. He took the girl’s hand, and told her to arise. And she arose (Mk 5:41). He commanded that she be given something to eat. The parents were astonished and He told them that no one should be told what happened.

Reflection

- Are there times when you think Jesus is too late? Are there times when you feel hopeless?
- Are you believing in Him, yet still doubting Him? Are you still afraid?

Conclusion:

- Jesus is still looking for people who are hurting, broken-hearted, damaged, frustrated, in despair, or feeling hopeless.
- Let us not be “outside” that we will miss the miracles of God. If you only have faith, you will see the miracles of God (Jn 11).

Prayer:

- Father God, touch everyone listening in their homes. Build their faith, increase their faith.
- Lord, may we testify for you, that we will not hide our faith.

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