

Mark 5: Three Healings
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A. Overview

1. Method

Important to have a toolbox of ways to approach the Scriptures, as a "prepared workman," 2 Tim. 2:15.

a) Analysis

- 1) Three healing stories in close succession: the demoniac, Jairus' daughter, and the woman with an issue of blood.
- 2) When the Spirit sets similar things before us, He often intends us to compare and contrast them. Show grid chart as example of how to do this.
- 3) The outcome is a series of points of comparison or contrast across all the episodes. They may be in the same order (an alternation, as with the churches in Revelation). Here, they are not, but still a useful way to explore the passage.

b) Application: Though all deal with various physical ailments, all have spiritual overtones as well, and we can see these as examples of how we need to be healed spiritually.

- 1) The Demoniac (1-20): oppressed by the Prince of Darkness. So we "walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph. 2:2).
- 2) The Woman with an Issue of Blood (24-34): she was thus ritually unclean (Lev 15:25-27,31) and would have been excluded from temple worship or from contact with observant Jews. So we were once alienated from the people of God (Eph. 2:11-12).
- 3) Jairus' Daughter was sick unto death (21-23, 35-43), and in fact dead when the Lord reached her. So we "were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1).

2. Themes

Two main points, each with three observations in more detail.

a) The Lord saves Individuals, not Groups.

- 1) The Individual responds differently from the Group.
- 2) The Group discourages the Individual, because of a defective attitude toward the Lord.
- 3) Each Individual's encounter with the Lord is distinctive.

- b) There are common characteristics for all who are saved.
 - 1) All come in faith.
 - 2) All make public confession.
 - 3) All experience a change in their lives.

B. The Lord saves Individuals, not Groups.

A fundamental lesson that we must learn, not only to be sure of our own relation to the Lord, but also to relate rightly to our brothers and sisters.

- 1. Most religions are a group phenomenon, defined either
 - a) by your parents (you are a Jew if your mother is a Jew) or
 - b) by your country (the ancient precept, *religio principis religio populi*, "the religion of the prince is the religion of the people").
- 2. Throughout the Bible, God calls his people OUT from the group of which they are a part:
 - a) Deut. 7:6-8 in the OT,
 - b) Rom. 8:29-30;
 - c) *eklegw* "to elect" = "to call out";
 - d) "saint" in both OT and NT = "one set apart."

Salvation is not for groupies. The notions of the importance and rights of the individual, so characteristic of our modern world and so foreign to the third world, are a direct outgrowth of the influence of this fundamental Judaeo-Christian insight that God sees us as individuals.

Now consider the three signs of this emphasis on the individual that we see in these three healings:

- 1. The Individual responds differently from the Group.
 - a) Demonic: note the contrast between him in 18 and the people in 17. He wants to stay with the Lord; they want the Lord as far away as possible.
 - b) Woman: contrast her purposeful pursuit of the Lord (28) with the mindless thronging of the crowd (24).
 - c) Jairus: contrast his faith in seeking the Lord (22-23) with the scorn (40) of others in the household.
 - d) *Application*: Outright rejection, scorn, and even groupie enthusiasm are all defective responses to the Lord, but the most likely ones among the mass of people.
- 2. The Group discourages the Individual, because of a defective attitude toward the Lord.
 - a) Demonic: Even as he runs toward the Lord, the demons in him cry out in antagonism (6,7).

- b) Woman: Why is she so secretive about her approach to the Lord? Probably because her condition made her ceremonially unclean. Many in the crowd would have pushed her away had they recognized her, and she may even fear that the Lord himself as a righteous Rabbi might not tolerate her. Imagine how she might have discussed the matter with others:
- 1) She: "I think I'll go ask Jesus to touch me and take away my issue."
 - 2) Others: "Oh, he'd never defile himself by touching you. Don't impose on him."
- c) Jairus: His own servants try to derail him: "Why troublest thou the Master?" (35)
- d) *Application*: It's easy to recognize the kind of opposition that the demoniac faced from his demons, but the opposition faced by the woman and Jairus is much more subtle, masquerading as piety. Beware moral injunctions from those who have forsaken the only root of true morality, the fear of the living God. Especially beware of thinking that you're too bad for the Lord to save (the fear of rejection by the Lord with which the woman was grappling). "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out," John 6:37.
3. Each Individual's encounter with the Lord is distinctive, with regard both to who takes the initiative and to the mechanism the Lord uses.
- a) Demoniac:
- 1) Initiative: The Lord seeks him out, on the other side of the sea. There is no way he could ever have come to the Lord, had he even known of him, but this does not render him unsaveable. The Lord finds him and brings him to himself.
 - 2) Mechanism: A word, and that not to the man himself, but to the demon within him.
- b) Woman:
- 1) Initiative: She seeks out the Lord. The Spirit has so inclined her heart toward him (contrast the crowd around) that she braves rejection to seek him.
 - 2) Mechanism: A touch, and one from her to him rather than the other way around.
- c) Jairus:
- 1) Initiative: The sick person does not come herself; her

father comes for her! It's true that you can't get saved for someone else, but your friendship and support may be the crucial link to bringing them to Christ, just as Jairus was the channel through which the Lord's power reached his daughter.

- 2) Mechanism: Both a touch and a word; the touch deliberate (unlike that to the woman), and the word to the girl (rather than to some demon).

- d) *Application*: Beware trying to constrain the Spirit of God as to how he saves people. He will bring his own to himself, often in widely different ways, from widely different backgrounds, each according to his individual need.

Application: Beware the pressure of the group--both the secular world, and also the established church. Remember that our Lord was crucified through the concerted opposition of both Rome and the Jerusalem temple. Be sure of your individual relation to the Lord.

C. There are common characteristics for all who are saved.

1. All come in faith.

- a) Demonic: 6, comes running to the Lord and falls down and worships him, even as the demons within him cry out in terror.

- b) Woman: 28, "she kept saying [imperfect], 'If I may but touch his clothes, I shall be whole.'" Faith is that for which the Lord explicitly commends her, 34.

- c) Jairus: Note his confidence in 23, and the Lord's exhortation to "keep on believing" [present tense], 36.

- d) *Application*: Acts 16:30,31, "What must I do to be saved? Believe on the LJC." Heb. 11:6, "Without faith it is impossible to please him, for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." You cannot earn God's favor. While the experience of salvation may differ from one person to another, the basis of the transaction is always the same: our faith in God's promise.

2. All make public confession.

- a) Demonic: 19-20, he "preached" what the Lord had done for him.

- b) Woman: 30-33, the Lord does not let her pass away healed and unnoticed, but calls on her to tell "all the truth" in the midst of the crowd.

- c) Jairus: At first glance, 43 seems to be an exception. But Jairus has already proclaimed his faith publicly; as a leader

of the synagogue, his suppliant approach to the Lord would be extremely impressive to those around. The news of the girl's healing will be impossible to keep secret for long: the synagogue will know that she has been ill, and you can't keep a 12-year old hidden. The intent of the prohibition in 43 is probably to give the Lord a chance to escape the press of the crowd at the end of a very busy day.

- d) *Application*: The Lord has no secret service. "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy," Psa 107:2. Matt. 10:32,33; 2 Tim. 2:12. True salvation may happen in the inner sanctum of our heart, but we are called to make it know to those around us.

And this verbal confession must be matched by tangible, visible change.

3. All experience a change in their lives.

- a) Demonic: 15, "sitting, clothed, in his right mind."
b) Woman: 34, "go in peace," a state of mind that she had hardly known for 12 years.
c) Jairus: 42,43, the family, almost rent asunder by death, now restored to fellowship together.
d) *Application*: Salvation works. It bears fruit. It is not joining a club, but experiencing a change deep inside. Matt 7:16,20, "You shall know them by their fruits."

D. Application

1. Recognize that salvation is an individual transaction between you and the Lord. Sometimes (as with the woman), we seem to seek him out; other times (as with the demoniac) he seems to do all the seeking; still other times (as with Jairus' daughter) others are instrumental in bringing us together. But it is ultimately a personal, individual transaction, mediated not by family nor by country but by God's Spirit bearing witness to our spirit that we are the sons of God (Rom 8:16).
2. Recognize that all who are truly saved will have certain things in common: a trust in God alone to save them; an open confession; fruit in their lives.