

LESSON 3

June 20, 2021

Unit I. Jesus Teaches about Faith

A Healing Touch

DEVOTIONAL READING: Proverbs 3:1-8

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: Matthew 9:18-26; Mark 5:21-43; Luke 8:40-56

PRINT PASSAGE: Matthew 9:18-26

KEY VERSE

Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour. (Matthew 9:22, KJV)

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Jesus turned and saw her. “Take heart, daughter,” he said, “your faith has healed you.” And the woman was healed at that moment. (Matthew 9:22, NIV)

Lesson Aims

As a result of experiencing this lesson, you should be able to do these things:

- Examine the nature of the faith involved in the healings of the woman and the girl in this passage.
- Sense the power of God to bring life and healing to your loved ones.
- Rejoice in the healing power of God as manifested in your own life.

KEY TERMS

Asleep (verse 24)—Greek: *katheudó* (kath-yoo’-do): to sleep; Jesus referred to death as sleep; “sleepeth” (KJV).

Faith (verse 22)—Greek: *pistis* (pis’-tis): belief; trust; confidence; fidelity; faithfulness.

Followed (verse 19)—Greek: *akoloutheó* (ak-ol-oo-theh’-o): accompanied; attended to; “went with” (NIV).

Healed (verse 21)—Greek: *sózó* (sode’-zo): to be saved, preserved, to rescue; “whole” (KJV).

Ruler (verse 18)—Greek: *archón* (ar’-khone): chief; “leader” (NIV).

Take courage (verse 22, NASB)—Greek: *tharseó* (thar-seh’-o): to be of good courage; be of good cheer; comfort; relief; “be of good comfort” (KJV); “take heart” (NIV).

Touched (verse 20)—Greek: *haptomai* (hap’-tom-ahee): adhered to; laid hold of.

PREPARING THE LESSON

- Refer to the *Townsend Press SS Commentary Teacher’s Edition* for an additional lesson plan—with word studies, insights on teaching adults, learner matrices, etc.
- Review last week’s student assignments (“Your Life” and Your World!”).

- Thoroughly review your student book for your adult or young adult class.
- Please note that you have the option of using your subscription bundle supplements, i.e., Lesson Scenario, Student Activity Sheet, SSL-AAG.

WHY THIS LESSON MATTERS

People often look to others to help them with their health issues. Where does healing come from? Jesus told the woman with the issue of blood that she was healed because of her faith, and told Jairus that his daughter was healed and restored to life.

THE LESSON IN FOCUS

Sickness, illness, and ailments do not discriminate. As adults, we have personally experienced times of illness, great or small. Even if you have been extremely fortunate to have never had even the slightest case of the sniffles, you can probably attest to knowing of someone personally who has experienced illness. We recognize that, at some point in our lives, we may be devoted caregivers to a loved one who is sick or ailing, or we may be the recipient of loving care during a period of physical or mental frailty. Because of the love we have for those who are ailing, despite the sacrifice, we are willing to take bold and audacious actions to help foster healing and restoration of health. Devoted parents will go to virtually any lengths to save their children. Children of aging parents in ill health will likely exhaust every means at their disposal to extend and improve their quality of life. When loved ones fall sick we cling to our faith. We have heard the stories and witnessed the modern-day miracles of those who have been sick and made well, those who were given a date with death yet survived, and others who have been saved and sustained. Our personal experiences, the testimonies of others, and stories from the Word of God strengthen our faith and remind us that our God is a healer.

THE LESSON IN CONTEXT

It was customary for Jewish rabbis to lay hands on the sick while praying for the Lord to bless them. The leader of the synagogue, Jairus, may have previously witnessed Jesus or another rabbi praying in this way. Jewish religious leaders would long continue the custom of laying on of hands, but the practice was unheard of in the case of those who were ceremonially unclean according to the Law. When someone died, it was customary for musicians to gather and play melancholy tunes to stir up the grief and mourning of those in attendance (see Matthew 9:23). Often, wailers would lead the mourning outcry of weeping. The hemorrhaging woman touched the tassel (tzitzit) of Jesus' prayer shawl, a symbol of God's commandments and a reminder to be holy (see Numbers 15:37-39). This part of Jesus' robe, as worn by priests of the day, and still done so today, was and is a sacred piece of the robe. Reaching out to touch the tassel expressed the woman's faith in the power of Israel's God to heal as well as in Jesus, one sent from God. The woman's condition involved ritual uncleanness and thus was a source of shame as well as physical discomfort. Instead of spreading her uncleanness to Jesus, the purity of her heart and her utter and complete trusting touch invited Jesus to impart healing and transformation. Jesus' healing touch restored and delivered both the woman and the girl back to their respective communities. Their encounters with Christ reunited them with their families and the communities to which they belonged. Strong faith invited the healing touch of Jesus to intervene and save them both.

OPENING INQUIRY

(Choose from the questions below.)

1. Recall a time when you desperately needed help.
2. Share a serious moment in your life where you were confronted with a life-or-death situation.
3. How did the experience strengthen your faith?

INSIGHTS

As believers of the Lord Jesus Christ, we understand that God responds to those who approach Him by faith. When we have a need, we must approach God in faith, without wavering. Those who doubt Him need not expect anything of Him (see James 1:6-7). Our relationship with Jesus gives us direct access to God, allowing us to connect with Him simply by speaking words of prayer. We approach God properly by removing any distractions that can hinder our interactions with Him. Removing distractions allows us to clearly commune with the one who is always able to help us. God cares about every matter that concerns us, including our health.

EXPLORATION

The Christian must never be fearful of approaching God with personal needs. It is not selfish to seek God's guidance and help in personal matters. We believe in God's power over life, death, and in healing. We thus believe that we must remain faithful in all things and under all circumstances. This faithfulness includes our recognizing that God does not always heal according to human desires or demands. He always moves within His divine realm and will. While we desire healing and avoidance of pain, we understand that God is sovereign and that even the acceptance of death is a sign of our faith and trust in God.

ADDITIONAL EXPOSITORY INSIGHTS FOR THE TEACHER

Commentary on Matthew 9:18-19

KJV

18 While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain *ruler*, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live.

19 And Jesus arose, and *followed* him, and so did his disciples.

NIV

18 While he was saying this, a synagogue leader came and knelt before him and said, "My daughter has just died. But come and put your hand on her, and she will live."

19 Jesus got up and went with him, and so did his disciples.

The synagogue ruler who came to Jesus seeking a miracle for his daughter is Jairus of Capernaum (see Mark 5:21-22; Luke 8:41). There were two officers in a synagogue: one was the bishop or overseer of the congregation, and the other was the head or ruler of the congregation. Overseers would select the passage from the Book of the Law to be read to the congregation and give it to the ruler, which is the office Jairus held to read or select someone to read during service. Jesus and Jairus most likely had met and taken part in a service together. If so, it would have been Jairus's

chance to hear Jesus' teaching ability and perhaps to witness some of the miracles Jesus performed at the synagogue and throughout the region. Matthew summarized several details into a concise narrative. Mark and Luke record that Jairus first said she was dying and was later informed by the messengers that she had died. The remarkable component of the text is that Jairus is a synagogue ruler. While not a member of the Sanhedrin council, he was a man of notable esteem and regard. He demonstrated the utmost humility by going to Jesus, bowing before Him and worshipping Him. Many Jewish leaders would have considered Jairus's approach to Jesus as sacrilegious, especially in that Jesus was not yet being heralded as the Messiah. A rebuke from his colleagues could have been potentially detrimental to his religious career. Luke's account refers to the girl as Jairus's "only daughter," while Mark calls her his "little daughter." Both accounts convey the sense that the girl was precious to Jairus. In times of crisis, every believer should have the faith to go to Jesus with everything that is precious to us.

DISCUSSION STARTERS

(Please review the appropriate student book's related biblical exposition section.)

- **Adult Question:** Describe a time when you faced a desperate challenge that only the Lord could handle. How did you respond?
- **Young Adult Questions:** What is bold faith? Have you ever demonstrated a bold faith in God for a personal situation? What was the outcome?

Commentary on Matthew 9:20-22

KJV

20 And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and *touched* the hem of his garment:

21 For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be *whole*.

22 But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, *be of good comfort*; thy *faith* hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour.

NIV

20 Just then a woman who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years came up behind him and *touched* the edge of his cloak.

21 She said to herself, "If I only touch his cloak, I will be *healed*."

22 Jesus turned and saw her. "Take *heart*, daughter," he said, "your *faith* has healed you." And the woman was healed at that moment.

While en route to the house of Jairus, Jesus was approached from behind by a woman suffering from a hemorrhage, diseased with an issue of blood, for twelve years. This ailment is ceremonially defiling (see Leviticus 15:19-30). According to the Law, the nature of the woman's infirmity restricted her from social interactions—mingling in crowds and worshipping in synagogues, or even engaging her own family. Because of the ceremonial uncleanness, she would not have been allowed to touch a rabbi (or any man for that matter). The "hem of His garment" refers most likely to the tassels on each of the four corners of Jesus' outer garment, worn by Israelites in accordance with Numbers 15:38 and Deuteronomy 22:12. Again, Matthew condenses the account but notes that Jesus made clear to the woman that faith, not the tassel, had allowed her

to obtain this cure—miraculous healing. Jesus openly comforts the woman who boldly yet secretly pursued His healing touch. Publicly, Jesus refers to the woman who had been an outcast as “daughter.” This is a comforting word showing connection, family love, and a warm welcome to the security and joy of life free from that twelve-year burden. Jesus offered words of comfort to the woman at just the right time. Despite her own hesitations and fears, she had come in great faith. When Jesus turned to see who had touched Him, she stood trembling, uncertain of whether He would rebuke her for her boldness (see Mark 5:33). By faith, the woman had risked all to reach for Jesus. His gentle declaration that her faith had made her whole is a statement of salvation. Her faith was the type needed for saving grace. It fully restored her, not only from her disease but also from every consequence associated with her disease, thus making her whole again—whole enough to love and live as a daughter of the King.

DISCUSSION STARTERS

(Please review the appropriate student book’s related biblical exposition section.)

- **Adult Questions:** Share a time when you went to extreme lengths to get closer to Jesus. How did it make you feel? What was the outcome?
- **Young Adult Questions:** If you were this woman, would your faith drive you to crawl into the presence of God to be healed, risking public scrutiny? Why or why not?

Commentary on Matthew 9:23-26

KJV

23 And when Jesus came into the ruler’s house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise,

24 He said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but *sleepeth*. And they laughed him to scorn.

25 But when the people were put forth, he went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose.

26 And the fame hereof went abroad into all that land.

NIV

23 When Jesus entered the synagogue leader’s house and saw the noisy crowd and people playing pipes,

24 he said, “Go away. The girl is not dead but *asleep*.” But they laughed at him.

25 After the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took the girl by the hand, and she got up.

26 News of this spread through all that region.

As Jesus continues His journey, the flute players and other mourners had gathered for the ancient funeral pageantry (see Jeremiah 9:17; 48:36). They traditionally gathered and played in times of death and calamity. The Jews routinely hired performers to set the mood during funeral processions with mournful laments (see Jeremiah 9:17-21; Amos 5:16).

Jesus occasionally referred to those whom others counted as dead as merely sleeping (see John 11:11, 14). The statement is neither a mistaken opinion by Jesus nor a literal truth that she was merely unconscious nor an opportunity for saints to engage in an argument that death is the soul asleep. Rather, it was spoken by Jesus in light of what He was going to do; the fact that if He says it then it is so—because He is God. If He says it, that settles it. She is not dead as to continue

under the power of death, but shall be raised from this physical death state as one who was physically well. Because Jesus is God, whatever He speaks becomes reality. Hearing Jesus' words, those present began to laugh Jesus to scorn. This is a contemptuous laugh, one filled with disdain and disrespect. They could not believe that anyone would make such a statement with reference to someone for whom traditional funeral songs were already being played. Jesus took no pause or regard for the laughter; He continued His work, putting them out, entering the room, and taking the girl by the hand. People whose situations seem dead or beyond hope often exhibit great signs of life when entrusted by faith to Jesus. The news of this healing spread throughout the region, in spite of Christ's warning against any publicity (see Mark 5:43; Luke 8:56). God received glory for this magnificent miracle.

DISCUSSION STARTERS

(Please review the appropriate student book's related biblical exposition section.)

- **Adult Question:** Share a time when all seemed lost and you trusted in Jesus against the odds. What is the greatest challenge of persevering in faith while you are surrounded by others' doubt?
- **Young Adult Question:** What distractions can you remove from your daily surroundings to allow for meaningful time in God's presence?

LIFE APPLICATION

Refer to Adult Book (See student lesson's "Your Life" section.)

—The woman in the text wrestled with her medical condition for twelve years. What prolonged challenges have you wrestled with overtime? What does it mean to trust God in the face of a persistent problem that you cannot solve or improve despite your best effort? Pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit to lead you and reveal the answer to your situation.

(See student lesson's "Your World!" section.)

—Think of someone you know who desperately needs God's intervention in his or her situation. Connect with the person and agree to join your prayers with his or hers. Expect God to do what only He can.

Refer to Young Adult Book (See student lesson's "Your Life" section.)

—The good news is that Jesus is still touching lives and transforming desperate situations today. If there is an area of your life in which you need the powerful touch of Jesus, bring it to Jesus, believing and celebrating by faith that nothing is too hard for God.

(See student lesson's "Your World!" section.)

—Many people do not believe in the reality and power of Jesus' healing touch. God has touched all believers so they can touch others with love, encouragement, and the hope of the Gospel. Whose life will you "touch" for Jesus?

NEXT WEEK'S LESSON

The lesson topic for Sunday, June 27, 2021, is “An Amazing Feat.” The Devotional Reading is Isaiah 38:16-20, the Background Scripture is Matthew 14:22-33, and the Printed Text is Matthew 14:22-33.

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, help us to live healthier lifestyles. Teach us to live by faith, accepting that even in our stages of sickness You heal by faith. Help us to lay our cares upon You—because You alone are able to turn every situation around and for our good and Your glory. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Why Do You Doubt? (June 21-27, 2021)

MONDAY, June 21	“Let's Sing of the Lord's Faithfulness”	(Isaiah 38:16-20)
TUESDAY, June 22	“The Baptist Dies for the Faith”	(Matthew 14:1-12)
WEDNESDAY, June 23	“The Crowd's Hunger Satisfied”	(Matthew 14:13-21)
THURSDAY, June 24	“Believe the One Sent to You”	(John 6:22-29)
FRIDAY, June 25	“The Sick Are Healed”	(Matthew 14:34-36)
SATURDAY, June 26	“Speak Confidently to Civil Authorities”	(Mark 13:9-12)
SUNDAY, June 27	“Savior of the Fearful, Doubter, Needy”	(Matthew 14:22-33)