

Notes for the Ekklesia Meeting

Sundays @ 10:00 a.m. Info: (651) 283-0568 Discipleship Training Ministries, Inc www.dtminc.org Today's Date: July 19, 2009

A Miracle Sandwich

by Dan Trygg

“When Jesus had crossed over again in the boat to the other side, a large crowd gathered around Him; and so He stayed by the seashore. ²² One of the synagogue officials named Jairus came up, and on seeing Him, fell at His feet ²³ and implored Him earnestly, saying, ‘My little daughter is at the point of death; *please* come and lay Your hands on her, so that she will get well and live.’ ²⁴ And He went off with him; and a large crowd was following Him and pressing in on Him. ²⁵ A woman who had had a hemorrhage for twelve years, ²⁶ and had endured much at the hands of many physicians, and had spent all that she had and was not helped at all, but rather had grown worse-- ²⁷ after hearing about Jesus, she came up in the crowd behind *Him* and touched His cloak. ²⁸ For she thought, ‘If I just touch His garments, I will get well.’”

Mark 5:21-28

We have been following Jesus’ activities through a very intense period of time in His ministry. He had come back to Peter’s house in Capernaum, where crowds of people gathered to be healed. Going out to the seashore, He preached to the crowds throughout the afternoon, until evening. Jesus suggested that they go across the lake. Their encounter with a storm led to a divine appointment with a man with 6,000 demons. Although the man was delivered, the populace of that area became afraid, and asked Jesus to leave again. So, **Jesus and His men again boarded their boat and headed back across the Sea of Galilee. They returned to Capernaum**, because Luke records, “And as Jesus returned, the people welcomed Him, for *they had all been waiting* for Him” (Luke 8:40). Undoubtedly, the Lord would have had opportunity to sleep on the return trip, if He had still been tired. If there had been any hope of a break in the action, it was only happening out on the lake, because ministry needs were waiting for Him onshore.

Two miracle events are recorded for us by Mark which finally conclude this action-packed couple of days of Jesus’ ministry. Interestingly, they do not unfold sequentially, as we normally expect things to occur. Rather, one event happens, as it were, *inside of* another scenario. In the first encounter, the ruler of the synagogue approaches Jesus on behalf of his daughter, who was hovering near death (Mk. 5:22,23; cf. Matt. 9:18; Lk. 8:41,42). Jesus agrees to come with him, but is interrupted by the healing of the woman with the flow of blood. After ministering to her, Jesus continued on to Jairus’ house. **The account of the sick woman is sandwiched on both sides by the story of Jairus’ daughter.**

As one of the synagogue officials (Mk.5:22), Jairus would have been a layman responsible for facilitating and overseeing the synagogue services, maintaining order, and choosing those who were the participants. **Jesus had made a practice of teaching in synagogues** both in Galilee and Judea (Lk. 4:14,15,43,44). Undoubtedly, *Jairus had heard Jesus speak* on numerous occasions, probably even permitting Him to speak at the synagogue where he presided (Capernaum? – Matt. 9:1). If it *was* the synagogue at Capernaum, he probably would have been present to *witness* Jesus deliver a demonized man (Mk. 1:21-27), and undoubtedly *heard the reports* of His ministry for some time. As his only child, his 12 year old daughter, became deathly sick, he began to realize that Jesus was his only tangible hope. But He was nowhere to be found! He had left town, and gone across the sea! He was beside himself, and there was no place to turn for help. Suddenly, **he heard that Jesus was back in town, down by the seashore! So he hurried to find Him and fell at His feet, begging for His help.** “My little daughter is at her end”, he said, “but, come, lay Your hands upon her in order that she might be saved and she might live” (Mk. 5:23). **Jesus agreed to come. Things looked hopeful.**

At this point, the focus shifts to another story which is unfolding at this same time. **Jesus’ mission to Jairus’ house was about to be interrupted. What about the woman with the flow of blood?** This woman had suffered from a flow of blood for 12 years. She had spent all her money on physicians, endured all manner of “treatments”, and had received no benefit at all. In fact, the flow had grown worse. Another factor, which is not readily apparent to us, is that **her condition had rendered her ceremonially unclean, which meant that no one would come near her, or touch her, for fear of becoming unclean themselves** (Lev. 15:16-33). Furthermore, anything she touched or sat upon would also be defiled. **In effect, she had become a social outcast.** You can imagine that after 12 years, whatever friends or family she may have had likely would have faded away, and **she was very much alone.** *Even though she was in this condition, we find her in the midst of a constrictive, pressing crowd, attempting to get close enough to Jesus to touch even the hem of His garments. She was desperate for healing, so desperate that she put aside protocol, or even concern for others, ...or even obedience to the Law.* She made no outward request, probably for fear of being rejected. (She probably had been the victim of accusatory gossip by those who believed that those who suffer so terribly must have done something wrong to deserve such a fate – e.g. Jn. 9:1-3) **She had no other viable hope, but she had heard and seen enough about Jesus to believe** that if she could just touch the hem of His garment, she would be healed. So, she *pressed* her way through the crowd, *reached out* and managed to touch His cloak. Immediately, the

flow of her blood stopped, and she could feel within her body that she was healed. Of course, we would never even have known of this incident, had not the next part occurred. **Jesus could feel the power flow out from Him (Mk. 5:30; Lk. 8:46), and turned about in the crowd, saying, “Who touched Me?”** Everyone stopped. The disciples tried to reason with Him. Even though the crowd was pressing around Him, Jesus knew very well what He had felt, and pressed again for a confession, revealing that He had felt the power go out from His being. At this, **the woman, in fear and trembling, fell down before Him and confessed all.** Instead of anger or rejection, however, He blessed her and said that *her faith had healed her.*

There is a lot to ponder concerning this account. **(1.) Her uncleanness, ...even her apparent disregard of God’s commands concerning ritual purity..., did not exclude her from being a recipient of God’s grace.** God did not require her to get cleaned up first. Nor was she punished or rebuked for defiling the crowd, or even Jesus Himself, with her touch. *That is what grace is, isn’t it? Receiving God’s blessing and provision when we clearly do not deserve it?* **(2.) Sometimes it would appear that God is less concerned about ritual purity, or even righteous performance, than some of us might be. He seems to look upon the heart more than the outward behavior.** There are other times, however, when He will *not* excuse lack of obedience or disregard of His commands in even a small matter, ...even when our *intent* may on the surface appear commendable (e.g., II Sam. 6:1-7). We had best not take Him lightly, in any way, but celebrate when He does show His wonderful grace to the worst of sinners. **(3.) Sometimes, when the power of the Lord is present to heal, people can receive healing whether anyone else prays for them or not.** It was *God’s choice* to act, and He did so without using the action of a third party. It is God meeting us, whether directly or through someone else. Who gives the healing, after all? **(4.) Jesus said that it was her faith that had saved her.** Clearly, it was not *His*, since He was totally unaware of what was going to transpire. God saw and honored *her* faith. **(5.) Sometimes the power of God can be felt, whether going out from us, or operating within us.** We should be aware of this, and watch for it. Jesus followed up on what He felt. He wanted to see what God was doing (Jn. 5:19,20).

One aspect of the interruption caused by the woman with the hemorrhage was that Jesus was delayed, and during this time, Jairus’ daughter expired. The father must have been totally crestfallen. His last hope was shattered. Even the messengers who brought the news told him to no longer bother the Master (Lk. 8:49). **Jesus, however, brushes all this aside by saying, “Do not be afraid; only trust, and she will be saved.”** Upon saying this, *He would allow no one to go* any farther, except Peter, James and John (Mk. 5:37). The other disciples remained behind to control the crowd. When they arrive at the house, they find the professional mourners already hard at their task, adding to the litany of grief expressed by the family and sympathetic friends gathered there. *Jesus sends them all away,* saying that she is not dead, but asleep, even though He had not yet seen her. They laughed mockingly at Him, but at His insistence, and that of the parents, they departed. **Jesus, His three closest disciples, and the parents of the girl were the only ones to enter into the room where she was lying (Mk. 5:40). He took her by the hand, and loudly told her to get up (Lk. 8:54).** Luke informs us that her spirit returned, and immediately she arose, and began to walk about (8:55). He then gave her parents instructions to tell no one, and to give her something to eat (Mk. 5:42,43).

What are some significant points to observe in this incident? (1.) The crises of life lead to opportunity and credibility. The needs or tragedies around us allow us to come alongside people who otherwise might keep their distance. When a need is met by God, people remember. For a respected synagogue official to come to Jesus, and receive help, was a tremendous affirmation of Jesus’ ministry. **(2.) Faith grows by hearing and seeing God’s actions in the lives of others.** This man, who had *heard* and *seen* the ministry of Jesus, had built up enough faith to seek Him for *the* most drastic of scenarios, ...the turning back of death itself. He put aside any and all pretensions of political correctness when his hour of need came. His daughter was more important than his reputation or his position, ...and he was rewarded for his desperate faith. **(3.) Things sometimes get worse before they get better.** In fact, things looked absolutely impossible, yet at Jesus’ word of encouragement, the father pressed on to follow things through. This is *often* the case, and we must keep this principle in mind to press on in faith, even though things look worse than ever. **(4.) Jesus sought to remove those who would be skeptical, or would have unbelief.** How important this was would become evident during His visit to His hometown (Mk. 6:6). **(5.) We are exposed to some of the means employed by Jesus.** How important *the grasp of the hand* was, or how significant was *the loud cry* (cf. Acts 14:9,10), is not told to us, but we are told these details to at least be aware of what the Master did, in case we are brought to face a similar situation (cf. Acts 9:36-41). We know that the Bible encourages us to *lay hands upon the sick* (Matt. 9:18; Mk. 6:5; 7:32; 8:23,25; Lk. 4:40; 13:13; Acts 5:12; 6:6; [cf 8:17,18; 19:6; I Tim. 4:14; II Tim. 1:6; Heb. 6:2]; 9:12,17; 14:3; 19:11; 28:8; cf. Jas. 5:14-16), and in several other cases, *the sick were touched* on the hand (or at the site of the affliction), or taken by the hand and raised from their sick bed (Matt. 8:3; Mk. 1:31; 7:33; 9:26,27; Acts 3:7; 9:41). **(6.) Note that the supernatural healing was followed by a natural prescription of food.** God wants us to be responsible for our physical needs and limitations.