

Women in the Gospels

Seeing Jesus from their perspective.

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A Bleeding Woman, a Dying Girl and a Disabled Woman

Jesus not only empathizes with us and has compassion on us—as he did with these three women long ago—he has the authority and the ability to help us in our time of need.

Hebrews 4:16: *Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.*

Psalms 46:1: *God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.*

A Bleeding Woman

Mark 5:21 - 34

²¹ When Jesus had again crossed over by boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around him while he was by the lake. ²² Then one of the synagogue leaders, named Jairus, came, and when he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet. ²³ He pleaded earnestly with him, "My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live." ²⁴ So Jesus went with him. A large crowd followed and pressed around him. ²⁵ And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. ²⁶ She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. ²⁷ When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, ²⁸ because she thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed." ²⁹ Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering. ³⁰ At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?" ³¹ "You see the people crowding against you," his disciples answered, "and yet you can ask, 'Who touched me?'" ³² But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. ³³ Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. ³⁴ He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering."

Jesus is approached by Jairus, who urgently begs him to come and heal his daughter who is dying. Jesus is willing to go with him.

Who was Jairus?

- Synagogue leader
- Probably a Pharisee
- Husband and father

For Jairus to courageously seek Jesus and ask him to come heal his daughter shows that his need was greater than his fear.

What would it mean for a woman in that day to have such a blood issue?

- Physically weakened her
- Could not worship in the temple
- Could not touch anyone or let anyone touch her
- She was considered unclean, continually unclean and isolated
- ?

I often wonder how this woman supported herself for 12 years. This is no wimpy woman. She has survived 12 years in this condition and now, she has the courage to go into this crowd and touch Jesus' garment. And when she does, her bleeding stops immediately.

Jairus is probably not happy with this sudden stop. He's anxious for Jesus to get to his house and save his daughter.

Have you noticed that Jesus is never on our timetables? He is never so rushed that he overlooks a poor, shamed woman with a 12-year blood issue.

This brave woman knows that she has been caught. Will Jesus rebuke her for making him unclean?

Notice she told Jesus the whole truth and he listened. There is no condemnation as she feared there might be. No, instead he pronounces that she is a woman of faith, and then he calls her "Daughter."

"But Jesus does not recoil. Instead, he welcomes this woman who has bled for 12 years straight as a daughter filled with faith. He gives her peace. Strikingly, this woman is the only individual in all the Gospels whom Jesus calls 'daughter'" (*Jesus Through the Eyes of Women* p. 116).

Jesus made us as women and he understands our feminine makeup. "The one who has numbered the hairs on our heads also knows every drop of blood in our bodies. Instead of humiliating this woman, Jesus validates her" (*Jesus Through the Eyes of Women* p. 116).

Here's a woman who is a nobody and Jesus stops a procession, heals her, and calls her "daughter."

Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever, so as women today, he welcomes us to come to him with whatever we have that is shaming us, or debilitating us, or causing us pain, and find his healing.

Romans 5:17: *For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!*

His love has no limit, his grace has no measure
His power has no boundary known unto men
For out of his infinite wisdom in Jesus
He giveth and giveth and giveth again.

What do you think life was like for her from this point on? How did Jesus change her life?

How has Jesus changed you? How has your life been transformed by Jesus?

A Dying Girl

Back to Jairus and his dying daughter. I can only imagine how he felt, standing there waiting for this woman to leave Jesus alone so he could get to his daughter. It must have seemed like an eternity. Then Jairus gets this terrible news from some of his friends.

Mark 5:35 – 43

While Jesus was still speaking, some people came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader. "Your daughter is dead," they said. "Why bother the teacher anymore?"

³⁶Overhearing what they said, Jesus told him, "Don't be afraid; just believe."

³⁷He did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James and John the brother of James. ³⁸When they came to the home of the synagogue leader, Jesus saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly. ³⁹He went in and said to them, "Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep." ⁴⁰But they laughed at him.

After he put them all out, he took the child's father and mother and the disciples who were with him, and went in where the child was. ⁴¹He took her by the hand and said to her, "*Talitha koum!*" (which means "Little girl, I say to you, get up!"). ⁴²Immediately the girl stood up and began to walk around (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished. ⁴³He gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this, and told them to give her something to eat.

Where do you turn first when you are desperate? What is your first instinct?

As Jesus is going with Jairus to heal his daughter, he learns from his friends that she has died. But Jesus' admonition to Jairus is one for us in many situations: "Don't be afraid; just believe."

Who does Jairus believe: his friends or Jesus?

Then we see the scene when they arrive at the house. Everyone had declared the girl dead, and they'd already begun their mourning, crying and wailing loudly. Everyone is telling Jairus that his daughter is dead. Jesus is saying to ignore them, not be afraid and believe, and Jairus is choosing to believe Jesus.

Well, we know the end of the story. Jesus went in and brought the girl to her feet, alive and well. We must learn, like Jairus, to ignore other people when their words are at variance with God's word. We must be willing to ignore what some people may say to us, and in courage declare that we believe in Jesus.

There are always people around to give you negative, discouraging words. They may be well-intentioned, they may be your best friends. But if their words of advice and information are faith-destroying words, then you should ignore them.

What are faith-destroying words?

Proverbs 18:21: *The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit.*

Think of what would have happened to Jairus had he chosen to believe the words of death his friends were telling him.

Hebrews 3:12-13: *"See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness."*

An unbelieving heart is a sinful heart. Lack of faith is not something to take lightly.

Daily we should be encouraging one another. I wonder what effect we could have on the world if every Christian took this seriously—to encourage each other daily.

It takes 21 days to form a new habit. So, for the next three weeks, I challenge you to practice this simple discipline of encouraging at least one person every day.

What would be the effect on you if you decided to do that?

"Jesus doesn't raise this girl from death to life for show. He does it because he cares. And one day, likely when our bodies have eroded and our names have been erased, Jesus will call us back to life with the same power and tenderness he showed the bleeding woman and the dead little girl!" (*Jesus Through the Eyes of Women* p. 118).

This girl was only 12 years old, but she was old enough to remember what happened to her. I think it's safe to assume that this changed her life, just as it must have changed Jairus and his wife's lives.

A Disabled Woman

Luke 13:10 – 17:

¹⁰ On a Sabbath Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues, ¹¹ and a woman was there who had been crippled by a spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not straighten up at all. ¹² When Jesus saw her, he called her forward and said to her, “Woman, you are set free from your infirmity.” ¹³ Then he put his hands on her, and immediately she straightened up and praised God.

¹⁴ Indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, the synagogue leader said to the people, “There are six days for work. So come and be healed on those days, not on the Sabbath.”

¹⁵ The Lord answered him, “You hypocrites! Doesn’t each of you on the Sabbath untie your ox or donkey from the stall and lead it out to give it water? ¹⁶ Then should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years, be set free on the Sabbath day from what bound her?”

¹⁷ When he said this, all his opponents were humiliated, but the people were delighted with all the wonderful things he was doing.

Satan is always trying to keep us bound by something. . . to keep us emotionally or mentally crippled so that we can't be as effective as we should be for the Kingdom.

Can you imagine what life was like for that woman? Constant pain; difficult to walk; had to look up at everyone. Her condition made every part of her life more difficult.



She was in the synagogue listening to Jesus but note that she didn't ask Jesus to heal her. In fact, Jesus calls her over to him. That itself was unusual in a synagogue.

Jesus put his hands on her and immediately she stood up straight and praised God.

Wouldn't you think that everyone in the synagogue would have praised God with her? But not this crowd. Jesus really rakes them over the coals and calls them out for their hard hearts and lack of compassion.

Jesus just does not put up with hypocrisy, with false religion and fake piety. Are we ready as Christ-followers to call out obvious and blatant sin when we are confronted with it? Are we willing to take a stand against the terrible ungodly and unbiblical things that our culture is trying to call normal and acceptable? Are we ready to take whatever abuse or condemnation that may come our way if we stand true to God's word and his clearly set forth principles?

References are from the book, *Jesus Through the Eyes of Women* by Rebecca McLaughlin

Establishing a New Habit in 21 Days

For 21 days encourage at least one person every day. Keep a record to remind yourself. After 21 consecutive days, you will have established a new good habit and it will be transformational for you and all those you encourage.

Today I will encourage:

10/23

10/24

10/25

10/26

10/27

10/28

10/29

10/30

10/31

11/01

11/02

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