

GREATER THAN

"GREATER THAN OUR SUFFERING"

MATTHEW 9:18-22

This Week's Core Competency

Trinity – I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

2 Corinthians 13:14, *May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*

The intertwined stories of the dead girl and sick woman found in Matthew 9:18-26 are also found in Mark and Luke, the other two Synoptic Gospels. A quick glance at the three accounts reveals that Matthew's is by far the shortest. Keep in mind that most commentators believe Mark's Gospel was written first, and Matthew, as well as Luke, used Mark in the writing of their Gospels. One such commentator observes: "Matthew's characteristic abbreviation of Mark is even more evident here than usual. Matthew seems impatient of Mark's asides and details and gives only the bare essentials of the story. Thus he reduces the length of the first part of the story of the ruler's daughter by one-third and the next two parts (the hemorrhaging woman and the raising of the girl) by no less than two-thirds" (Donald A. Hagner, *Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 33a, Matthew 1-13*, 246).

When it comes to what Jesus said and did, the Gospel writers *selected, arranged, and adapted* Jesus'

Praiseworthy faith does not doubt God's ability to act, but it does not presume to know how he will choose to act.

– Craig L. Blomberg

words and works to fit their individual purposes, and it appears in the embedded story of the woman with the hemorrhage (vv. 20-22) that Matthew has cut through the details of what happened to focus on Jesus' ability to heal and the role of faith in appropriating that healing. The few simple words that coursed through the woman's mind as she approached Jesus signaled her remarkable faith: "If I only touch his cloak, I will be healed" (v. 22). She must have said them over and over again to herself as she made her way toward Christ. Then, at the moment she touched him, Matthew says, "Jesus turned and saw her. 'Take heart, daughter,' he said, 'your faith has healed you'" (v. 22). The moment she touched him her faith in him made her whole. The same commentator explains Matthew's focus with these words: "It is clear that from Matthew's perspective, it was Jesus who had made the woman whole again. But it was her faith, exemplified in her desire to touch Jesus' garment, that appropriated the healing power of Jesus. In this sense her faith had made her whole, had 'saved' her. Matthew stresses the immediate occurrence of the healing, after or by the word of Jesus (so Kalin, 44-45), in his added phrase, 'from that very hour' (cf. 8:13; 15:28; 17:18). Thus Jesus sovereignty announces that the woman has been healed, and from that hour she is healed" (249).

The implications of the woman's healing must be understood in the light of Matthew's purpose, which isn't to teach us how we can be physically healed just like she was, any more than it is to teach us how we can be raised from the dead just like Jarius' daughter was. This is suggested by the

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the word translated "healed" in verse 22. Jesus' words to the woman, "your faith has healed you," is more literally translated, "your faith has saved you." The NIV rendering suits the woman's condition, but the Greek term suggests more. In it Matthew's readers "undoubtedly could see implications for the woman's spiritual state as well" (Craig L. Blomberg, *Matthew*, NAC, 161). Evidently, the woman's physical healing marked the time of her spiritual salvation as well. Another commentator remarks: "The physical suffering of the hemorrhaging woman and the blind men [vv. 27-34] was real, and Jesus attended to their needs, but in pointing to their faith in him he indicates that there are deeper spiritual issues at stake. The crowds seem to want healing without attending to their deeper needs of salvation from sin. And to compound the problem, the crowds are harassed and helpless by religious leaders, who were oppressing them with religious activity that masked the sin problem.

"The concerns that we often think are our greatest needs may not be. As we put ourselves into God's hands, he understands our lives better than we do, and at times he is more concerned with the development of our hearts than he is with the comfort of our lives. There is no question that God enjoys giving good gifts to his children (7:11) and has compassion on our suffering (9:18-34). But sometimes what we think is the greatest gift does not always address the deepest needs in our lives. Our hearts have been tainted severely by the effects of sin, and sin hits the center of our affections and our ability to have a relationship with God. God is always concerned with what is best for us, but what is best may not always be what we think or pursue for our own well-being. *The healing of physical suffering is only cosmetic if a sinful heart is not given into the care of the Great Physician*" (Michael J. Wilkins, *The NIV Application Commentary: Matthew*, 376-77, italics added).

day 1 ENCOUNTER – read God's word to put yourself in touch with him.

Matthew 9:18-22

18 While he was saying this, a ruler 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.

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.

Cf., Mark 5:21-34

21 Jesus got into the boat again and went back to the other side of the lake, where a large crowd gathered around him on the shore. 22 Then a leader of the local synagogue, whose name was Jairus, arrived. When he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet, 23 pleading fervently with him. "My little daughter is dying," he said. "Please come and lay your hands on her; heal her so she can live."

24 Jesus went with him, and all the people followed, crowding around him. 25 A woman in the crowd had suffered for twelve years with constant bleeding. 26 She had suffered a great deal from many doctors, and over the years she had spent everything she had to pay them, but she had gotten no better. In fact, she had gotten worse. 27 She had heard about Jesus, so she came up behind him through the crowd and touched his robe. 28 For she thought to herself, "If I can just touch his robe, I will be healed." 29 Immediately the bleeding stopped, and she could feel in her body that she had been healed of her terrible condition.

30 Jesus realized at once that healing power had gone out from him, so he turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my robe?"

31 His disciples said to him, "Look at this crowd pressing around you. How can you ask, 'Who touched me?'"

32 But he kept on looking around to see who had done it. 33 Then the frightened woman, trembling at the realization of what had happened to her, came and fell to her knees in front of him and told him what she had done. 34 And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace. Your suffering is over." (NIV 2011)

EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

* Bracket "While he was saying this" in v. 18.

* Circle "ruler" in v. 18.

* Circle "knelt" in v. 18.

* Box "but" indicating *contrast* in v. 18.

* Underline "just then" in v. 20.

* Circle "bleeding" in v. 20.

* Circle "behind him" in v. 20.

* Bracket "edge of his cloak" in v. 21.

* Circle "daughter" in v. 22.

* Circle "healed" in vv. 21-22.

* Underline "from that moment" in v. 22.

day 2

EXPLORE – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. What is "this" and *where* is Jesus saying it?
2. What kind of "ruler" came to Jesus, and *what* does the fact he "knelt" before him signify?
3. Explain the *contrast* in verse 18.
4. "Just then" is *just when*?
5. If the woman's condition wasn't life threatening, what made it so serious?
6. Why would the woman approach Jesus so *timidly*?
7. What makes you think the woman's desire to touch Jesus' garment was motivated by *faith* or by *superstition*?
8. Put what Jesus meant by "your faith has healed you" in your own words.
9. The woman was healed "from that moment." *What "moment"* was that and so *what*?
10. **Discussion:** Compare Matthew's account with Mark's account and then talk about what Matthew accomplished by leaving out so many of the details included by Mark.

day 3

EXAMINE – an explanation of the message to better understand the meaning of the passage.

Matthew 9:18-26 contains the intertwined stories of a dead girl and a sick woman. In the first, Jesus raises a synagogue ruler's daughter, who has just died, and in the second, Jesus heals a woman, who has been subject to bleeding for twelve years. The second miracle is embedded in the first and both take place after Jesus and his disciples cross back over the lake and return to Capernaum (9:1; cf., 8:1, 28).

The narrative opens with the ruler's urgent request: "My daughter has just died. But come and put your hand on her, and she will live." If this "synagogue ruler" named "Jarius" (cf., Mk 5:22; Lk 8:41) is connected with the synagogue in Capernaum, which seems likely, he is no doubt familiar with Jesus and knows what Jesus is reputed to be doing throughout Galilee (4:23). The ruler's posture suggests what he thinks of Jesus. By kneeling before the Lord, he shows him immense honor, since kneeling is the appropriate position one takes before God. The extreme urgency of his request is matched only by his strong confidence in Jesus' ability to restore his daughter's life. According to one commentator, "The ruler has the same confident trust in Jesus' ability to heal as did the leper (8:2-4), the centurion (8:5-13), and the paralytic and his friends (9:2-7), but his trust is profound enough to believe that Jesus can raise his daughter from the dead" (Wilkins, 370)—even though as yet he has not raised anyone. But as the two, along with the twelve, get up to leave, an unnamed woman inserts herself into the narrative.

She is a woman with an enormous problem and enormous faith in Jesus to solve it. While the hemorrhaging she has suffered for twelve years has not proven life-threatening, it has proven stigmatizing and has left her an outcast from society. She is unclean, and anyone who comes in contact with her is rendered unclean and therefore,

unable, like her, to participate in virtually any religious or community activity. But she, like Jarius, has remarkable confidence in Jesus. As she approaches the Lord, the thought, "If I only touch his cloak, I will be healed," runs repeatedly through her mind. One translation renders verse 21, "For she *kept saying* to herself, 'If only I touch his cloak, I will be healed'" (NET). Her mission is simply to touch one of the blue tassels on the corner of Jesus' outer garment (Nu 15:37).

One writer comments: "Bleeding rendered a Jewish person ritually unclean (cf. Lev. 15:19-33). She should have kept away from other people, and not touched them, since by doing so she made them unclean. However, hope of healing led her to push her way through the crowd so that she might 'touch' Jesus ('His garment'). She apparently believed that since Jesus' touch healed people, if she touched Him she would get the same result. 'The fringe of Jesus' 'cloak' (v. 20) was probably one of the four tassels that the Jews wore on the four corners of their cloaks to remind them to obey God's commands (Num. 15:37-41; Deut. 22:12; cf. Matt. 23:5)" (Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on Matthew," 2016 ed., 173, www.soniclight.com).

Once her mission is accomplished, she is healed and Jesus turns to her with these words of assurance: "'Take heart daughter,' he said, 'your faith has healed you'" (v. 22). Now, there's nothing magical about faith per se. Jesus heals her, but her faith *in him* is the channel whereby she receives his grace. Matthew is careful to make that perfectly clear by adding, "And the woman was healed from that moment" (v. 22). Given Matthew's word translated "healed," it's likely that he has in mind both the woman's physical healing and her spiritual salvation.

The Message of the Passage

Jesus, the Messiah and Son of God, saves the one who comes to him in faith asking for deliverance.

day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you in his word.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James teaches in James 1:22. Reflect on 3 "living questions" to apply what you have learned this week.

- **Journal your thoughts on the passage:**

–Write about how God is making himself known to you . . .

–Write about how God wants to change you . . .

–Write about how God is calling you to change your world . . .

“Greater Than Our Suffering”
(Use the space below for Sunday’s message notes)

notes **N** STUDY – the commentaries to answer the questions.

v. 18 **While he was saying** . . . Matthew links the intertwined miracles that follow to the question of fasting in verses 14-17, indicating that the coming of Jesus marks the beginning of a new era of rejoicing. "Thus the story of the raising of the dead girl (vv 18-19; 23-26) is interrupted by the inserted story of the healing of the hemorrhaging woman (vv 20-22). These stories make clear the point of the preceding pericope that the present is a unique era of incomparable joy, the anticipation of the very blessings of the eschaton" (Hagner, 246).

v. 18 **ruler** Cf., "one of the synagogue rulers, named Jairus" (Mk 5:22). "It is not easy to know how to understand the word translated a ruler; it certainly means an important man in the community, a leader of some sort, but the term is not precise. Most interpreters understand the man to be a synagogue official and this is probably correct. Mark calls him a ruler of the synagogue, and this is what Matthew implies. The synagogue was the center of local life, civil as well as religious to use our terms (though first-century people did not put a sharp distinction between the two), and a man who is designated a ruler, without any qualification, would have been one of the leaders in the local synagogue" (Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, 228). Perhaps Jarius was responsible for the order and progress of worship in Capernaum. "That, in view of his child's imminent death, and with the knowledge he had of the 'mighty deeds' commonly reported of Jesus, Jarius should have applied to Him, can the less surprise us, when we remember how often Jesus must, with consent and by invitation of this Ruler, have spoken in the Synagogue; and what irresistible impression His words had made" (Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, 1:619).

v. 18 **knelt** "This ruler approached Jesus courteously: he bowed down to him, which certainly indicates respect and may even mean that he worshipped him" (Morris, 228). "Only Matthew describes how Jarius 'knelt'-his characteristic word for worship" (Blomberg, 160).

v. 20 **bleeding** "Most likely this woman's condition is menorrhagia, a disease in which the menstrual flow is abnormally prolonged, which usually produces anemia as well. This condition is all the more difficult because she would be considered ritually unclean and excluded from normal social and religious relations, since others making contact with her would also become unclean (Lev. 15:25-30)" (Wilkins, 371). "This woman not only faced the inconvenience and physical danger of such regular loss of blood but also suffered the stigma of ritual uncleanness in that culture and consequent ostracism (see esp. Lev 15:25-30)" (Hagner, 248). "It was probably this that made her take the approach she did" (Morris, 229).

v. 20 **behind him** "Why is the woman so much more timid than the man? [i.e., Jarius] Because she is a woman and because of the nature of her illness. Her medical problem renders her continually unclean according to Lev. 15:25. Anyone who touches her will contract her uncleanness and be disqualified from various religious activities . . . It seems probable that her timidity is due to her sex. In Jewish society, women ranked little ahead of children and slaves. Her inferior status prevents her from approaching Jesus with the confidence that he will treat her as human being of equal dignity. Jesus' word to her, 'Be confident daughter,' is not paternalistic but affectionate. [cf., "son" in 9:2] It assures her that he does indeed regard her as a person worthy of respect" (Douglas R. A. Hare, *Matthew*, Interpretation, 106).

v. 21 **edge of his cloak** "She approaches Jesus and touches 'the edge [*kraspedon*] of his cloak.' The term *kraspedon* is rendered 'tassel' in 23:5, which may be the meaning here as well. On the four corners of a garment worn by men were 'tassels' attached with a blue cord, conforming to Numbers 15:37-42 and Deuteronomy 22:12. These tassels reminded the wearer to obey God's commands and to be holy to God" (Wilkins, 371). "The idea of being healed through even the garments worn by a holy person was not so unusual in that culture (cf. 14:36; Mark 6:56; Acts 19:12). It should not be thought of as quasi-magical. If healing power could be experienced by touching a special person directly (e.g., Mark 3:10; Luke 6:19), then it could also extend to touching what had touched that person. If there is a slight hint of magic in this, the woman's strategy is at least commendable as a sign of deep faith in the power of Jesus" (Hagner, 249).

vv. 21-22 **healed** "The word for 'healed' in vv. 21-22 is more literally 'saved'" (Blomberg, 161). "Matthew may indicate that an even more profound event has transpired in this woman's life because both Jesus' statement ('has healed') and Matthew's narrative ('was healed') use the verb *sozo*, which normally is used in the sense of 'saved.' It may well be that her act of faith in coming to Jesus for healing is also the moment in which she exercise faith in Jesus as the One who can save her from her sins (cf., 1:21)" (Wilkins, 372).

v. 22. **from that moment** "From that moment the sufferer was made well, the specification of that hour making it clear that it was Jesus' saving power that was responsible and not some spontaneous cure" (Morris, 231).

Family Talk

Encouragement from one parent's heart to another

The truth of the matter is that bad things happen. In our text today one man loses his daughter to an illness and we learn a woman has been suffering for twelve years with a sickness. Wondering why evil seems to prevail and why bad things happen to good people is normal. For kids (and adults) it can be hard to reckon suffering and a loving God. Praise the Lord we have answers to this in His Word. We know, because of Adam and Eve's sin in the garden, we are all sinners and live in a sin-filled world. We also know that sin causes suffering and death. Sometimes bad things happen because of the consequences of our choices. Sometimes they happen because of other people's actions. Some suffering, like sickness or earthquakes, just happen because we live in a fallen world. Regardless of the origin, suffering hurts. As parents we have the privilege of reminding our kids that Jesus has promised He will be with us through everything (Matthew 28:20). We also have a beautiful promise that He is able to make good come of bad (Romans 8:28). In our suffering, His desire is that we learn to lean into Him and let Him use the circumstance to bring Him glory and make us more like Him. I'm praying for you as you lead your child this week through the good and bad!

What Does The Bible Say

Weekly Verse: Read Matthew 9:18-22

1. What did the ruler ask of Jesus?
2. How did Jesus respond?
3. What did Jesus tell the woman who touched his cloak?

What Do You Think

The ruler's daughter had already died when he came to Jesus. What must he have believed about Jesus in order to ask Him to come?

What R U Going To Do

Who do you know that is sick right now? (If you don't know anyone, you can do this for a stranger in a nursing home or hospital.) Make that person a colorful card reminding him that Jesus will always be with us!

Core Comp

Trinity - I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Memory Verse

Psalm 23:4 - *Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me, your rod and your staff they comfort me.*

KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized my verse _____, completed *Scrolls* _____, brought Bible _____, brought a friend _____.

Series Discipleship Challenge located in KidPix Store.

Child's name _____ Grade ____ Parent's signature _____

Earn 1 token by completing the PantegoKids Bible study and another token by reciting the memory verse.

Questions: Kids@pantego.org

30 CORE COMPETENCIES

10 CORE BELIEFS

Trinity 2 Corinthians 13:14

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation By Grace Ephesians 2:8-9

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible 2 Timothy 3:16-17

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God Psalm 121:1-2

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ John 1:12

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church Ephesians 4:15-16

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity John 3:16

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion Psalm 82:3-4

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity John 14:1-4

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship 1 Timothy 6:17-19

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

10 CORE PRACTICES

Worship Psalm 95:1-7

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer Psalm 66:16-20

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study Hebrews 4:12

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness Matthew 6:33

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts Romans 12:4-6

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Biblical Community Acts 2:44-47

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Giving Away My Time Colossians 3:17

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Money

2 Corinthians 8:7

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith Ephesians

6:19-20

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life Romans 12:1

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

10 CORE VIRTUES

Joy John 15:11

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace Philippians 4:6-7

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

Faithfulness Proverbs 3:3-4

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Self-Control Titus 2:11-13

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Humility Philippians 2:3, 4

I choose to esteem others above myself.

Love 1 John 4:10-12

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Patience Proverbs 14:29

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness 1 Thess. 5:15

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Gentleness Philippians 4:5

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Hope Hebrews 6:19-20

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

About the Authors

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Wendy Hollabaugh (B.S.W. University of Texas at Arlington) is the Children's Minister at Pantego Bible Church. Wendy has over ten years of experience in Children's Ministry. She has a passion for leading families to connect with God and each other. She enjoys creating compelling environments where kids fall in love with God and His Truth. Wendy and her husband, Greg, are also involved in their own personal youth ministry as they are training their three teenagers, Hannah, Aaron and Noah.



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