

Two classic passages on the nature and mystery of faith:

**Mark 5:21-43** - *The miracles of healing and raising from the dead as study points for issues relating to faith and wholeness* - "And when Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered about him, and he was beside the sea. [22] Then came one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name, and seeing him, he fell at his feet [23] and implored him earnestly, saying, "My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well and live." [24] And he went with him. And a great crowd followed him and thronged about him. [25] And there was a woman who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years, [26] and who had suffered much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was no better but rather grew worse. [27] She had heard the reports about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment. [28] For she said, "If I touch even his garments, I will be made well." [29] And immediately the flow of blood dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. [30] And Jesus, perceiving in himself that power had gone out from him, immediately turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my garments?" [31] And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing around you, and yet you say, 'Who touched me?' " [32] And he looked around to see who had done it. [33] But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling and fell down before him and told him the whole truth. [34] And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease." [35] While he was still speaking, there came from the ruler's house some who said, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?" [36] But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the ruler of the synagogue, "Do not fear, only believe." [37] And he allowed no one to follow him except Peter and James and John the brother of James. [38] They came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and Jesus saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. [39] And when he had entered, he said to them, "Why are you making a commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but sleeping." [40] And they laughed at him. But he put them all outside and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him and went in where the child was. [41] Taking her by the hand he said to her, "Talitha cumi," which means, "Little girl, I say to you, arise." [42] And immediately the girl got up and began walking (for she was twelve years of age), and they were immediately overcome with amazement. [43] And he strictly charged them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat."

1) **THE WOMAN WITH THE ISSUE OF BLOOD** (Mark 5:24-34)

There is a uniqueness to the healing of the woman with the issue of blood. This is the only time where, as far as we can tell, Jesus heals *unintentionally*. That is, He made no conscious effort to reach out to this woman. She reached out to touch Him.

- a) *Perhaps we're to learn of the power of the sheer presence of Jesus.* The presence of God is focussed in the person of Jesus. Things happen for our good when we draw close to Him. We should never make the mistake of allowing distressing times to cut us off from Christ. We should keep close ties with His Body, the church. There is a wonderful wholeness that comes from pressing close to Him, especially during times of hunger and need. In our hectic age we need to take *proximity to Christ* very seriously.

- b) **Perhaps we're meant to see the persistence of one relatively insignificant person surrounded by other, more visible needs.** Other people touched, or at least bumped into, Jesus in that thronging crowd. Why (as far as the text tells us) was this woman the only one healed? I believe we're meant to notice the significance of **intent** in our approach to Jesus.

Like many others in that crowd, you can **touch** Jesus without **reaching** for Jesus and thus remain unchanged. The heart must be hungry and the heart must be persistent. We see the power of **keeping our attention** on Jesus Christ at all times.

- c) **Perhaps the greatest barrier we must push through is our own discouragement.** This woman is a classic picture of this. In addition to not being well, she carries the daily grind of 12 years of doctor's appointments. She has repeatedly been denied health. Somehow she still carries hope in her heart in the presence of Jesus. This is the faith Jesus felt in her touch.

## 2) THE RAISING TO LIFE OF THE OFFICIAL'S DAUGHTER (Mark 5:21-23,35-43)

- a) **Part of the significance of this miracle is that great faith is present in the heart of one who was part of the crowd that typically hated and persecuted Jesus the most.** Jairus was not just any old official. He was a **"synagogue official."** He was part of the crowd hunting Jesus down to His death. Faith can rise above prejudice and bigotry if the heart is open to the truth. Jesus didn't treat this official with any less love and compassion and attention than anyone else to whom He ministered.
- b) **Jesus brings the daughter back to life (38-43) - How much faith is necessary for Jesus to work, and who has to exercise it?** Those are important questions to consider when we read this account. Most of the onlookers didn't believe there was any hope after the girl died (5:40 - **"And they laughed at him."** Certainly this was not an environment of belief, yet this one ruler's faith stands out from the crowd. This seemed to impress Jesus right off the bat (**verse 23**). Also, this girl can't exercise faith for herself. We learn the faith of one person can accomplish great things for another. There are some tremendous implications in this for our prayers for those who don't yet believe - unsaved loved ones, missionary endeavours, etc.

Also, no situation is beyond reach. We are constantly encouraged in miracles like these not to **put our own limits** on the power of God. I'm sure this official was starting to wonder just what he was getting into as he followed Jesus into that little room (**see how Jesus has to encourage his trust - 36 - "Do not fear, only believe!"**). It's a beautiful example of His concern for this nervous seeker.

- c) **Notice also that little needs get as much attention as great ones (verse 43) -** How easy it would have been for this resurrected body to be quickly paraded around as proof of a great miracle. Jesus remembered that even resurrected bodies have to eat! It's the kind of attention our heavenly Father gives to our needs today. Jesus' command not to publicize this miracle is also significant. Unlike many healing ministries today, Jesus treated the needy as **ends in themselves** rather than a means to His own recognition and advancement.