

Mark 5:21-43: Interruptions

Children's Message:

(create Get well soon cards)

Have you ever felt afraid, or sad, or very tired? When I was little, I would sometimes feel lonely, but I had a few things that gave me comfort. One was a song my mother would sing to me. Do you have a song like that? Some people call them lullabies.

I also had this (show blanket/stuffed animal and tell them your story of how it comforted you.)

These stories are hard ones to hear. There is a father named Jairus, and his daughter was very sick. I wonder how he felt. I wonder if he had anything to comfort him. And there was a woman who had an illness that caused her to bleed and feel sick. I wonder if she had something to comfort her, or if there was nothing that helped her feel better?

The one thing both of these people had was faith that Jesus was a healer. The woman knew in her heart with all of the faith she had, that if she touched Jesus she would be healed. And she was. The daughter was healed too, because of the faith of the people asking for healing.

We can't always be healed though. But, whatever we struggle with, however scared we might feel sometimes, Jesus is our comforter. Jesus stays with us. Jesus cries with us. Jesus comforts us. Even when we are afraid, we can trust Jesus.

*Prayer shawls – this is something of comfort that our church gives out to people when they are sick or scared or hurt. **quilts?? **Prayer Pillows?

Our hands are important for healing as we use them to care for and help others.

Discuss who they might give their healing hand card to and why to that person.

Adult Message:

Dear friends, grace to you and peace from God our father and his son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen

This has been one of those weeks. I had planned to get so much done this week...return emails, write some curriculum, finish the Lenten family devotional that I am creating, and attend some Aitkin basketball games. I love connecting with people and supporting our youth in their sports or activities or whatever they do.

And then my oldest child got a fever. And then my two younger daughters were waking up during the night. And before we knew it we had made 7 trips to the doctor's office for 3 sick children that resulted in 3 ear infections, a case of strep throat, rsv in the baby, and lingering fevers in all three children that have resulted in sleepless nights, and no day care, so my husband and I did a bunch of tag-teaming and juggling our ministry and job schedules to make sure our children were taken care of.

Needless to say, I didn't get much done this week. Sick kids interrupted my plan for the week and my goals of all I would accomplish.

Interruptions. We know about them all too well in this world that we live in, and, unfortunately, this is not a new concept of life. My interruptions in my life this week were actually pretty small in the grand scheme of things.

In our gospel lesson, we actually see lots of lives being interrupted. First we have Jarius. Jarius was a leader of the local synagogue, whose life was suddenly interrupted when his daughter got sick. Jarius had heard about Jesus and that he could work miracles, and, well, Jarius was desperate. Immediately when Jesus arrives on shore, Jarius approaches Jesus and starts pleading with him. "My little daughter is dying!. Please come and lay your hands on her!".

Jesus feels the urgency, panic, and fear in Jarius' voice and so Jesus begins to follow Jairus to his home to help his sick and dying daughter.

And as they started on their way, along with hundreds of other people who were following them, another interruption happens. But this time, it is Jesus who gets interrupted as he was on his way to heal this sick child.

"Who touched me?" Jesus asked boldly.

People looked around confused, and Jesus' disciples even look a bit annoyed. "Jesus...there are hundreds of people surrounding you. Any one of them could have "touched" you".

But Jesus was adamant. "'No, I felt healing power go out of me to someone. Who touched me?"

And lo and behold, a woman, trembling with fear, came forward and confessed to Jesus that she touched him. She is the one that touched him because she just knew...she believed...that if she could just touch him, she would be cured of her disease that she had been living with for 12 years! 12 years!! This woman's life...her hopes and dreams...had all been interrupted for the past 12 years because she had a disease...she had been bleeding...and in that time, it made her unfit and unclean, and an outcast to the entire society. HER life had been interrupted by her disease, and she told all of this to Jesus. And Jesus said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace and be healed of your disease".

3 different interruptions...Jarius, Jesus, and the bleeding woman...all in a matter of minutes in our gospel story today. Interruptions in life. They happen all the time.

Interruptions of life were just as common during Jesus' day as they are in our lives today.

And I'm not just talking about physical illnesses, though those can indeed be some of the hardest interruptions to deal with. But it's possible our life's interruptions may also be failed relationships, or a failed marriage, or not enough finances, or losing a job, or a child who is disobedient, or a car accident, or a parent that we just can't get along with. These are all interruptions that literally interrupt our hopes, dreams, and plans for our lives.

When we feel like Jairus, or his daughter, or the bleeding woman; when the events in our lives are beyond our ability to cope...how are we supposed to continue on and deal with these unwanted interruptions in life?

Well, if we are like the crowd who was there with Jesus that day, maybe we laugh at Jesus. The crowd laughed at Jesus because they didn't believe that He could heal Jairus' daughter. Many of us are like that crowd...because really, how can Jesus heal something that appears to be so far gone? Or maybe we snicker, because we don't know what else to do, or we shut down, or we lash out. We may shake our fists at God; lots of biblical characters did. We may turn our backs on God, have nothing to do with him and with his church anymore. I've seen that a lot. Despair can even move us to harm ourselves because we see no hope in the future. The story of Jairus' daughter becomes a laboratory for us to see ourselves. How do we cope when life overwhelms us? How do you cope when unwelcomed situations or circumstances interrupt your life?

It's possible that Jesus will deliver us the way we want through the power of His Holy Spirit. There are countless numbers of stories of people who have had miraculous cures from disease, people who have gotten better with no physical reason. People have had tumors shrink, pain go away, tissues which were unhealthy became healthy. People who have had an anonymous donations made in their name, or their house payment miraculously paid, or food show up on their doorstep when they had just eaten their last loaf of bread. Jesus still does work miracles! Christ does deliver.

But sometimes, miracles come in other ways too.....ways that are not necessarily the way that we might have had in mind. Perhaps when we bring our life interruptions to God, we

also need to ask for the courage and strength from His presence to face the troubles in our lives. We may not get the kind of deliverance that WE want. But instead, we may get the strength, the courage, the power to live, the stamina to walk the road of life with that certain trouble walking along with us....or the blessing to be all of that to someone else.

This past week, the high school girls played Ogilvie in basketball, and during the varsity game, a girl from Ogilvie went down. Our team was a little shook up by it and didn't know what to do. So the option they chose was to take a knee and pray. Steph Miller captured this moment:



As we live in this world, we need to remember that God is here. He has not caused our brokenness, but he is there to share it with us. God shares our sorrow. God shares our pain. And he puts people in our lives to help us through things as well. One of the great blessings of being part of a congregation like this one is that nobody ever weeps alone. We are family, and if you suffer, you have fellow sufferers on the journey with you.

One day, when God's Kingdom prevails, when all the Saints are gathered in God's presence, we will laugh with Jesus. We will smile and be free of unwanted interruptions. Scripture tells us that all the tears will be wiped away, and only love will prevail. I look forward to seeing Jesus, laughing with all his children...lifting them up, completely freed from all our life "interruptions". Until then, we have each other...and the promises of God that we will continue to hold onto. May this be enough for the journey.

Amen.