

14. God's compassion for all

September 23, 2007

Even though I have fairly consistent back pains, allergy problems and tendonitis on my arms close to last thirty years, but I am rather healthy. I am grateful to the Lord for giving me a good health. But time to time, the Lord allows me to be flat on my back to get my attention or make me to realize that there are many people who are going through terrible physical infirmities. During that time, my heart becomes sensitive and compassionate to those who are sick constantly or having terminal diseases. You might say that it is a 'compassion' class 101.

I cannot even fathom what the parents would go through while they face their own child's eminent death or death notice of their child by someone.

We all have heard that parents are supposed to die first, not burying their children. They would be so numb, disheartened, full of unanswered questions and wondering if there is anything they could to change the situation.

I was going to cover a lot more originally, but I realize that there is a great lesson for us to learn from Jesus who extended His compassion to two contrasting people socially, but they both desperately needed Jesus.

A. A FATHER WHO NEEDED JESUS

Luke 8:40-42 So it was, when Jesus returned, that the multitude welcomed Him, for they were all waiting for Him. 41 And behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue. And he fell down at Jesus' feet and begged Him to come to his house, 42 for he had an only daughter about twelve years of age, and she was dying. But as He went, the multitudes thronged Him.

Where the people of the Gerasenes couldn't wait for Jesus to leave, the Galileans of Capernaum could hardly wait for Him to step ashore. One distraught father and one lonely and desperate woman in particular were especially anxious for Jesus' arrival.

Jairus, as a synagogue official, was responsible for the administration of the synagogue and the ordering of public worship. He was like a senior pastor of a church in modern days. He had reached the highest post that life could give him in the respect of his fellow men.

He had been enjoying the presence of his precious only daughter for twelve years in his life. Now he was facing her death. Death is no respecter of persons or position. Jairus' good standing in the community, his success and money were all powerless to hold the tide of death that was slowly creeping over his only daughter.

It took a great deal of humility and courage for Jairus not only to come to Jesus, but also to ask His help at his feet. Because by this time the Jewish religious leaders were plotting to kill Him. He begged this Miracle Worker of Galilee to come over to his home to heal his dying daughter.

Without a word, Jesus set out for the man's house. He didn't tell Jairus to bring his daughter back at two o'clock for an appointment. He simply went. Jesus had compassion on this dying daughter and desperate father.

B. A SICK WOMAN WHO NEEDED JESUS

Luke 8:43-48 Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, 44 came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped. 45 And Jesus said, "Who touched Me?" When all denied it, Peter and those with him said, "Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?' " 46 But Jesus said, "Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me." 47 Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately. 48 And He said to her, "Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace."

As Jesus was making His way to the home of Jairus, there was a woman in the crowd who had been sick for 12 years. It almost appeared that Jesus was unaware of her in the crowd. But in reality, He had been waiting for her.

While the little girl had brought delight into Jairus' family for twelve years, this woman had suffered alone in darkness during that miserable time.

This woman had spent all her money to a bunch of quack doctors trying to find a cure for her disease. It also affected her spiritually, because the hemorrhage made her ceremonially defiled and unable to participate in the religious life of the nation. She was defiled, destitute, discouraged and desperate. I wouldn't be a bit surprised if she was rejected by her husband due to this problem. But she came to Jesus.

Once from somewhere she had heard a Jewish myth that if you touch the hem of a prophet which was known as tassels, your sickness will be cured. Her faith was almost superstitious, but the Lord met it where it was.

We need to remember that when she touched His garment, Jesus wasn't made unclean, but the woman was made whole. When we come to Jesus with our sin, and lay it upon Him, it doesn't make Him a sinner, but it makes us clean.

How could this woman be healed by touching the tassels of Jesus' garment? Because even though her faith had elements of error and superstition, she believed in the healing power of Jesus, and the tassels of His garment served as a point of contact for her faith. But more than anything, her faith was in Jesus, and the object of faith is much more important than the quality of faith.

V47 says, "*when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him,*" this probably means that Jesus was looking right at her when He said, "Somebody touched Me."

She was fully expecting another cold rebuke from a rabbi, but Jesus' eyes said otherwise. They were filled with love for her.

The woman's testimony was a rebuke to the multitude. You can be a part of the crowd and never get any blessing from being near Jesus. It is one thing to "press Him" and another thing to "touch Him" by faith. We may not have strong faith, but we do have a strong Savior, and He responds even to a touch at the hem of His garment. Jesus had compassion on this desperate lonely woman.

C. THE DEATH OF JARIUS' LITTLE GIRL

Luke 8:49-51 While He was still speaking, someone came from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, "Your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the Teacher." 50 But when Jesus heard it, He answered him, saying, "Do not be afraid; only believe, and she will be made well."

We can imagine how Jarius' heart sank when he heard this. He must have thought, "I knew this was taking too long! I knew Jesus shouldn't have wasted His time on this silly woman!" We sometimes think that God has waited too long, and that things are beyond fixing. But God always knows what He is doing. He is never too late and never loses control.

Jesus gives Jarius two things to do:

1) Do not be afraid.

2) Only believe.

We often can't really believe in Jesus until we give Him all of our fears and concerns.

The only thing that Jarius had to believe in was Jesus' word. Everything and everybody else told him that his daughter was gone forever. This is both the best place to be and the hardest place to be.

D. FROM DEATH TO LIFE

Luke 8:51-56 When He came into the house, He permitted no one to go in except Peter, James, and John, and the father and mother of the girl. 52 Now all wept and mourned for her; but He said, "Do not weep; she is not dead, but sleeping." 53 And they ridiculed Him, knowing that she was dead. But He put them all outside, took her by the hand and called, saying, "Little girl, arise." 55 Then her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He commanded that she be given something to eat. 56 And her parents were astonished, but He charged them to tell no one what had happened.

The scene at the home would have discouraged anybody. The professional mourners were already there, weeping and wailing loudly. They are from "Mourners-R-Us". And a crowd of friends and neighbors had gathered. Jewish people in that day lost no time or energy in showing and sharing their grief. The body of the deceased would be buried that same day, after being washed and anointed.

Jesus took command of the situation and told the crowd to stop weeping because the girl was not dead but asleep. Of course she was dead, because her spirit had left her body. But to Jesus, death was only sleep. This image is often used in the New Testament to describe the death of believers.

Mark 5:41 Then He took the child by the hand, and said to her, "Talitha, cumi," which is translated, "Little girl, I say to you, arise."

This was not a magic formula but a word of command from the Lord of life and death. Jesus simply commanded her spirit to return to her body and even death obeyed Him. She was a teenager, the first thing after coming back from death was eating.

This is a preview of the resurrection of the believers of Jesus Christ. He saves lost sinners and raises them from spiritual death. The Gospels record three such incidents that people coming back from death, though Jesus probably performed more.

In each instance, the person raised gave evidence of life. The widow's son began to speak in Luke 7:15, Jairus' daughter walked and ate food, and Lazarus was loosed from the graveclothes in John 11:44. When a lost sinner is raised from his spiritual death to a born-again believer, you can tell it by his speech as a Christian, his walk with Christ, his appetite for the truth of the Bible and his change of spiritual clothes. You cannot hide true life in Christ Jesus.

Can you imagine how grateful Jarius and his wife were to Jesus for what He had done to bring their daughter back to life?

E. I KNOW WHAT YOU ARE THINKING

I know what you are thinking right now. Some of you might be in terrible physical infirmities or you may have your loved ones in that situation. You believe in God that He can heal you or loved one at any time if He chooses. Then why doesn't He do that? I don't know. The only thing I can say is that God is our Comfort and He has a reason that we don't and cannot understand. But I can trust Him.

F. APPLICATIONS

Some of us are uncomfortable with the situation where you find yourself with somebody who is sick or dying or his family member is dying, because you don't know what to do. Here are some practical applications for you utilize:

1) Just be there physically if you can.

You don't have to be a theologian to comfort or encourage someone. As a matter of fact, when you are there, the less said, the better it is. Don't think that you have to fill silence with your words. If you feel like, cry with them.

Romans 12:15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.

2) Put your arms around their shoulders and let them know you love them and you are there for them. Ladies, you do this to ladies. Men, you do this to men.

Job's three friends did very well until they opened their big fat mouths. When you feel led to speak by the Holy Spirit, speak briefly and gently. They don't need a sermon, cliché or even quoting typical Bible verses from us. Be sensitive to the Spirit of God so that He can comfort them through you.

3) Extend your compassion to others as much as you want God to extend His compassion to you.

In my cases, I want a lot of His compassion, so I need to extend a lot of compassion to others.

4) Check back with them through phone calls and visits weeks later and months later when everybody forgets them.

That is when they really need the assurance from God through His people.

5) Even if you are in need of compassion from others, extend your compassion to those who are in the same or even a worse situation.

You will be pleasantly surprised that you will become a focal point of God's blessings.