

## **The Sufficiency of Christ Pt. 1**

Mark 5:21-34 (02/15/15)

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What a joy to walk with Christ through this Gospel. To take the time every Sunday morning to hear Him, see Him in action, to be in His presence as He walks along pressed by all these people, as He works with all kinds of people and ministers to them. Wow! What a joy this is. I'm glad we have a good ten or so more chapters. Every week it's exciting.

We've watched Him in the sufficiency of His power and love every step of the way. Jesus never fails. He displayed his sufficiency for those desperate disciples in the midst of a killer storm. He demonstrated His sufficiency for that desperate fellow infested with a legion of demons as He cast them into those slabs of bacon that ran down to the hill, drowned, and turned into fish food.

This morning we come to two more desperate people. Two totally different people, at both ends of the social ladder, one respected, one rejected, but both desperate, and we're going to see Jesus' sufficiency in both cases. Jesus never fails. He stands unique among all human beings. No one ever came in desperation to Jesus with a problem He could not handle. Doctors are often stumped about a person's condition. We need second and third opinions, and then we may not get answers. But when anyone comes to Jesus, regardless of the guilt of their souls, regardless of the vileness of their behavior and the wickedness of their hearts, Jesus is able and sufficient to meet our needs. And ultimately, of course, when He gives us new bodies, all our diseases and death will be swallowed up in victory.

This morning we see two people coming in desperate need. They don't come in pride or arrogance with excuses and blaming or with a hard heart, but with desperate hearts. They are coming to Him because their problems are beyond human power. And Jesus is the only One who is able to meet them in their desperation. That's exactly where God wants us to be – desperate. If you are, Jesus will never fail you!

### **Here comes Jesus, the One who never fails – v. 21**

*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.*

The mob is by the sea looking out, seeing that little speck of a boat making the four to five mile trip from the eastern shore to the northwestern shore of Galilee. Here He comes! The great crowd of who knows how many are eager to see what He's going to do next. Most are curiosity seekers enamored by the Man. There are so many people He stays along the shoreline.

### **Here comes a desperate father – vv. 22-24**

*One of the synagogue officials named Jairus came up, and on seeing Him, fell at His feet and implored Him earnestly, saying, "My little daughter is at the point of death; please come and lay Your hands on her, so that she will get well and live." And He went off with him; and a large crowd was following Him and pressing in on Him.*

Jarius' position – He is a supervisor of the synagogue, arranging the services and making sure everything is done decently and in order. Although not rabbis, synagogue officials were highly respected in the community. We don't know if he had been opposed to Jesus earlier as were the Pharisees, but right now he's got a desperate situation on his hands and he comes to Jesus.

While he was a synagogue official and very familiar with the Law and all the Jewish writings, one thing the Law could not do was keep his daughter from dying. The Law cannot bring life, or make one clean. Just like no amount of law can still storms on the sea or bring sanity to a crazed, demonized madman! The Law never brought spiritual life and spiritual power to anyone. There's no power in Law, whether God's

Law or man's law. You can lay a Bible directly on top of a corpse, and nothing will happen. But when Jesus lays His hand on a corpse, you have life! Jesus is sufficient and never fails!

Jarius' posture – Here comes Jairus, and I want you to see His posture! He comes up to Jesus and falls at His feet. He is desperate. He isn't looking around embarrassed, wondering what people will think. We're talking humility and single-mindedness in seeking Jesus' help. This father's heart is broken and desperate.

Jarius' pleading – Mark uses the present tense to convey the reality of this. Jairus is coming, falling, and now pleading much, earnestly. He's never been so broken and serious and determined as he opens his case to Jesus, "My little daughter!" She's twelve years old, considered a woman, but to this daddy, like most daddies, she is his little girl. Luke says she is his only little girl. There's a special bond between fathers and daughters. Sons can't get away with stuff daughters can. They can often sweet talk their daddy out of about anything. This father loves his precious baby and now she's at the point of death. Luke says, "She lay dying." Jairus is willing to risk any amount of religious ridicule and public embarrassment by kneeling at Jesus' feet and begging Him to come to his house. He is confident Jesus can rescue her from the jaws of certain death!

What do you learn from this? This is how to approach Christ with our spiritual needs and the needs of others, our children, grandchildren, friends, "Lord, these people are about to die in their sin. You are the only One who can lay your hand on their soul and save them! Please do it!"

Plus, Jairus' desperation overcame any prejudice or reluctance to come to Christ. He did this publicly and nothing stopped him. When your need is great, nothing will stop you! You will run to Christ, regardless of what others think. When you really know you are guilty and in trouble with God and God is pressing hard on your soul, driving you to desperation, you'll go through fire and flood to get God's forgiveness through Christ. We need much more desperation!

So there's Jesus, hearing this desperate father, knowing the need, and watch, "He went off with him." There they go at the head of this huge mob with people getting up around and behind them, pressing in on both of them, heading straight to Jairus' home, to his dying daughter. How sweet is that? How good and kind and loving and caring and approachable and, well, Jesus never fails! 1 Peter 5:7 tells us, "Cast all your cares on Him, because He cares for you."

But we've got a problem. We're headed quickly to Jairus' house when here comes this woman. And suddenly everything comes to a stop, all because of this woman! You can feel anxiety shooting through Jairus' heart – "Come on Jesus, we don't have time for this!" It's like when that sweet little old lady gets in front of you putt putting along down the road when you're already late for that appointment, or that old geezer in his 1979 pickup pulls out in front of you and casually enjoys the morning ride to his favorite fishing hole, and you're anxiously looking for those broken passing lines. What's the problem? Here it is. We too often forget that not a molecule or a little old lady in front of us is outside of God's sovereign, predetermined will for His greater glory! You see, this little girl is going to die! And her death is within God's perfect plan. God is going to be more glorified by Jesus raising her from the dead than keeping her from dying! But that's next week. In the meantime, relax, people! (That was a sermon "selfie" right there!)

#### **Here comes a desperate woman – vv. 25-34**

The woman's problem – vv. 25-26

*A woman who had had a hemorrhage for twelve years, and had endured much at the hands of many physicians, and had spent all that she had and was not helped at all, but rather had grown worse--*

This woman's flow of blood began the same year Jairus' daughter was born and hasn't stopped since – it lasted for twelve years! That's a long time. She was called a *zabah* by the Jews, a sufferer with a discharge. Leviticus 15:25-27 says her bed, her chair, whatever she touched was unclean. She was ceremonially unclean all this time. She was an outcast from Jewish society and cut off from synagogue

and temple worship. There were five chapters in the Mishnah regulating this kind of condition. I'm guessing she wasn't married and therefore had no children.

Not only this, but she had tried every trick in the book to get healed. She suffered at the hands of every physician available, all to no avail. Not only that, her bank account was zero and all the human resource in the world couldn't help her, but she only got worse! What a depressing verse in the Bible! And what a statement about the limits of human resource.

So this gal had gone the circuit of physicians and their cures, and they had some doozies. There are eleven remedies in the Talmud. A typical one was to set her in a place where two paths meet, let her hold a cup of wine in her right hand, and let someone come behind and frighten her, and say, "Arise from thy flux!" There were others just as odd to us to try after that.

We have to remember, the medical field was very strange in those ancient days. Nurses before Florence Nightingale (1820-1910) were a despised group, left to either old, weak, drunken, dirty, stupid, or bad women. Have you ever thanked God you live in an era of anesthesia? It wasn't until 1847 that Sir James Young Simpson experimented with a couple of friends with chloroform. On November 4 they sat around a table and inhaled chloroform. Almost immediately a mood of cheer and humor set in, but then they suddenly collapsed and didn't regain consciousness until the next morning, at which point Sir Simpson knew he'd found anesthetic. He later gave some to his niece, Miss Petrie, who fell asleep soon after inhaling while singing the words, "I am an angel!"

The woman here in Mark 5 had tried everything and spent all she had without success. She was at her wits' end. That's where Christ finds us. People seek answers to life's puzzle in money and clubs and groups and friendships and family and psychology and pills and alcohol and drugs and sex and knowledge and religion, even self-denial, self-inflicted pain, cutting – all to no avail! Psalm 107:27-28 says when people came to their wits' end, "then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, And He brought them out of their distresses." That's exactly what is happening here.

The woman's pursuit – vv. 27-28

*After hearing about Jesus, she came up in the crowd behind Him and touched His cloak. For she thought, "If I just touch His garments, I will get well."*

Put yourself in this poor woman's place. She's heard about Jesus, and now she knows He's close by, so she gathers up her robe and with hope in her heart, she pushes her way through this crowd of people, weaving and bobbing her way, determined to do one thing – grab His cloak! That's what's in her mind. She is convinced if she could just get a hold of His garment, she'd be healed!

Was her faith superstitious? A lot of scholars think so. Like people flocking to locations where Mary appeared in the condensation of a window, or "Just reach out your hand and touch the radio and you will be healed, and don't forget to send a seed gift of \$100 dollars to "Pastor Ripoff" at "I Don't Really Care About You Boulevard!"

Well there may have been an element of superstition, but she had true faith in her heart that Jesus could heal her and Jesus recognized it. You don't have to have a perfect grasp of the Westminster Confession or even the London Confession of 1689 to qualify for saving faith. Her faith may have been uninformed, but she was desperate. With desperate hope moving her on, she pushed through to Jesus and grabbed onto his cloak!

The woman's healing – v. 29

*Immediately the flow of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction.*

Boom! Immediately she is healed and she knows it. Ah! Imagine having a migraine for 12 years and suddenly it's gone. After all these years! Instantly! Jesus is sufficient and Jesus never fails! This is how God gives you new life when you are desperate to be saved. "Look and live!" the thin, uneducated man

cried out to Spurgeon, and that's just what he did and instantly God saved him. Paul on that Damascus Road was instantly converted, 180 degree turn around from religion to Christ, from law to grace, from hell to heaven!

The woman's confession – vv. 30-34

*Immediately Jesus, perceiving in Himself that the power proceeding from Him had gone forth, turned around in the crowd and said, "Who touched My garments?" And His disciples said to Him, "You see the crowd pressing in on You, and You say, "Who touched Me?"" And He looked around to see the woman who had done this. But the woman fearing and trembling, aware of what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth.*

Jesus isn't a machine or computer. He is personal and knows what's going on, and he knew power went out from Him to heal someone. Just like He felt it when He agonized on that cross taking our wrath, crying out, "My God, my God...."

So He turns around and pans the faces asking "Who touched My garments?" Of course his disciples, especially Peter, are right there to inform Him that that's a silly question since all these people have been pushing and shoving – "What do you possibly mean?" Luke 8 adds, "They were all denying it!"

Did He know? Some say no, some say yes. I say, "Yes, He knew." Teachers do this all the time. You know Jack over there has the answer, but you ask, "Does anyone know the fourth plant from the sun?" Jesus asks the question; He wants her to confess her faith and not stay under the radar.

And here she comes, gripped by fear and trembling, as one author wrote, "like a guilty thing surprised." Her desperation has been rewarded. In thorough humility she falls down before her Savior! The crowd probably knew she was unclean and may have gasped when she came forward thinking, "She made Him unclean!" But just the opposite happened. The reality is that He made her clean! She knew she was in the presence of One who could do what no other human being could do, she knew He knew her. This was an eternal moment right here! Listen to Luke 8:47:

*When the woman saw that she had not escaped notice, she came trembling and fell down before Him, and declared in the presence of all the people the reason why she had touched Him, and how she had been immediately healed.*

The woman's joy – v. 34

*And He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace and be healed of your affliction."*

Jesus loves her. He calls her, "Daughter." Remember Jairus' "little daughter?" As much as Jairus loves his daughter, Jesus loves His people more. And He made time for this unknown woman.

Jesus instructs her, "Your faith has made you well, and saved you. You believed in Me! You are well." Faith is the instrument that brings us to Christ. Without this woman's desperate reach of faith she would have remained in her uncleanness. That's what everyone here today must do. In desperation and in your sinful uncleanness, you must reach out the hand of your heart and grab hold of Christ and you will be saved! "As many as received Him, to them He gives the power to become God's children." (John 1:13)

Jesus assures her, "Go in peace." What assuring, hope-filled words for this desperate woman. To know that there is peace between you and God is the most wonderful reality in life. Having been justified by faith, we have, what? Peace with God!

Jesus promises her. "Be healed of this affliction." This Genesis 3 condition that lashed out at this woman for the last twelve years is gone. And it would not return to her!

Christ responds to even a little faith, as long as it is desperate and He is its object. The only thing to fear is that He passes so closely to you through His Word preached every Sunday or through others bringing His gospel to you, and you fail to see the desperate condition on your soul and you fail to reach out to

Him! But if you do reach out to Him and believe His promises, He assures you too of that peace with God that passes all comprehension! Jesus is sufficient for you, and He never fails!