

Matthew 20-04-05a

Good morning. Welcome to the Sunday morning services at Grace and Truth Bible Church. I am self-engineering today, so any inelegancies you can lay squarely at my doorstep.

We're going to continue our study in the Gospel of Matthew. We're in chapter 9, and we'll be picking up this morning at verse 18. This is the 5th of April, 2020, and we're in a section of the book of Matthew that is recording sign miracles that Jesus did, and as we have seen, these miracles have more going on than meets the eye.

They are always examples of the Lord Jesus' concern for His people, His being moved with compassion, but beyond that, there is always a sign significance either having to do with Jesus' teaching or having to do with God's plan and purpose as it works out through the ages. So we're going to see that this morning, and in connection with it, because we're inevitably going to be looking at the dispensational truth that is a part of that sign material, we'll be thinking about the end of the church age, the last days, and what, if anything, this passage tells us about that. But let's take a moment to focus our concentration, to set aside the many distractions that might be nibbling away at the edge of our minds, and prepare for a time of refreshment at the oasis of God's Word.

Shall we pray? Father, it is such a wonderful source of comfort and encouragement and the foundation for our hope to know that we are held securely in Your hands. We are placed firmly, eternally, and irrevocably there because of our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ and His relationship to You. We thank You that He is the way, the truth, and the life.

We thank You that we have been cleansed from our sins. We've been rescued from our fallen condition. We've been liberated and elevated above the carnality of our nature and the fallenness of our condition.

We thank You for Your provisions, for Your blessings, Your watch-care over us. We remember that the very hairs of our heads are numbered and there is nothing that is allowed its way through Your wall of fire protection except for our good and our benefit. We thank You for this passage of Scripture.

We thank You for the Lord Jesus Christ and the wonderful examples of teaching and action that are recorded in Your Word for us. We pray that as we look at this portion, Your Holy Spirit will minister it to each of our hearts, strengthen us, and equip us for every good work. We ask it in Jesus' name, Amen.

I managed to step on my glasses and break them, so if you see me fumbling around here with readers, that's why. In Matthew chapter 9, we have just seen the little red ink section about the friends of the bridegroom and the piece of unshrunk cloth, the new

and old wineskins, a teaching section that talks about and addresses God doing something new. God doing something new.

Something new has come and the old forms cannot contain it, cannot adjust to it. These new truths and God's new way of dealing with people through the Holy Spirit is going to require a new system. Nothing wrong with the old system.

The old garment was once new and was serviceable for a long time. The old wineskin did its job. It didn't leak.

That's why someone might try to reuse it, but its time has passed. An old garment's time has passed. An old wineskin's time has passed.

It was once good and legitimate. Nothing wrong with it, but there's something by way of an innovation, by way of progress, by way of forward movement. And so Jesus talks about that, and we want to be sensitive and flexible when it comes to God doing something new.

God can do something new in our lives. We should be making progress. We should grow.

We should advance. We should be breaking some new ground, building some new structures in our soul. If we're just dog paddling in place, if we're just treading water, we're not fulfilling the potential that the Lord Jesus Christ made possible for us through His work on the cross, through His provision of the Holy Spirit, through the unplumbed depths of the Word of God.

These things create potential for us, and that potential is for growth. So having covered that, in the Gospel of Matthew now we come to verse 18 of chapter 9. While He spoke these things to them, behold, a ruler came and worshipped Him, saying, My daughter has just died, but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live. So Jesus arose and followed Him, and so did His disciples.

Suddenly a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came from behind and touched the hem of His garment. For she said to herself, If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made well. But Jesus turned around, and when He saw her, He said, Be of good cheer, daughter, your faith has made you well.

And the woman was made well from that hour. When Jesus came into the ruler's house and saw the flute players and the noisy crowd wailing, He said to them, Make room, for the girl is not dead, but sleeping. And they ridiculed Him.

But when the crowd was put outside, He went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose. And the report of this went out into all that land. We get a few additional details by looking at the Gospel of Mark, chapter 5, verses 21 through 43.

This is also recorded in Luke, chapter 8, verses 40 through 56. This is actually one of the shorter accounts. We have 22 verses in Mark, and we have 16 verses in Luke.

We have just eight or nine verses here. But we're basically going to stick with Matthew. I'll allude to some of the additional details as we need them, but we have a lot to cover today.

I'm going to endeavor to get through both of these miracles, and you know how that goes. So I will do my best. I also have an additional little segment this morning that I will get to come Hades or high water.

So we begin at the beginning here. While He spoke these things, and I mentioned that the sequence of material in the various Gospels is sometimes the same and sometimes different. Sometimes it is organized for thematic effect, but we have a clue here in Matthew that ties these two healing miracles to what He has just said.

I've already reviewed the thrust of that, but bear it in mind while He talked about needing to adjust to a new circumstance, a new dispensation, a new situation, a new way of God dealing with His people, we have these two episodes. As you've heard me say in the past, I like to think of this as sort of an Oreos miracle, a sandwich miracle. It's a little chiasm.

You have Jairus at the beginning, and you have Jairus at the end, and in the middle, you have the woman with the issue of blood. So looking at the sequence here, Jairus comes. He is a ruler and worships.

We know that this is Jairus from the other Gospels. His name is not given here, but he came and worshiped Him. This is a pretty big deal for a ruler of Israel to come and worship the Lord Jesus.

It tells you something about Jairus right away, his attitude, his expectancy, his belief, else he wouldn't risk his reputation. He wouldn't have the confidence to come to Jesus and make this request. We will go to great lengths for our children.

It's part of what God puts parents in the world for, not only to produce the children, but to care for them. There is an obvious attachment, a deep parental love. It's a factor here.

Jairus cares about his daughter in a deep and personal way. That love is all the more real and active because it is combined with faith. We've talked before about the triad of Christian virtues.

There is faith, there is hope, and there is love. Faith is the means, hope is the motivation, and love is the outworking, the evidence, the active expression of our faith and of our hope. We are able to love the unlovely.

We are able to share the love of God that is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit because of and to the extent that we have and nurture faith and hope. You can't jump to love of any durability, of any quality, of any real intelligence. You can sort of kill people with kindness.

You can be well-intentioned and actually do harm. Effective love, God-honoring love, God-glorifying love is love that springs out of the well-nurtured soil of faith and hope. The greatest of these is love.

So obviously Jairus has that love and it is accompanied by faith and it is accompanied by the hope, the confident expectation that Jesus is able to do for him what he knows Jesus has done for others. So he is a ruler in Israel. He is an Israelite.

And when we get to parsing these details in terms of their sign significance, that is going to be of primary importance. That's one of our keys. It says, My daughter has just died, but come and lay your hand on her and she will live.

Now this is one of those typical condensations, one of those typical summaries. If you've ever seen the movie based on the book and you read the book, you know that sometimes in the movie, for the sake of brevity and emphasis and dramatic effect, characters will be combined. Episodes will be eluted or otherwise modified for the thematic purpose of that particular presentation of the story.

We are going to need to turn to Luke. So keep your finger here and turn to Luke chapter eight, beginning at verse 40. Luke chapter eight, verse 40.

For this example, and we're just going to very quickly note this because it's important when you're reading other sections of scripture and you start hanging entire doctrines on a word or a tense or a quick statement. If you saw the archive broadcast Thursday night, and I think even possibly last Sunday, this point has come up that sometimes if Paul has a purpose in talking about the rapture, for example, and that the purpose of it is comfort, he's not necessarily going to give a big long eschatological sermon detailing the rapture, the tribulation, the three and a half years, the antichrist, the second coming, the resurrection of Old Testament saints. He has a purpose.

And so he's going to glide over and leave out some details to focus on his purpose. This is what Matthew is doing when he puts into the mouth of the ruler, who we know from the other gospels is Jairus, that my daughter has died. That's not actually the first thing he says, is it? You remember this.

Luke chapter eight, beginning here at verse 40, Jesus returned. The multitude welcomed him for they were all waiting for him. Behold, there came a man named Jairus.

He was a ruler of the synagogue. He fell down at Jesus' feet. This is summarized by Matthew as worship, begged him to come to his house for he had an only daughter,

about 12 years of age, and she was dying.

But as he went, the multitudes thronged him. Now a woman having a flow of blood for 12 years who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, interesting detail to be noted by Dr. Luke, came from behind and touched the border of his garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped.

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? But Jesus said, somebody touched me for I perceived power going out from me. 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. And he said to her, daughter, be of good cheer. Your faith has made you well.

Go in peace. 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.

When Jesus heard it, he answered him saying, do not be afraid, only believe, and she will be made well. 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. Now all wept and mourned for her.

But he said to them, do not weep. She is not dead, but sleeping. 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. And you remember, we actually get the Aramaic for that in Mark, Talitha, Kumi. Then her spirit returned and she arose immediately.

And he commanded that she be given something to eat. And her parents were astonished, but he charged them to tell no one what had happened. Tell no one what had happened.

Yet we find it in all three Gospels. So eventually the story was shared. Well, we're going to start by talking about the woman with the issue of blood because the Jairus story begins and then is interrupted.

So as Jesus is following Jairus with his disciples in verse 20 of Matthew chapter 9, or in verse 43 of Luke chapter 8, a woman having a flow of blood for 12 years who had spent all her livelihood came from behind and touched the border of his garment. Came from behind and touched the border of his garment. The loss of blood, a bleeding disease, as you know from the law of Moses, is a defiling situation.

It, like leprosy, is sort of a living death. And of all of the different maladies that this

woman could have had, it is this unstoppable hemorrhage situation. And the life of the flesh is in the blood.

So it is a picture of a living person who is dying, dying for 12 years. Now she had heard about Jesus. We get this detail from the gospel of Mark.

She had heard about Jesus and she comes and says to herself in verse 21, if only I may touch his garment, I shall be made well. Now turn with me in the old Testament to the passage that says, if you touch the garment of the Messiah, you will be made well. And let me know when you figure out the reference because I can't find one.

This is an interesting detail to me because on what basis does she know that if she touches his garment, she'll be made well? Do you know of any other miracle where someone came up from behind and touched Jesus' clothing and was healed? Does she have any precedent for saying, well, it happened to someone else. It can happen to me. Is there an old Testament passage that she might be drawing upon? There is no precedent for a healing based on touching someone's clothes.

And it's intriguing to me because Jesus is going to say, your faith has made you well, right? Jesus turned around and saw her and says, be of good cheer, daughter. Your faith has made you well. You remember the components of faith.

There's two parts. We have great confidence. We believe in something and there is that something in which we believe.

So you have the object of faith and you have the act of faith. Now, what is the object of this woman's faith? Is it anything in scripture? Is there something in the law of Moses that says that this will take place? Is she claiming an Old Testament example or promise? No, she's not. Is she claiming something that she has heard Jesus teach, say, or accomplish? No, she's not.

So it makes me wonder, what is the object of her faith here? Is she just making something up? It would appear so. So can anybody make something up? And if they believe it, it will happen. Only believe.

Follow your dreams and so on. Is this a legitimate lesson to draw from this passage? Well, here's the thing. She draws a conclusion.

Notice exactly what it says she believes. She said to herself, and you would have had to get this in conversation with her afterward, you get the idea that they didn't just walk off and leave her after she was healed. She entered into the fellowship, the disciples, some of the women who are associated with the Lord Jesus, no doubt engaged in conversation.

And she tells this story and what was in her heart afterward. And so it's a reminder that when God works and God acts in us and through us, there is a benefit to the fellowship,

to other people who are in the periphery. And there's a celebration, there is a happiness at healing or at blessing or provision that extends to others.

And this woman evidently is going to become a part of the circle. You can imagine suffering with something for over a decade and then being healed. She wants to spend time with people who appreciate the Lord Jesus the way she does.

And that's why we have these details. But she said to herself, if only I may touch his garment, I shall be made well. Now, it's particularly noteworthy when you check the other gospels, that this woman is a Gentile.

So she would even have less occasion to have the tradition or the understandings that would pertain in Israel. But she says, if I touch his garment, you get the idea that she has been someone much as the centurion with the servant or son who is healed, who has a strong acquaintance and has perhaps been attending synagogue and is a proselyte to Judaism and understands the teaching of the law. Keep your finger here and turn back with me to Numbers chapter 15, verse 37, Numbers chapter 15.

What we're looking at here is, do you have to find an explicit promise or can you take what you know of the word of God and synthesize a conclusion and put your faith in that conclusion? That's what we're looking at here. So in Numbers chapter 15, we're here in the latter portion of the section. And in your New King James, if it's like mine, it says, the Lord spoke to Moses saying, speak to the children of Israel, tell them to make tassels on the corners of their garments.

This is at the hem where you have a right angle. They would typically have this rectangular garment, kind of like a poncho in Mexico that could be square with a hole in the center for your head. And it would drape before and behind.

You've seen these with a belt tied around the middle. Charlton Heston wears one in the Ten Commandments, which they just showed on PBS last night. You shall have the tassel.

Why? Look at verse 39. What's it for? Look upon it and remember all the commandments of the Lord and do them. Notice this isn't a hat.

Make yourself a little hat, make yourself a yarmulke, make yourself some kind of a little cap so that you can remember the commandments of the Lord and do them. What's the thing about the tassels? It's out where you can see it. It's the furthest away part of your clothing.

It's down at the hem. It's near the ground. Every time you take a step, you could be kicking that thing out in front of you and seeing it.

So it's a visible reminder. This is better than a phylactery strapped to your head. You

might forget you have that thing on.

Have you ever been looking around for your glasses and they're on your head? But if you had your glasses flopping around on the cuff of your jeans or on the hem of your dress, you probably have very little trouble remembering. It's a visible, daily, all your waking hours while you've got your clothes on reminder, this tassel. Remember the commandments of the Lord and do them that you may not follow the harlotry to which your own heart and your own eyes are inclined.

Your heart and your eyes are inclined that you may remember and do all my commandments and be holy for your God. Be sanctified, be set apart, live a life that's different than the surrounding godless nations. I am the Lord, your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God.

I am the Lord, your God. So what part of the Lord's garment does this lady touch? She touches the part that is associated with faithfulness. She touches the hem of his garment.

That's where the tassel is. It's a reminder of faithfulness and obedience and looking to God. Sometimes it's hard to be obedient.

It's it's counterintuitive. It doesn't always make human sense. You can go to passages of scripture such as Ezekiel chapter 5 verse 3. I don't have time to review as many of the Old Testament scriptures as I would like.

I just want to look at a couple here. Turn to Ezekiel chapter 5. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel. Go to chapter 5. God had the prophets do all kinds of strange things, marry strange women and do all kinds of sign activities.

And you can remember some of these. We've been through Ezekiel. But you can see at the beginning of chapter 5, take a sharp sword, take it as a barber's razor and pass it over your head and your beard.

Then take scales to weigh and divide the hair. You shall burn. By the way, what's the other thing about Ezekiel's hair? What do you remember about Ezekiel's hair? Remember anybody ever getting snatched up by the hair of the head and dropped into the visionary realms from the River Kabar? Remember that same word as the word tassel? It's a real interesting Hebrew word.

It's it's hard to say. It's tsitsith, T-S-I-T-S-I-T-H. The singular of it is tsuth, like a soothsayer, but put a T in front of it.

A soothsayer, just put a T in front of it, tsuth, T-S-U-T-H. But the tsitsith are tassels and tsuth, the root meaning of it is flower. And so you can imagine flowers.

This would be bundles or, you know, protruding things that are sort of bound together like a bouquet. And it's the word that's used when it says that God reached down and grabbed him by the tsitsith of his head, by the tassels of his head, and took him to the temple in that vision. Same word.

So take your hair here and weigh and divide the hair. Burn with fire one third in the midst of the city when the days of the siege are finished. Take one third and strike around it with the sword and one third you shall scatter in the wind.

I will draw out a sword after them. Verse three, you shall take a small number of them and bind them in the edge of your garment. What do you think burning the hair represents? It's the fire of judgment, right? What do you think chopping with the sword and scattering in the wind represents? Scattering as a judgment with the sword following after.

What do you think binding this small number of hairs into the edge of his garment, what would that represent? Faithful believers. Remember the inkhorn angel that goes through and marks all those who sigh and cry over the evil and coming judgment on Jerusalem. And the inkhorn angel marks them so that, and he says, don't touch them when you execute the judgment.

These that have the mark. These few hairs represent the remnant, the faithful remnant. And of all the things he could do with them, what does he do? He binds them into the hem of the garment because that is the symbolic area of faithfulness, faithfulness point of application.

We want to be Ezekiel's hair sewed into the edge of the garment. We want to be the edge of the garment that the woman touches. And because it represents faithfulness, the power of God comes into act.

When Jesus says to the lady, your faith has made you well, is it her faith? Can you just believe anything hard enough? And it just carries with it its own power. I believe I can fly and I jump out a third or fourth story window. I believe that God will protect me.

If I walk out into traffic, I believe that I can violate the bounds of common sense for no reason other than I'm just trusting God wildly. The merit of faith is in the object and we can draw conclusions about God that aren't explicitly stated in scripture. This requires common sense.

This requires wisdom. But when we do, when we are people of faith, we will be guided by our faith, will be guided by our hope. We will express that in love and the power of God enters.

When Jesus says, your faith has made you well, what did he say before that? When you go to Luke, he says, I perceive that power has gone out from me. The disciples say, how

do we know who touched you? You're in a big crowd. Many, many people touched him and the touching, the garment itself didn't have supernatural power.

It's not some magic garment, is it? Lots of people touched it. Soldiers at the foot of the cross are going to touch it. It doesn't do anything for them, does it? So there's not intrinsic power in the garment.

The woman believes from the point that she starts going to see Jesus, why couldn't she just be healed as soon as she makes that, draws that conclusion? I know that Jesus can heal me. If I just pray to the father in heaven, I can be healed. What is it? It is God actively honoring faith that he sees in valid conclusions from scripture.

That's what God honors. That's our application. God can and will honor our faith with his power.

The power is not in our faith and the power isn't even necessarily in the promise. It is God's recognition of our faith, the integrity of it, the object of it. It's God's power.

It was God, the Holy Spirit that healed this woman because of her faith. And it's an important thing for us to remember. We're going to pause here and take our break.

When we come back, we are going to look at the second part of this miracle, which is the healing of Jairus' daughter that brackets this particular miracle. But let's pause here and take our break.