

MATTHEW 9:18-34

COMPASSION IN THE FACE OF EVIL OPPOSITION

We all have certain keywords that will trigger certain reactions. Words like Columbine, holocaust, Vietnam or even a number such as 9/11. These all bring various memories and fears to the forefront of our minds.

I recall as a child, “Cold War” was a term that especially scared me. I can remember lying awake at night terrified that a Russian missile could land at anytime. It was well known that the Russians had ICBM’s aimed at every city with a population of 50,000. At that time my hometown fit that criteria, plus we had two military bases there. In the mind of a child, that was even more reason for us to annihilated by a nuke.

Israelites also had words that brought fear and pain to the forefront of their minds. “Egypt” brought about the memory of slavery and death. That was exacerbated by the fact that they were under the Roman yoke at the time.

“Nebuchadnezzar” evoked memories of captivity and deportation – the destruction of the Temple. All of these things compounded the daily issues with which Israelites lived, such as poverty and the lack of certain civil rights under Roman rule. But then there were other words such as “unclean” which further ostracized people within their own communities, even without Roman interference. It was into this milieu that Jesus stepped. And the main character trait we see in Him as we have read since the inception of His ministry is compassion. The world has changed little since then. Jesus has not changed at all.

As we pick up in verse 18 we see that Jesus is continuing His travels, His teaching, and His healing of the sick. It is very important that we keep in mind the scope of what is going on. Jesus came to do just what He is doing, with the main objective being to save the lost. The Jewish people have taken the wrong path with the Law. Instead of seeing it as a schoolmaster that would bring them

to faith in the Messiah, they chose to believe that one day they would wake up in a state of perfection and be able to keep the Law in its totality. While we might want to give them an A for effort, it was a futile effort. It is the same for us. If we wake up thinking that we can work our way into a state of perfection then we are engaging in a futile effort that will only make us more miserable. We must have faith. Faith in Jesus is the common thread that we will see today. The people that came to Jesus were flawed in many ways, but they were saved and healed because of faith in Him. Despite all of the healings and other aspects of Jesus' ministry, He will face opposition. Much of it comes from those that were supposed to have the same mission as He.

Verse 18 picks up with Jesus finishing His parable of the wineskins. As He is finishing a ruler comes up in need of a miracle.

Mat 9:18 *While He spoke these things to them, behold, a ruler came and worshiped Him, saying, "My daughter has just died, but come and lay Your hand on her and she will live."*

Luke gives us a little more detail of the event.

Luk 8:41 **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,**

Luk 8:42 **for he had an only daughter about twelve years of age, and she was dying. But as He went, the multitudes thronged Him.**

Luke tells us that Jairus was the ruler of the synagogue.

synagogue- 586 B.C. Jews deported to Babylon; no longer able to worship at the temple so the local neighborhood synagogue came about.

10 leaders called elders. One was elected ruler.

Jairus was a leader of the community. To come to Jesus in this way he was risking everything.

Impending death tends to move people toward Jesus. Why don't we make the move sooner?

Jairus had to rethink his theology

At any rate, Jairus had faith in Jesus.
No long-distance healing here – Jesus went to see the girl.

As they were going to his house something happened.

THE WOMAN WITH THE ISSUE OF BLOOD

Mat 9:19 *So Jesus arose and followed him, and so did His disciples.*

Mat 9:20 *And suddenly, a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came from behind and touched the hem of His garment.*

Mat 9:21 *For she said to herself, "If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made well."*

Once again, Luke gives us a few more details.

Luk 8:43 **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,**

Luk 8:44 **came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped.**

This woman had a menstrual problem that rendered her unclean. This meant that she was an outcast not only from society, but from her family as well. She would also have been weak and anemic.

She had spent her savings on doctors and was no better.

Touched the hem of His garment.

Num 15:38 **"Speak to the children of Israel: Tell them to make tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and to put a blue thread in the tassels of the corners.**

Num 15:39 **And you shall have the tassel, that you may look upon it and remember all the commandments of the LORD and do them, and that you may not follow the harlotry to which your own heart and your own eyes are inclined,**

Borders of the garment spoke of one's status in society.

Scribes and Pharisees enlarged the borders of their garments.

David cut Saul's cloak

This command turned into superstition.

She was possibly superstitious, not theologically sound, but nevertheless she had faith in the power of Jesus. She was desperate! She had been sick and isolated from everyone she loved for 12 years!

She was at risk in her culture because she was to keep at a safe distance so as not to make someone else unclean by being touched by her. She risked it all just as Jairus did.

Jesus reacted to her touch. Luke sheds more light on His reaction.

Luk 8:45 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?' "**

Luk 8:46 But Jesus said, **"Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me."**

There were hundreds of people touching Jesus as He made His way through the crowd.

Her touch was different. It was done in faith.

Many people approach Jesus wanting something, or are just checking Him out. They come away empty handed. They don't believe.

Believe what? That He was who He said He was. Believing that, having faith in His deity and power, allowed for this woman to be healed.

Her reaction to Jesus is also telling. Once again we go to Luke's account.

Luk 8:47 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.

She faced legal consequences if she was found out. That was no longer an issue once she was healed. Jesus, always the teacher, knowing her superstitious

background made sure she knew the source of her healing.

Mat 9:22 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.

Her faith made her whole. In Luke's Gospel Jesus referred to her as "daughter."

BACK ON THE ROAD TO JAIRUS' HOUSE

While all this is going on Jairus is probably about to blow a gasket. His daughter is dying and Jesus has stopped to talk to some random woman.

We often get anxious when we think Jesus is taking His time answering our prayers. Jesus doesn't panic. He runs on His timetable not ours. We are to run on His timetable, not ours. The anxiety comes from us bouncing between 2 different worlds, or 2 different plans for our lives.

At some point in our Christian walk we have to come face to face with the fact that God is in control. He moves at His pace. Our problems come when we either get too far ahead of Him or lag too far behind. If we walk in the Spirit, we won't have this problem. We will have problems/ tribulation, but we shouldn't have this anxiety.

When He is done Jesus proceeds to Jairus' house. Sometimes the moving of God in our lives may be "delayed" because He is working something out in someone's life that is in close proximity to us. When it comes down to it, we're all intertwined. No man is an island.

Mat 9:23 When Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the flute players and the noisy crowd wailing,

Mat 9:24 He said to them, "Make room, for the girl is not dead, but sleeping." And they ridiculed Him.

professional mourners- Wanda on Good Times

sleeping - bodily death is only temporary

They ridiculed Him. There will always be people in your life that scoff at what God is doing. Don't pay them any attention. If they ridiculed Jesus, they will ridicule you also.

They didn't bother Jesus at all. He knew He had the solution.

Sometimes we're timid because we don't necessarily believe we have the solution, but we do. Jesus.

Jesus proceeded with taking care of business.

Mat 9:25 But when the crowd was put outside, He went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose.

Pro 22:10 Cast out the scoffer, and contention will leave; Yes, strife and reproach will cease.

JESUS CONTINUED TO MAKE HEADLINES

Mat 9:26 And the report of this went out into all that land.

Mat 9:27 When Jesus departed from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying, "Son of David, have mercy on us!"

Mat 9:28 And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord."

Though they were blind they saw Him as Messiah. (Son of David)

Insight but not eyesight

They, being blind were willing to be led.

We must recognize our own blindness.

Are we willing to be blind, or are we content to roam around in the darkness?

They could have walked the entire countryside in blindness and never have found Jesus. We have to be willing to be led by the Spirit in order to receive our sight.

Mat 9:29 Then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith let it be to you."

No formula, you can't franchise what God does.

With eyes He spoke/ touched/ made mud/ 3 different denominations

Mat 9:30 And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, saying, "See that no one knows it."

Mat 9:31 But when they had departed, they spread the news about Him in all that country.

"SEE THAT NO ONE KNOWS IT."

Why?

We tend to focus more on the gift than the giver. Once again the spiritual need superseded the physical one.

It would have been pretty hard to hide the fact that they were no longer blind.

Though they had faith they didn't always obey, like us. Obedience was a character trait not yet developed in these young believers.

At least they witnessed while they were disobeying.

He told them to tell no one and they ran around telling anyone that would listen.

He tells us to go and tell everyone and we clam up. We have faith, but don't always obey, like them.

In verse 32 we see that they brought someone else to Jesus.

Mat 9:32 As they went out, behold, they brought to Him a man, mute and demon-possessed.

Mat 9:33 And when the demon was cast out, the mute spoke. And the multitudes marveled, saying, "It was never seen like this in Israel!"

Their faith was the catalyst. The man was possessed. Jesus didn't tell him his faith was responsible and he wasn't referred to as child or son. God does heal the heathen too.

The clamor of the people saying that no one else did this had gotten up the dander of the Pharisees.

OPPOSITION FROM WITHIN

Mat 9:34 But the Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the ruler of the demons."

The Pharisees blaspheme. They can't bring themselves to say that He is the Messiah. Their pride has blinded them. If He is right then they are wrong. They call God Satan.

When we refuse to yield to the Holy Spirit we can be guilty of something similar. Either He is Lord of our life, or we are. We aren't a neutral party in this. If we choose to run our own lives then we are rejecting the God who saved us and choose the world over Him.

35 Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. 36 But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.

JESUS' COMPASION

- Sheep without a shepherd... this metaphor was familiar to the Israelites.

Isa. 40:10,11

**10 Behold, the Lord God shall come with a strong hand,
And His arm shall rule for Him;
Behold, His reward is with Him,
And His work before Him.
11 He will feed His flock like a shepherd;
He will gather the lambs with His arm,
And carry them in His bosom,
And gently lead those who are with young.**

Compassion: splanchnizomai – to be moved in the inward parts.

Jesus accurately assessed the situation. He saw through the "felt needs" and the immediate physical needs to the heart of the matter. He had compassion for all of the more superficial needs of the people, but He, being the Great physician,

properly diagnosed the root of the condition. That root is sin. We can often get sidetracked with symptoms, but while treating symptoms may bring temporary relief, we will never truly get better without the cure. And only the Great Physician can cure sin.

A proper sense of balance comes from keeping an eternal perspective on our compassion. Our responsibility for being the salt and light among the evil in this world will not result in the eradication of evil. Regardless of how much relief we may bring to those in the throes of physical, emotional or even psychological problems, everyone will face an eternal reckoning one day. Our compassion for the world is insincere unless we keep all this in an eternal perspective.

But we still must go from person to person carrying the healing touch of Jesus.

In Conclusion:

1. Are we willing to lose all to get to Jesus like Jairus and the woman with the issue of blood?
2. Are we willing to trade our status we have in the community and amongst our friends to receive the cure for our sin?
3. Are we willing to be scoffed at or are we the scoffer?
4. Are we willing to recognize where our gifts, abilities and sustenance come from, or do we believe we are responsible for those things?
5. Jesus saves and heals us not because we have all our ducks in a row or because we're theologically sound, but because He loves us.
6. While the woman suffered for twelve years and was dying, while she seemingly had no hope, on the other hand a young vibrant girl had lived a life for 12 years in a well to do household, loved by her father. Two totally different scenarios for the same duration of time. One was lonely and saw no hope for twelve years where the other saw nothing but love and hope for twelve years. We don't know what tomorrow holds. The solution for each of them and each of us is the same: Jesus. Do we recognize Him for who He is?