

The Messiah Has Come
Week 37
Matthew 9:18-26
“Desperation + Dependence = Deliverance”

Introduction

“Truly I tell you,” He said, “unless you turn and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child — this one is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes one child like this in My Name welcomes Me.” **Matthew 18:3-5**

I recently watched a clip of an interview with the President of The United States, after he had worked out a peace agreement between Israel and Palestine. The reporter asked the president if he thought this accomplishment would, and I quote, “help him to get into heaven.” First of all, it was a ridiculous question posed by someone who had absolutely no theological acumen whatsoever. But even scarier than the question itself was the president’s response. He said, “I doubt that at this point that I will ever be able to get into heaven, but I do have the assurance that I have helped a lot of people.”

So let us tackle this topic head on shall we? First of all, no one, and I mean no one, will ever be able to “get themselves into heaven.” There is only one way into heaven. It is a closed community, and has only one door, and that door can only be opened from the ***inside***! So, no one will ever be able to get into heaven, unless they are invited to come in through this door. And who is this door you might ask? His Name is Jesus, and He is the only way in.

“I Am the gate. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture. A thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come so that they may have life and have it in abundance.” **John 10:9-10**

No amount of “good works” will ever be able to open the door for us. We can only come in when we accept the invitation that God has given us. And this is why I found the president’s answer to be so troubling. I wish that someone had been there who could have explained it to him. No, Mr. President, you are correct that there is nothing that you can do at this point to “get into heaven”, but there is someone Who has already done the work so that you can indeed enter in. Jesus paid your admission, and God The Father has sent you an invitation to enter in through the only door that is available to you. And He has offered this access to both the small and the great that they may indeed enter through the same door.

For God loved the world in this way: He gave His One and Only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him. Anyone who believes in Him is not condemned, but anyone who does not believe is already condemned, because he has not believed in The Name of The One and Only Son of God. **John 3:16-18**

As we continue in our study of Matthew’s Gospel, we see two more of Christ’s incredible miracles unfolding before our very eyes. Today’s passage contains the story of a miracle within the story of another miracle. And I believe that The Spirit arranged this passage in such a way so that we could see for ourselves that the “*formula*”, if you will, or the way in which we enter the kingdom is exactly the same for both the powerful and the lowly, the acclaimed and the outcast. All of us must go in through the same door.

I love this particular passage of Scripture, because there are so many truths that can be wrung out from its verses. And we can see for ourselves the childlike faith that it takes to have the door of salvation swing open to accept us as the adopted sons and daughters of God. As we study this passage today let us not miss out on the truth of how we must enter into God's kingdom. And the way in, the "combination of the lock", as it were, becomes altogether clear for us to understand: *Desperation plus Dependence equals Deliverance*. Please allow me to explain.

Desperation (vs. 18-21)

As He was telling them these things, suddenly one of the leaders came and knelt down before Him, saying, "My daughter has just died, but come and lay Your hand on her, and she will live." So Jesus and His disciples got up and followed him. Just then, a woman who had suffered from bleeding for twelve years approached from behind and touched the end of His robe, for she said to herself, "If I can just touch His robe, I'll be made well." **Matthew 9:18-21**

In these few verses we see two desperately needy people. The first, a rabbi and leader of a synagogue would have been considered a pillar of the community, and the second, the woman with an issue of blood, a social outcast. And yet, in their own respective ways, they both shared the same desperation for a healing touch from God. One was able to approach in view of the public's gaze, while the other felt forced to plead her case under the cover of anonymity. It is a story of a healing, within the story of another healing! How rich these Scriptures are in beauty and in truth, for they reveal to us that no matter how we are viewed in society, the way to true spiritual cleansing is the same for all of us!

Let us examine these two needy persons, one at a time. The other synoptic gospels, (namely Mark and Luke) give us a bit more insight into these people. The man who came and knelt before The Savior to plead for the life of his sick child was named Jairus (pronounced ee-ah'-i-ros, meaning "whom God enlightens, **Luke 8:41**), and he was a ruler of the local synagogue. We do not know why he waited until his daughter lay dying to finally come and plead with Christ for a healing miracle. But perhaps it was because the proverbial tide within the religious community was turning against Jesus more and more every day, and Jairus was afraid of losing his position. But as his daughter grew more and more ill, he cared less and less about his social standing and more and more about the child he loved.

It is that way often times. People who are in desperate need of God's grace are more worried about what others may think than being reconciled to God. This is why Jesus has warned us that if we are to come to Him in faith, we must be prepared for any cost that we must pay as a result. To become a follower of Christ, we are called to take up our cross, meaning that there is a price to pay. And that price may be the family and friends that turn away from us when we choose to follow. **You cannot stay where you are and go with God. And if you go around saying that you love Jesus, then sooner or later you will indeed get the chance to prove it.** So the question remains; "Just how desperate are you for His healing touch?" For until your need for Him, outweighs all other considerations, then you are not ready to humble yourself before Him. And until we reach the reality of our own hopeless desperation, we will never humble ourselves like a little child and cry out for His mercy.

We know from the other gospel's that when Jairus approached Jesus, his child was still barely clinging to life, but while he was gone to plead for the Savior's touch, she had passed away. We can only imagine the grief that he was feeling, and perhaps the guilt that he had let his own personal ambitions hold him from coming sooner. So many of us wait until the ninth hour to come to The LORD for healing. I cannot help but wonder what The Savior thought of Jairus' procrastinations. But even this did not sway Him from answering his prayer for help, albeit a tardy one.

The second person in this passage would have been ashamed to even approach the Savior in a public way. According to Mosaic Law, because she was suffering from perpetual menstruation, she would have been ceremonially unclean. This would have made her untouchable in polite society much like a leper. If she had been a married woman, this would have been grounds for her husband to divorce her, since it would have been unlawful for them to have any physical relations. Not only this, but she would

have been considered unclean to enter a synagogue, so there was no hope of her even being able to gather with others who worshipped on a regular basis.

The other gospels tell us that she had exhausted her financial wealth by going to every kind of physician she could find. Luke, who was also a doctor, tells us that her disease was incurable by any medical procedure known during that period of time. This had made her desperate for a healing touch from the only Physician Who is able to heal any disease. He is not limited to await the latest man-made medical technological advances, for He is The One Who created us in the first place. This poor woman's desperation also drove her to the Savior, but in quiet faith, she was convinced that she merely needed to touch His clothes in order to be made whole. So she crept through the crowd unnoticed and reached out in her desperation, hoping no one would even notice she was there. While the prayer of Jairus was public, hers was private... yet both were answered! Because that is the kind of God we serve. He cares about those who are accepted in society, as well as those who are not. So not matter where we find ourselves, when we become desperate enough to humble ourselves in His holy presence, our healing is just a prayer away!

Dependence (vs. 18b, 21)

...“My daughter just died, but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live.”

Matthew 9:18b

...“If I can just touch His robe, I'll be made well.”

Matthew 9:21

Both Jairus and the suffering woman made strong professions of faith when they realized their desperate need for a healing miracle. This is key for receiving the gift of God's grace for any situation. We must believe that God will do what He says He will do. *The Bible* is clear in this, ***without faith it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6)***. So the formula for healing, both spiritual and physical, becomes quite clear. It is *desperation*, plus *dependence* (total reliance upon God) that brings deliverance. First, we must come to the realization that we cannot save ourselves, and then we must, in faith, turn to the only One Who can.

I am often asked what is my favorite *Bible* verse of all time. The answer for me has changed over the years. But as I have gotten older, and I can comprehend the truth of Scripture more and more, it has become rock solid for me. My favorite verse in all of *The Bible* is found in the Fifteenth Chapter of *Genesis*.

Abram believed The LORD, and He credited it to him as righteousness. Genesis 15:6

For me, that one verse sums up everything else. For you see, I am a wretched sinner by nature. My situation was desperately hopeless. There was nothing that I could ever do to earn my way into God's favor. ***“But God”***, two of the most powerful words in all of Scripture (found in **Ephesians 2:4a**), ***Who is rich in mercy, because of His great love that He had for us, made us alive with Christ even though we were dead in trespasses.*** In other words, I was dead in my sins, and God provided a way for me to be alive in Christ! He opened the door into heaven from the inside, so that I could go in. All that I had to do was believe that He *would*, and that He said that I *could*!

There will not be a single person within heaven's gates that deserves to be there, except Christ. He is the Pioneer and Perfecter our faith (**Hebrews 12:2**). The only reason that we can enter into heaven is because Jesus said that we could. And all that we have to do is to take Him at His word on this. That is what faith is; believing that He will do exactly what He says that He will do. I once heard it described thusly. FAITH is:

F - *Forsaking*
A - *All* (other means)
I - *I* (will)
T - *Trust*
H - *Him*

Jairus, as well as the woman with the issue of blood, had to come to the end of themselves and place their total dependence upon the power of Christ, and Him alone, in order to find the healing they so desperately needed. I am convinced that both of them had exhausted all other means available to them, but to no avail. People will try almost everything to fix themselves, before they realize the futility of their actions, and frankly, some never do. But when we get to the point of utter despair and desperation, then we are willing to surrender and depend fully upon God for His power.

Whatever struggle you might be facing today, whether it is for the salvation of your soul, or if you are a Believer struggling with the daily temptation of sin, the formula is still the same. *Desperation + Dependence = Deliverance*. So take your burdens to The LORD in childlike faith and see what He can do which you in your own strength could never hope to accomplish. He can break down every stronghold that you face. And you do not have to worry as to whether or not He will do this for you, for in His Word He has told us:

Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, so that He may exalt you a the proper time, casting all your cares on Him, because He cares about you.

1 Peter 5:6-7

Deliverance (vs. 22-26)

Jesus turned and saw her. "Have courage, daughter." He said. "Your faith has saved you." And the woman was made well from that moment. When Jesus came to the leader's house, He saw the flute players and a crowd lamenting loudly, "Leave." He said, "because the girl is not dead but asleep." And they laughed at Him. After the crowd had been put outside, He went in and took her by the hand, and the girl got up. Then news of this spread throughout that whole area.

Matthew 9:22-26

The other gospels tell us that the woman pressed through the crowd and touched the tassel of his robe. Jewish rabbis often wore robes with sky blue tassels at the hemline to serve as a reminder of God's heavenly presence. This woman with her uncleanness reached out to touch this portion of The LORD'S robe and was instantaneously healed from her affliction. I love the implication here, that in spite of our uncleanness, Jesus longs for us to reach out and touch Him. He doesn't shy away from our filthiness, but rather, He cleanses us from it! We are washed clean in His blood.

This poor woman, who was an outcast with everyone in her life, was made whole and accepted by God. The LORD of creation called her a "daughter"! No one in her family would have wanted anything to do with her uncleanness, and yet, we see her adopted into the family of God. The words that Jesus spoke to her were not only intended as words of physical healing, but of spiritual salvation as well. **"Your faith has saved you," He said.** The Greek word is "sozo", which speaks to a soul's salvation. Again remember the words of **Genesis 15:6 - "Abram believed The LORD, and He credited it to him as righteousness."**

This woman's faith was so strong, she believed that just a simple touch of The Savior's garment would be sufficient for her healing. She had no intention of Him ever knowing she was there. But the other gospels tell us that The LORD felt the power leave Him in order to heal her disease. This world may never know any of our names, but rest assured that when we call out in faith to Jesus, we are not only known, but also loved and made whole, adopted as sons and daughters into the family of God! Again, *desperation + dependence = deliverance*.

When Jesus arrived at the home of Jairus, the professional mourners had already gathered. I read once that the great Pastor Charles Spurgeon was called upon to do a funeral service. So he went to the Scriptures to find one that The LORD had conducted. To his surprise he found there is not one instance of Jesus preaching at a funeral. Mainly because He broke up everyone He ever attended! Jesus ran the paid mourners and musicians out of the house, after telling them that the young twelve year old girl was only sleeping. They laughed, but little did they know that death is no problem to overcome when you are The Resurrection and The Life!

The gospels tell us that Jesus only allowed the girl's parents along with Peter, James, and John to accompany Him into the room where the child lay. She was only twelve years old. I find it interesting that when this child was born the woman who had an issue of blood had her first symptoms. She had suffered for twelve years, and here lay a twelve-year-old girl on her deathbed. Both of them found a miraculous recovery in Christ on the very same day!

Mark tells us in his gospel writing that Jesus took the little girl by the hand and said, "***Talitha koum***", which he then translates, "***Little girl, I say to you, get up.***" It is the more perfect translation which stirs my soul to the very core: "***Little lamb, I say to you, ARISE.***" Here we see a perfect picture of the Good Shepherd, calling to one of His little sheep. And one day, all of those who belong to His sacred flock will answer the very same call!

Jesus commanded those in the room not to share what they saw, but apparently, Jairus, nor his wife, could hold their peace, and the word of this resurrection spread throughout the region. I cannot help but wonder if the Pharisees excommunicated Jairus for his faith in Jesus. His decision to go to the Savior may well have cost him everything, but I am quite certain that he would have done it all over again to see his precious child returned to him. You see, it doesn't matter what it costs to follow Jesus. He is, always has been, and always will be, worth the cost.

So, as we conclude this week's message, I would like to ask you something this morning. What are you struggling with in your life today? Are you consumed by some personal sin and need the Deliverer to set you free? Or are you lost and searching for your empty life's true purpose? Or is there some physical ailment that has you bound? There is a Biblical formula in which you can find the healing that you seek. And that formula is simply thus: *Desperation + Dependence = Deliverance*. Your Heavenly Father loves you, and He longs for you to bring your burdens to Him and find rest. Cast your cares upon Him, because He cares... for you!

TRUTH!!!