

"Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." (Matthew 9:13)

I. Jesus Heals in Two Acts

- a. This is another example of Jesus proving that mercy is greater than sacrifice. Matthew wants us to see the new life given to the girl as an illustration of the new wine Jesus has just been speaking about.
- b. For twelve years the woman had been afflicted with this condition; for twelve years the ruler of the synagogue had watched his little daughter grow. (Mark 5:21-43)
- c. The *ruler* oversaw the worship and building. Most often appointed by community elders.
- d. The ruler's daughter is evidently dead and not sick. Matthew makes it clear from the beginning that the girl was already dead.
- e. The Jewish woman with the issue of blood was required to announce her uncleanness.

II. The Untouchables are Touched

- a. Jesus touches the untouchables and allows the untouchables to touch Him. A woman with a menstrual flow was unclean. So was a dead girl. They are the unprivileged, the outcasts.
- b. *Faith* among the Jewish community is in the forefront of these miracles. In each one, faith is the hand that grasps the amazing "new thing" presented in Jesus.
- c. Faith is what brings us into contact with Jesus, not religion. It was so with the woman in the crowd, and with the father of the little girl: both touched, and experienced, His power.
- d. Faith is still faith even when it is imperfect faith.
 1. The synagogue ruler came to Jesus as a last resort, desperate to see if anything could be done about his child.
 2. The woman in the crowd had a superstitious faith: she thought that if she touched his clothes the miracle might occur.
- e. However, the power of Jesus is not easily manifested among unbelief. The crowd around the woman did not believe, and they received nothing.
 1. The professional mourners surrounding the girl did not believe, and they were ejected (vv.24-25)
- f. *Faith* brings salvation, and it does so as soon as we stretch out and make contact with the Lord. That is the message that we want to hear. "Your faith has healed you" (v.22)

III. Thoughts and Considerations for Action

- a. As people are set free from danger, disease, demonic powers and death, they are called to share with Jesus in enjoying the new wine of the kingdom of heaven.
- b. The human heart is capable of profound resistance and deep self-deception. It is only when we trust that we find salvation.
- c. Our *faith* may be a last resort, it may be "superstitious", it may be theologically deficient, but if *faith* is placed in Jesus it will bring about His desired results.
- d. The ruler and the unclean women knew the rules, but he asked Jesus to come and touch his unclean daughter. She reached out and touched. *Faith* is still faith in the face of the facts.
- e. What in your life needs an attentive touch from the Lord? Will you reach for Him? Will you call on His name? Reach by faith! Speak by faith!