

**“The Healing Power of Faith”**  
**Sermon for Sunday, July 8, 2018**

Our scripture lesson this morning comes to us from the New Testament Gospel of “Mark”. The passage we will be reading this morning is sometimes called a “Marcan sandwich” (a literary technique of Mark’s) meaning he will start with one story, interrupt it with a second story, and then return back to the first story. Listen for the two stories.

**SCRIPTURE: Mark 5:21-43** The word of God for the people of God...

**Two stories of healing...**

Jesus brings healing to the daughter of Jairus, the leader of the local synagogue. Brings her back from the dead... a twelve year old girl.

Jesus brings healing to the unnamed women with the hemorrhage... a twelve year old disease.

“Daughter, your faith has made you well!”

Two stories of healing. Good news! A happy ending for both.

But what are we to say when the healing we sought does not happen?

**In my chaplaincy training**, I remember spending time at Kosair Children’s Hospital in Louisville with a single mother and a married couple...

One with a 47-day-old infant that had been through multiple surgeries and had never been conscious,

The other with a 2-year-old son requiring open heart surgery.

Both professing faith in Jesus. Both praying for healing.

But two different outcomes.

The married couple would share their joy that heart surgery had been successful.

“God answered our prayers,” the mother said.

The single mother would share that there was no hope and her child had been declared brain dead.”

“Will you stay with him when they remove his life support?” she asked.

Where was her healing Jesus?

**We all have experienced situations in which “healing” has not occurred in the way that we had hoped or for which we prayed.** It can cause us to

question God. “Why didn’t you heal my son... my daughter... my spouse... my friend... me?” “These are beautiful stories about Jesus healing two people, but

what about my prayer for healing that was not answered?” How do we find meaning in these stories, when we have likely experienced a different outcome for ourselves or for someone we love?

### **What if we began by thinking of God's "healing" in a different way?**

Jairus asked Jesus to come to his daughter so she could be "made well".

Jesus says to the woman with the hemorrhage, "Your faith has made you well."

"Made well" also means "saved".

Jesus tells the little girl, who has died, "Get up".

"Get up" or "Arise" also means "resurrection".

Can Jesus heal disease? Of course! Can Jesus heal our "dis-ease" through our faith? The healing that comes from God is a healing that "saves" us—saves us from fear, saves us from anxiousness, saves us from "disease". It is a healing of the soul that reminds us that death does not have the last answer and that God is always with us to bring peace and wholeness.

Rev. Michael Lindvall is a former senior pastor at First Presbyterian and he was talking with a man who had Parkinson's disease about being healed.

The man said, "I have been healed, not of Parkinson's disease, but I have been healed of my fear of Parkinson's disease."

Perhaps the healing that Jesus offers, the healing that is activated by our faith in Jesus is more about healing our fears than healing our bodies.

### **Healing came for two people who could not have been more different.**

A man with it all, including a name and a circle of many friends... a woman with nothing, no name, in social isolation for twelve years. And yet, Jesus interrupts his journey to the house of the one that was considered most important to tend the one considered the least important. Can you imagine Jairus' reaction when Jesus stopped to help this poor, nameless woman?

"Jesus, my daughter is dying! There isn't time for this! Besides, touching her will make you unclean and my daughter and I will be unclean, too!"

Hmmm... sometimes we can be a selfish, self-centered lot.

### **When we think about being healed, so often we are thinking about ourselves, our own suffering, our own "dis-ease".**

Sometimes prayers for physical healing are answered. God can do that.

But perhaps the best healing comes to us in a different way.

A healing of the heart and soul... a healing from fear to resurrection and peace.

Healing comes when we choose to be a healing presence in the lives of others.

To take the time to stop what we are doing to be in relationship with another...

To be reminded about God's special care for the poor... for the one who is alone...

Healing can come to us, when we become a healing presence for others.

"I have been healed, not of Parkinson's disease, but I have been healed of my fear of Parkinson's disease."

[Prayer for healing... to be healers... to have faith]