

June 28, 2015
Will Healing Come?

Teaching the Revised Common Lectionary
FEASTING on the WORD
CURRICULUM

Adult
Resource Sheet 1

Focus on Mark 5:21–43

WHAT is important to know?

— From “Exegetical Perspective,” Efraim Agosto
She too, like the synagogue ruler, falls at Jesus’ feet in homage and seeks his mercy for her touch that should make *him* ritually impure (see Lev. 15:19–33). Jesus has already shown he is less concerned about touching the impure than about showing them mercy (see 1:41). Thus he calls this unnamed woman “daughter” and says, “Your faith has saved you” (v. 34a). Moreover, he sends her away in peace, because her faith has made her “healthy” from her illness (v. 34b). Thus Jesus provides a very public acknowledgment of a private healing.

WHERE is God in these words?

— From “Theological Perspective,” Mark D. W. Edington
In the kingship of Jesus *the need of the marginalized and vulnerable is addressed before the need of the celebrated and powerful*. One imagines the reactions of the crowd, knowing in whose company Jesus is traveling. Here is a woman barred by law from hope of regaining her health, her safety, or her place in the community. But the message is clear: in the realm ordered by Jesus’ kingly authority, those on the fringes of society have a rightful place in direct relationship with the Lord. Moreover, Jesus exercises *absolute sovereignty over the realm of law*, reaching through the purity boundaries to effect a direct encounter based on the authority not of law but of faith.

SO WHAT does this mean for our lives?

— From “Pastoral Perspective,”
Michael L. Lindvall
I have a friend, a man of deep faith, who was diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease. He is in the last debilitating stages of the disease. Nevertheless, he once told me that his prayers had been answered. He said in all sincerity, “I *have* been healed, not of Parkinson’s disease, but I have been healed of my fear of Parkinson’s disease.” These two biblical healing stories in which people turn to Jesus for healing will raise the question, “Does prayer work?” If we mean by this, “Do you get what you pray for?” the honest answer will be “Sometimes, but not always.” Pray as they may, congregation and pastor both know that all prayers are not answered as we pray them.

NOW WHAT is God’s word calling us to do?

— From “Homiletical Perspective,”
Beverly Zink-Sawyer
A question has to do with what role faith plays in our healing. The hemorrhaging woman has the audacity to transgress a whole host of social protocols when she touches Jesus’ robe without permission to claim her own healing. Talk about faith! And then there is Jairus, whose faith causes him to fall at Jesus’ feet, despite how Jesus is regarded by most synagogue leaders. These examples challenge us to examine our own faith, asking how we find the strength to claim God’s promises of healing and hope for ourselves, and how we empower others to do the same.