

Semicontinuous

2 Sam. 1:1, 17–27

Ps. 130

Complementary

Lam. 3:22–33

Ps. 30

2 Cor. 8:7–15

Mark 5:21–43

Anytime and Anywhere

Goal for the Session

As Jesus responded to needs when requested, youth will prepare to serve in Jesus' name whenever and wherever they are called to do so.

■ PREPARING FOR THE SESSION

Focus on Mark 5:21–43

WHAT is important to know?

— From “Exegetical Perspective,” Efraín 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.

FOCUS SCRIPTURE
Mark 5:21–43

Focus on Your Teaching

Young people are familiar with community service. Many schools require programmed community service hours; churches send youth on mission trips. Christian service includes these, but also extends to wherever and whenever we encounter people in need. Jesus healed people personally, sent disciples organizationally, and preached against the toxic habits of his and our cultures systematically. Encourage participants to think about what kind of service they can offer with the gifts they have, at any time and anywhere.

Dear God, who and what would you have me see today? Open my heart that I might see through your eyes. Amen.

YOU WILL NEED

- markers and paper
- Bibles
- copies of Resource Sheet 1
- pens

For Responding

- option 1: copies of Resource Sheet 2, pencils
- option 2: paper, pencil
- option 3: hymnals, newsprint, scrap paper, pencils, marker

For Media Connection

- computer with Internet connection

When telling a story wait to begin until you have the group's attention. Make eye contact.

LEADING THE SESSION

GATHERING

Welcome participants as they arrive. Hand out paper and markers. Ask youth to trace one of their hands. Invite them to label parts of the hand with service projects that have they participated in (such as mission trips, school service projects, family service at a soup kitchen, and so on). Invite each person to find a partner and introduce his or her hand to the partner. Encourage partners to name ways they used their hands in serving. After two minutes, ask the youth to mingle and find new partners. Repeat three to four times.

Tell the youth that today's Bible passage records two interwoven stories. Jesus heals two people. Invite the youth to listen for how hands and touch are present in the story. Pray:

Holy God, help us to see your word and your world through the love of Christ. Amen.

EXPLORING

Recall that over the last few weeks they have been enjoying stories about the life and teaching of Jesus from the Gospel of Mark (Jesus' family, parable of Mustard Seed, calming the sea).

Explain to the participants that you are going to read a story about Jesus healing two women. Invite participants to close their eyes and imagine that they're in the story as the passage is read. Challenge them to imagine the characters' hands—how they move and express the drama in the story. Read Mark 5:21–43 aloud. As you read, pause from time to time for their imaginations to fill in the details.

Distribute copies of Resource Sheet 1 (Hands) and pens. Have participants complete the chart with the ways in which they saw the hands in different sections of the story. When all are finished, give participants an opportunity to compare charts. Have participants retell the story using the outline of the six sections of the story listed on the resource sheet. As

each section of the story is retold, have participants include descriptions of the hands that appear in their charts.

Assign half of the participants to focus on Jairus and assign the other half to focus on the hemorrhaging woman. Have groups imagine that they are their assigned character and respond to the following questions:

- ✿ What is your role in society?
- ✿ What motivated you to seek Jesus' help?
- ✿ What thoughts were going through your mind as you approached Jesus?
- ✿ What role did hands play in your story?

Invite the youth to name similarities and differences between each character's story. Be sure the participants discuss these similarities and differences:

- ✿ Jairus came from privilege; the hemorrhaging woman was marginalized.
- ✿ Both Jairus and the hemorrhaging woman profess faith in Jesus Christ.
- ✿ Both victims are ritually unclean (one as a result of death; the other as a result of a hemorrhage).
- ✿ Jesus' touch restores both victims to new life in response to their requests.
- ✿ The people around them lack understanding.

Ask:

- ✿ How does your faith in Jesus Christ inspire you to reach out to help hurting people?

EASY
PREP

RESPONDING

Choose one or more of the following learning activities:

1. **Service Handprints** Help young people recognize where they can serve in Christ's name. Hand out Resource Sheet 2 (Service Circles) and pencils. Say that all around us are people we can serve in Jesus' name. Invite the youth to label the handprints with places where they encounter other people; five handprints have been labeled to get them started.

After a time, ask the youth to think about who they could serve in each of those places—and how. Suggest that they think of specific individuals or groups of people, and write their responses in the hands. Invite the youth to name ways they can serve the people in tangible ways. Challenge them to commit to tangible service in the coming week.

2. **Identifying Need** Help young people recognize who they can serve in Christ's name. Ask the youth to think about others their age in the community and the ways in which healing might be needed. Ask: What do you think might be the main worries, concerns, or problems of young people in your neighborhood? Make a concerns list.

Brainstorm ways young people with the problems listed could be helped by others, especially other young people. Brainstorm a list of places or organizations trying to help youth, including your own church. Plan to contact some of the groups already helping

youth to find ways your own group might lend support, for example, by distributing information or raising funds. Plan a fundraising activity such as a car wash, bake sale, lunch, or cookie bake.

- 3. Serving through Song** Help the youth create a musical testament to their ministries of service. Ask the learners about hymns or praise songs they know: what do they say about healing and serving others in Jesus' name? Mention that a way that people express their love for God is by writing and singing hymns. Pass out hymnals and invite the youth to work together to create a new hymn by selecting a hymn or praise chorus with a familiar tune, replacing the words with a stanza they write based on the healings in today's story, and printing the stanza on newsprint. Sing the new hymn together in worship where the congregation may be inspired by it.

CLOSING

Participants can honor Jesus by reaching out with compassion to a hurting world. Ask:

- ✪ How might you reach out to care for your family?
- ✪ How might you reach out to care for your friends?
- ✪ How might you reach out to care for creation?
- ✪ Where else do you think care and compassion is needed?

Encourage participants to stand in a tight circle. Extend your hand palm down and invite each person in turn to place his or her hand on top until there is a stack of hands. Explain that when you say, "We have the power to reach out to others in Christ's name," they respond with "Let's do it!" and raise their hands high in the air. Practice this several times, inviting participants to say their names as they place their hands on the pile. Finish with a group high five.

Pray:

Loving God, thank you for this time together. Teach us to recognize those people who need care and help us reach out with your healing love. Amen.

■ ENHANCEMENT

MEDIA CONNECTION

Watch the video "Test Your Awareness" from www.youtube.com/watch?v=UfA3ivLK_tE, which misdirects viewers' attention by having them focus on one event while a second, surprising event happens on camera. (If your group has already seen this video, you can find other relevant videos on YouTube by searching on "invisible gorilla" or "awareness test.")

Discuss:

- ✪ What important things, like the gorilla, are hidden in plain sight in our lives?
- ✪ What keeps us from seeing those things?
- ✪ How could we learn to focus on what is important rather than on what naturally attracts our attention?

June 28, 2015
Anytime and Anywhere



Youth
Resource Sheet 1

Hands

	In the story, I noticed that hands . . .
Jairus's Request (vv. 21–24)	
An Interrupted Journey (vv. 25–29)	
Jesus' Reaction (vv. 30–34)	
Back to Jairus's Daughter (vv. 35–36)	
On the Way to a Healing (vv. 37–39)	
A Private Healing (vv. 40–43)	

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Youth
Resource Sheet 2

Service Circles

