

SESSION 4

WHEN WELL-MEANING PEOPLE INTERRUPT YOUR PLANS

Leader pages on pp. 144-147

THE POINT:
GOD-ORDAINED
INTERRUPTIONS CALL
FOR A SENSITIVE HEART.

LUKE 8:40-50, 54-56

⁴⁰ When Jesus returned, the crowd welcomed him, for they were all expecting him.

⁴¹ Just then, a man named Jairus came. He was a leader of the synagogue. He fell down at Jesus's feet and pleaded with him to come to his house,

⁴² because he had an only daughter about twelve years old, and she was dying. While he was going, the crowds were nearly crushing him.

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⁴³ A woman suffering from bleeding for twelve years, who had spent all she had on doctors and yet could not be healed by any,

⁴⁴ approached from behind and touched the end of his robe. Instantly her bleeding stopped.

⁴⁵ "Who touched me?" Jesus asked. When they all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the crowds are hemming you in and pressing against you."

⁴⁶ "Someone did touch me," said Jesus. "I know that power has gone out from me."

⁴⁷ When the woman saw that she was discovered, she came trembling and fell down before him. In the presence of all the people, she declared the reason she had touched him and how she was instantly healed.

⁴⁸ "Daughter," he said to her, "your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

⁴⁹ While he was still speaking, someone came from the synagogue leader's house and said, "Your daughter is dead. Don't bother the teacher anymore."

⁵⁰ **When Jesus heard it, he answered him, "Don't be afraid. Only believe, and she will be saved."**

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⁵⁴ So he took her by the hand and called out, "Child, get up!"

⁵⁵ Her spirit returned, and she got up at once. Then he gave orders that she be given something to eat.

⁵⁶ Her parents were astounded, but he instructed them to tell no one what had happened.

MEMORY VERSE

KEYWORDS

When Jesus returned (v. 40)–

Much of the activity of Jesus's Galilean ministry revolved around the Sea of Galilee.

Fell down . . . feet (v. 41)–The Greek term for fell down means to rapidly throw oneself to the ground when approaching a superior with a request.

Suffering from bleeding

(v. 43)–Refers to a hemorrhage or flowing of blood. The result was that she would have been considered ceremonially and socially unclean.

Her spirit returned (v. 55)–The fact that the girl was dead is stated twice in this passage.

WHAT DO WE DO WHEN OTHERS INTERRUPT OUR PLANS?

Peter Greig was on his way home to England. As he hurried through Chicago's O'Hare Airport, he soon learned that the Iceland volcano had grounded all flights. Peter asked God how He wanted him to use this interruption and his thoughts flew to his friend Joe, 150 miles away in Madison, Wisconsin. "Hey, I'm in Chicago," he emailed. "Can I come crash on your couch?"

What Peter didn't know was that Joe had just received terrible news. His wife asked, "Who do you wish you had on your couch right now?" Joe answered, "I wish Pete was on my couch, but I know that's crazy."²¹ Within hours of Joe's stated longing, Peter was sitting on his couch. Sometimes, God interrupts our lives with people in ways that feel like an answer to prayer. In our passage, Jesus was surrounded by people, but He took time for two desperate people. He responded with such spiritual sensitivity and power, it changed them.

Interruptions Are Often Opportunities to Serve //

Luke 8:40-42

In Luke 8, Jesus was going from town-to-town, preaching and teaching about the kingdom of God,

taking back what demons had stolen, and bending the laws of nature to reverse what sin's curse had done.

In v. 40, Jesus had just crossed the Sea of Galilee, docking in Capernaum. As soon as He steps ashore, He was swept up into the current of human sin and need once more.

Pressing through the crowds of people was one of the most prominent men in the community. Jairus was a synagogue leader who was responsible for overseeing the teaching and worship in Sabbath gatherings. Since the synagogue was the spiritual and social center of life in a Jewish community, the townspeople would have recognized Jairus. What was he doing? Was he going to debate Jesus?

Jesus had been a troublemaker for Judaism. Jesus was likely held in contempt by Jairus's social group. He was a threat to their standing among the people, constantly calling their teaching and character into question. What would the other rabbis think if they knew what he was about to do?

But Jesus had been impossible for Jairus to write off. Capernaum had been His home base for ministry, so many of Jesus's miracles and teachings were done on its streets. This gave



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Jairus access to eyewitness accounts and personal stories about Jesus. All of Jesus's works displayed His compassion for people, authoritative teaching, and ability to perform miracles

Jairus must have known that what he was about to do would be risky. But on this day, he wasn't coming as a synagogue ruler; he was coming as a father whose only child, twelve years old, was dying. She needed a miracle. As he fell to the ground at Jesus feet, Jairus came to the only One who could heal her. He begged Jesus to come to his house.

Now, shift your attention to Jesus.

- His mission had a time limit, making His every action purposeful.
- He combatted demonic possession and opposition everywhere He went.
- He faced the winds of increasing hatred from religious leaders accusing him of being a heretic
- He bore the stress of being popular. The crowd was claustrophobic, and everyone wanted something from Him.
- He felt weary from the constant pace of ministry.

Yet we see no trace of impatience or irritation with Jairus or others in need. Jesus never allowed pressures to squeeze an unloving or selfish word or deed out of Him or make Him hardened toward people and their needs. Instead, He stopped and listened, graciously responding to the need in appropriate ways.

WHAT MIGHT HOLD US BACK FROM BRINGING OUR NEEDS TO JESUS?

Handle Each Interruption with Compassion // Luke 8:43-48

Concealed in the human traffic jam surrounding Jesus was a woman whose very presence violated the Mosaic Law. We don't know why she was hemorrhaging, but her blood loss kept her physically weak and ceremonially unclean (Lev. 15), costing her dearly.

She couldn't touch anyone without defiling them and was required to announce her "unclean" status when near people. She had drained her financial resources on physicians, undergoing painful procedures that only made matters worse (Mark 5:26).

See her lingering on the fringe of the crowd? For years, this woman had been told to keep her distance. Can you imagine how



DIGGING DEEPER FAITH

Faith often shows up most powerfully in moments of desperation, as seen in the lives of two unlikely individuals in Luke 8. Jairus, a respected synagogue leader, pursued Jesus to heal his dying daughter—an act of humility and faith that could have cost him his livelihood and status. Meanwhile, the woman with a chronic illness, considered unclean and an outcast, believed touching Jesus's garment would restore her health. Regardless of their differences in status, both displayed remarkable faith, trusting Jesus to meet their needs in seemingly impossible situations.

Their encounters show faith goes beyond social boundaries and personal shame. Jesus honored both their faith, healing the woman and raising Jairus's daughter, displaying His power and compassion.

What barriers—fear, pride, or doubt—might keep you from approaching Jesus with your deepest needs?

How can their faith inspire you to trust Him fully in your circumstances, no matter how desperate or unlikely?

emotionally starved and terribly lonely it was to be an “untouchable?”

Mark’s account tells us “she had heard the reports about Jesus” (5:27). He was doing impossible things. Some say He was the Messiah. Her hope was reborn as faith in Jesus gripped her heart. Now, that faith would move her to action.

Word of Jesus’s approach raced ahead of Him. She quickly formed a plan: get close, touch His garment, get away, and, hopefully, remain unnoticed. No need to draw unwanted attention to her unclean status.

Her pulse must have raced as she stepped into the crowd. When Jesus passed by, she reached out and touched the edge of His robe. Jairus’s emergency was put on hold as Jesus asked, “Who touched Me?” (v. 45).

Jesus’s disciples were confused by the question, considering the crowd. But Jesus was calm and determined to identify the person. Why did He insist on knowing who touched Him?

Jesus wanted to express compassion directly to this woman. When the woman realized she couldn’t hide, “she came trembling and fell down before Him” (v. 47). Jesus called her “daughter,” a term of family status. She was welcomed to the family. She was seen, affirmed in her faith, and restored

Jesus focused on her faith in three ways:

1. Jesus wanted to dismiss any idea that her healing came because she touched His clothes. “Your faith has saved you,” Jesus said.
2. He wanted to relieve her of any worries that “she had stolen this healing from Jesus” without His permission. Jesus’s words, “Go in peace” would relieve any guilt that she had taken something without His knowledge. Her healing was a gift of grace.
3. Jesus didn’t want her faith to be anonymous. Faith in Christ is not meant to be private. It must be publicly declared (Rom.10:9-11).

This woman had lived with her illness and uncleanness for a long time, leaving her a hopeless outcast. Her faith in Jesus, acted out in her reaching touch of His cloak, transferred her



uncleanness and alienation to Jesus, while He made her clean and welcomed. It was a beautiful picture of what Jesus came to do: taking our sin and shame upon Himself and giving us His righteousness (2 Cor. 5:21). What a Savior and Friend He is.

WHAT HAVE LIFE EXPERIENCES TAUGHT YOU ABOUT BEING FLEXIBLE IN MEETING THE NEEDS OF OTHERS?

When Delayed, Don't Be Discouraged // Luke 8:49-50, 54-56

What do you think was going on with Jairus as he watched Jesus and the woman? **Frustration** that they had stopped. “Did He not understand how serious the situation is?” **Aggravation** that Jesus was searching for someone who touched Him. “We don’t have time for this!” **Excitement** at the healing power and love of Jesus.

That’s when it happened. Jairus’s worst fears as a father were realized. Jesus and the woman were still speaking when a messenger arrived with the terrible news. Death was the period at the end of the sentence. It’s irreversible. Jairus was too shocked to speak. Jesus wasn’t. He said something to Jairus that would directly collide with the hopelessness he felt: “Don’t be afraid. Only believe, and she will be saved” (v. 50).

Jairus had come to Jesus, believing He could heal his daughter. Could he believe in Jesus now, in the face of death? In that moment, Jairus went all in with Jesus. Jairus turned toward home with Jesus. They heard the loud wailing and crying of

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mourners as they approached. Jesus corrected their perspective about death, which they found laughable. Jesus was delusional, as far as they are concerned. But He knew something they didn't. Jesus dismissed the crowds, nine of His disciples, and the mourners.

Six people enter the room when the girl lay dead: the girl's father and mother, three of His closest disciples, and Jesus. What happens next is mind-blowing. He tenderly took the dead girl's hand, which was a defiling act for a Jew, but Jesus was about to remove the source of any uncleanness. He said something very ordinary, something this girl would have heard almost every morning when her parents woke her. "Child, get up!"

When the One who is resurrection and life says "get up" to the dead, they got up. It was that simple. The astonished disciples and overjoyed parents were stunned by this truth. Jesus gave orders that food be brought for her, and that this holy moment be kept private.

Two desperate needs brought in faith to Jesus. Two great miracles mingled with personal attention by Jesus. This is who He is for us.

HOW CAN WE REMAIN SENSITIVE TO GOD'S LEADING WHEN WE FACE INTERRUPTIONS?

DID YOU KNOW?

Both the bleeding woman and Jairus exhibited bold faith that transcended social status quo or restrictions. Both heard about Jesus's miracles and desperately believed and needed to experience them themselves. Their actions show how faith compels individuals to overcome barriers, whether societal norms, personal shame, or fear of rejection. Both believed Jesus alone held the power to change their circumstances. Luke 8 highlights faith in Jesus isn't bound by human limitations or social expectations. As we defend our faith in today's postmodern cultural, this account offers evidence that Christ's power and compassion are for anyone who believes. Jesus's response to both—healing the woman and raising Jairus' daughter—proves His authority over illness, death, and societal barriers. How does this inspire you to trust Jesus boldly, even in situations where faith challenges cultural or personal boundaries?

Biblical Truth: Jesus is able to do above and beyond all we can ask or think.

What do Jesus's statements in verses 48 and 50 reveal about our faith and expectations of God?

LIVE IT

How will you respond to interruptions from people that throw your plans completely off?

Jesus provides an intense example of grace and focus when faced with interruptions. While on His way to heal Jairus's daughter, He was stopped by a woman in desperate need of healing. Instead of frustration, Jesus responded with compassion, addressing both needs fully. How can you reflect this Christ-like balance in your daily interactions, responding to interruptions with grace and purpose in today's hectic world?

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- **Become people-oriented.** Create a list of people you know who are facing some type of personal crisis (physical, spiritual, emotional, familial, relational). Pray Jesus meets their needs and makes God's love real for them.
- **Check your heart.** Ask God to give you a heart of compassion for people who are hurting and desperately in need of what only Jesus can provide.
- **Trust over fear.** Receive Jesus's word, "Don't be afraid. Only believe." Reflect on Psalm 23:4, Psalm 56:3, and Hebrews 13:5b-6, and trust Him when fear comes.

DAILY READINGS

1. A COMPASSIONATE INTERRUPTION // LUKE 8:40-42

While watching a talk show, I was inspired by a guest called a hero and earth angel. Due to past mistakes, he was not pleased with his life, but God had a purpose for him. On a day of fishing, his life was interrupted when he saved a drowning teenager with cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Six weeks later, while driving in the wrong direction, he saw an elderly man trapped in a burning car and pulled him to safety.²² God interrupted his life twice to save someone else. Jesus, in the midst of a crowd, stops to listen to Jairus' desperate pleas to heal his dying daughter. Each story was a divine, compassionate interruption guided by God.

Divine interruptions lead to your purpose!

2. A HEM HEALING // LUKE 8:43-48

Encountering God during challenging times can lead to life-changing moments. In Luke 8, the woman with the issue of blood was determined to reach Jesus. Her faith was so strong that she knew if she touched Him, she would be healed. With the crowd pressing so close, she could only touch the hem of his robe. Amazingly, she was instantly healed. Jesus felt His power leave Him and asked, "Who touched me? Nervously, she confessed, and Jesus praised her faith. Often, we believe we have strong faith, but do we? What is our faith like when we are in crisis? In our predicament, may we remain faithful and believe in Him.

Let us sing, If I could just touch the hem of His garment, I know I'll be made whole.²³

3. SHE IS ALIVE // LUKE 8:49-50, 54-56

Don't you love how Jesus easily moves from one crisis to another? Jesus is on his way to Jairus' house when he receives the message that Jairus' daughter has died. Those in attendance said, "Do not bother the teacher anymore." However, Jesus responded that it was no bother. He reassures

Jairus to have no fear, just believe. Matthew 19:26 tells us that with God, all things are possible. Jesus is working in a different realm where he controls life and death. We have all experienced overwhelming situations where we feel hopeless, but God! His authority is beyond our earthly boundary. Jesus, showing kindness and compassion, revives Jairus' daughter just by taking her hand.

Lord, I believe in your power. Thank you for your compassion toward humanity.

4. HAVE PATIENCE // PSALM 27:14

In our lives, waiting is difficult, especially when we are waiting for God to do what He promised. In Acts 1, Jesus instructs his disciples to wait for the promised Holy Spirit. I imagine the disciples are wondering how long it would take. Will it be today or tomorrow? The expression "pack your patience" means to prepare yourself for a situation that may be stressful or frustrating. This situation was stressful because the anticipation of receiving the power of the Holy Spirit was exciting. The disciples were instructed to wait and pray, we are also called to wait patiently and pray. So, take a seat with the disciples and patiently wait; The Holy Spirit will arrive soon.

Lord, teach me to wait patiently for your promise. In Jesus's Name. Amen.

5. REAL HOLY POWER // LUKE 4:14

The world wants power and influence but this worldly power is temporary. In Acts 1, Jesus is sending a power so great it is like a rushing wind and tongues of fire. The disciples are eagerly waiting to fulfill their mission of sharing the gospel and for the Holy Spirit. Yet, Jesus reminds them everything is in God's timing. We have to trust in God's timing and be faithful in our waiting for his promises. Here is what we can do while we wait – pray as a unified body of believers for God's divine wisdom.

Holy Spirit, empower us this week to fulfill your will. Amen.