

RELATED SCRIPTURES

STUDY FOR SERMON FROM 1.8.23

Numbers 19:11-13 | Leviticus 15:25-30 | Mark 2:15-17

SUMMARY

In his gospel, Mark often utilizes a technique that scholars have named the “Markian sandwich.” Mark will begin a narrative, take what seems like a detour into another story, and then come back and complete the first narrative. The interesting fact about the middle part—or the detour—is that it’s not really a detour; it’s detail that reinforces the overarching point. As Mark begins this particular account, we read of a man named Jairus who pleads for his daughter’s life; she is at the point of death. As Jesus begins to go to Jairus’ daughter, our story is interrupted by another soul in distress—a woman who has suffered 12 years with a discharge of blood. What these two individuals have in common might seem apparent—they’re both very sick and in need of a physician. What’s not so apparent is their ceremonial condition. A woman with this sort of illness—as if being a social pariah wasn’t enough—would have also been considered “unclean” and unfit to enter worship at the temple. Similarly, as the account continues, we learn that Jairus’ daughter dies before Jesus arrives. As a result, those that came from Jairus’ house with the sad news said, “Why trouble the Teacher any further?” Indeed, they said this because she was now dead, but like the woman with the discharge of blood, the little girl, who is dead, is now unclean; moreover, anyone who comes into contact with a corpse would also be considered ceremonially unclean. So perhaps Jesus should just stay away? But this is what makes Jesus the Great Physician; not only does he provide healing in both instances, he does what no other can do; he makes the unclean *clean again*. He meets the need in the moment, but his actions also point us forward to what he will do for all who believe in him—make us well, make us clean, and give us new life.

GROUP QUESTIONS

From the sermon or your direct reading of Mark 5:21-42, share something that surprises, encourages, or troubles you.

There’s a common theme of desperation in these two accounts. Can you think of a time when you were desperate for the Lord’s intervention? What can this passage teach us about such situations?

Detail the characteristics you see in Jesus in this account. Of those characteristics, which are you in most need of development? How do we do this?

If there’s one thing Jesus would want you to walk away believing and receiving as a result of this portion of Scripture, what is that thing?

CLOSE IN PRAYER

As you pray, be sure to include today’s themes in what you bring before God.