



Sermon Growth Guide

July 13, 2025

There is Kindness

Luke 8:40-56

Key Verse: Luke 8:47 - “Then the woman, seeing that she could not go unnoticed, came trembling and fell at his feet. In the presence of all the people, she told why she had touched him and how she had been instantly healed.”

Big Idea: Jesus took the time to listen to this woman’s story and celebrate her healing with her.

Foundations

This passage describes two individuals desperately in need of Jesus to change their circumstances. It also reveals the kindness of Jesus in His response to them.

First, we’re told of a woman who “had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors” (Mark 5:26) for 12 years yet was worse after spending all she had.

Despite the press of the crowd around Him and the need of one who’d already asked His help, Jesus paused what he was doing long enough to listen to this woman’s story. His response reminds us that Jesus wants to hear our story as well. And it encourages us to pause long enough to listen to the stories of others.

We also read of Jairus, who learned of his daughter’s death while waiting for Jesus to come help her. Though the story has a happy ending when Jesus restored the girl to life, it also speaks to all who are only partway through our stories, wondering why God is seemingly taking His time in responding to what feel to us like important needs.

Understanding God’s Word

Together, read Luke 8:40-56. Then read Leviticus 15:25.

Given what we’re told of this woman’s situation, how would you assess her state of mind as she approached Jesus? How did what she hoped to receive from Jesus compare to her actual experience?

How would you describe Jairus’ roller-coaster experience in this story?

What observations about Jesus can we make from these two encounters?

Applying God’s Word

When you’re not doing well, what can make it hard for you to share this with others? With how many in your life would you say you could comfortably share your struggles?

How do you handle moments of praying for something and not seeing a similar urgency in God’s response to what you’re feeling?

Witnessing God’s Word

Who around you this week needs to experience the kindness of Jesus through you?

I invite you turn to Luke 8, as we continue our series In the Face of Jesus. There's a lot in today's passage, which brought to mind the first sermon I ever preached. I shared my manuscript with our senior pastor early that week and asked for feedback. I can still remember sitting in his office, hoping to hear that I was on the right track. I also remember the pastor's first words: "You have five sermons in here!" Those words have shaped my preaching the last 38 years.

Today's text covers two stories about two individuals who brought two different needs to Jesus. One sermon! For as we explore in this series what the nine fruit of the Spirit look like in Jesus and in us, the unifying theme of both stories today (There is kindness) is the kindness of Jesus. Let's see what this looks like in Luke 8:40-56.

I don't know every story in this room, but I think it's safe to say that many of you are silently struggling this morning. Years ago, Billy Graham's daughter Ruth wrote a book titled, *In Every Pew Sits a Broken Heart*. Some of us are nursing hearts that ache from loss, disappointment, or loneliness. Others are discouraged by physical pain or limitations, depression, or a future that's uncertain.

That's our reality within; yet when we're in public, we tend to put on our game faces. We seek to convey to those around us that we have our act together: that we're fine . . . even when we're not. We smile at each other this morning, but some of us aren't doing so well.

Perhaps we're unsure how to share what's going on. Or perhaps we're not sure others will value it. Years ago, John Powell wrote a book titled *Why Am I Afraid to Tell You Who I Am?* In the book, Powell answered his own question: "I am afraid to tell you who I am, because if I tell you who I am, you may not like who I am, and it's all that I have." John Powell If you're not silently hurting this morning, there's a good chance someone around you is.

I just described a pretty significant need; today's passage also touches on another one. Some of us may be struggling with God's seeming lack of responsiveness to our prayers. What do we do when we ask for God's help in some way and don't see the same urgency from Him that we feel? We may find ourselves wondering what this indicates about His love

for us, or interest in our needs. Some of us may even be questioning whether our faith is strong enough to continue holding us up.

If you're silently hurting in some way, or feel tension with what seems like God's disinterest, today's text reveals the kindness of Jesus in ways I hope you'll find encouraging.

Let's look first at a hurting woman:

As Jesus was on his way, the crowds almost crushed him. And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years, but no one could heal her. She came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak, and immediately her bleeding stopped.

"Who touched me?" Jesus asked.

When they all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the people are crowding and pressing against you."

But Jesus said, "Someone touched me; I know that power has gone out from me."

Then the woman, seeing that she could not go unnoticed, came trembling and fell at his feet. In the presence of all the people, she told why she had touched him and how she had been instantly healed. Then he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace."

(Luke 8:42b-48)

Think what you were doing 12 years ago, in 2013; that's how long this woman had suffered from this illness. She was likely dealing with menstrual bleeding. Mark adds some additional details in his Gospel: She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. (Mark 5:26)

"Cures" for this woman's issue in those days included carrying the ashes of an ostrich-egg in a linen bag in the summer and cotton bag in the winter. If that didn't work, she could always carry pieces of barley corn found in the dung of a white donkey. We roll our eyes, but this woman had likely tried these and more that were prescribed, only to become worse. She'd lost her health. She'd lost all her money. And she was close to losing all hope. When all else had failed, she turned to Jesus. Interestingly, this woman's healing came not from Jesus' touch, but from her desperate touch of Him.

This story leaves out an important detail that

Luke's readers would have known: This woman shouldn't have been in that crowd. Her medical condition made her ritually unclean. The Old Testament book of Leviticus makes this clear: When a woman has a discharge of blood for many days at a time other than her monthly period or has a discharge that continues beyond her period, she will be unclean as long as she has the discharge. (Leviticus 15:25)

When this woman went out in public, she was supposed to avoid touching people and to call out a warning so no one would touch her. If any did, they also became unclean for the next seven days, unable to worship God. This woman came into contact with many as she approached Jesus, for Luke tells us the crowds almost crushed (Jesus) (8:43). When he asked who touched Him, his disciples seemed astounded at the question. They essentially answered, "What do you mean, who touched you? Jesus, everyone is touching you!"

Why did Jesus put this woman on the spot by asking her to identify herself? He knew how furious those around her would be when they learned what she'd done. She did too, which is likely why we're told she was trembling as she responded to Jesus. In the kindness of Jesus, He wanted to continue ministering to this woman. Mark's account tells us that Jesus had a conversation with her. In Mark's words, she told the whole story. After 12 years of suffering, that was a lot to share.

Years ago, our Senior Pastor Jim Singleton preached this passage and his description of this conversation still makes me laugh: "First, I started w/Dr Zechariah; he was good but couldn't fix what was wrong. Then I went to see Dr. Abijah; he was a quack and took my money for nothing. Then I tried some mail-order herbs and they did nothing."

Do you see what was happening here? Amidst the demands of the crowd plus another who was waiting on Him, Jesus took the time to listen to the story of a woman who'd been socially isolated the past 12 years. He affirmed her importance, then publicly declared for all to hear that she'd been healed.

Is there something you want to say to Jesus today? Know that in His kindness, He's ready to listen, respond, and affirm.

We could stop there, but our passage describes another who also needed kindness from Jesus. These two stories appear in three of our four Gospels; each time, they're intertwined together. Let's read the beginning of our text again:

Now when Jesus returned, a crowd welcomed him, for they were all expecting him. Then a man named Jairus, a synagogue leader, came and fell at Jesus' feet, pleading with him to come to his house because his only daughter, a girl of about twelve, was dying. As Jesus was on his way, the crowds almost crushed him. (Luke 8:40-42)

When our first child was born, I remember holding him in my arms for the first time and instinctively thinking, "I would do anything for you." So, it's not hard to understand this father's heartache as his daughter slipped toward death. The Bible repeatedly reveals that religious leaders weren't on the best of terms with Jesus. Jairus' desperation is clear in his willingness to approach Jesus. He'd probably rehearsed his words in advance, but when he reached Jesus Jairus fell to the ground pleading for his help.

Imagine Jairus's relief when Jesus agreed to help and began following/home. Then, imagine his growing tension when Jesus became distracted by someone else. I find myself wondering if Jairus wanted to shout, "Jesus, I got you first—let's go!" He was surely dying inside during every moment he had to wait for Jesus to focus on his need again. And then came the news Jairus had dreaded: While Jesus was still speaking, someone came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader. "Your daughter is dead," he said. "Don't bother the teacher anymore." (Luke 8:49) As our friend Jim Edwards put it in his commentary on Mark: "The interruption, so profitable to the woman, has cost the life of Jairus' daughter."

We previously read the remainder of this story, so we know it had a happy ending.

But Jairus didn't know this at that moment. All he could see was that Jesus seemingly hadn't valued his daughter's life as much as Jairus did. By pausing with this woman, He refused to respond with the same urgency Jairus was feeling.

This passage speaks to all who are only partway through our stories, wondering why God is taking His time. Though Jairus's story ended well, we're never sure, as we wait, what our own outcome will be. It's hard to see the kindness of Jesus when He doesn't seem to care about our needs as much as we do.

One of our pastors, Junior McGarrahan, shared an image years ago that I've found helpful. She suggested viewing our prayers as a triangle. The left side represents prayers we offer to God. The right side represents God's response to our prayers. The bottom represents the time we walk through before we can often see those answers. Though we may not yet see glimpses of God's kindness that we long for, His silence and delay are never indicators of inattentiveness or disinterest. After all, God waited until the third day after Jesus' death before restoring Him to life. The timing of Jesus' kindness is never arbitrary; there's always purpose to it.

As you ponder these stories this morning, I want to leave you with two questions. First, Where do you need to experience the kindness of Jesus? Perhaps, like this woman, you're hurting in ways the world around you doesn't realize or seem to care about. If that's the case, we'd love to connect you with Stephen Ministers who'll listen on a weekly basis. You can request one today at tables in the Commons and Plaza. Or look for a member of our Prayer Team after this service and every Sunday. They're there to listen and to pray.

Maybe, like Jairus, you're struggling to see God's love and care in response to your need. One of the benefits of a faith community is that we can lean upon the faith of others when ours is weak. If you're not part of one, would you consider joining a Sunday morning community or a weekly gathering where you can experience the kindness of Jesus through others?

Second, Who needs to experience the kindness of Jesus through you? Earlier I mentioned our Stephen Ministers and Prayer Team members. What would happen if we all listened with kindness to each other? Like Jesus, to stop, ask, and listen even when other demands may be tugging at us or the story is long? To ask someone what their suffering has been like, and how've they've maintained a sense of hope?

Kindness is manifested through a genuine interest in the affairs of others. Can you think of someone you might move toward this week or even today to ask and listen? When you do, you share with them the kindness you've received from Jesus.

Some years ago, Joshua Bell, one of America's greatest violinists, put on a t-shirt and baseball cap and performed in a Washington, DC subway station on his \$3.5 million instrument. During the 43 minutes Bell played, only seven people stopped to listen for at least a minute. Twenty-seven gave money, most of them on the run, for a total of \$32—though \$20 was from someone who recognized Bell from a concert the previous night. Nearly 1100 others hurried by, oblivious to the talent before them.

Too often, the crowd around us pays little attention to what's really going on. In contrast, Jesus stopped what he was doing long enough to listen to a hurting woman's story. He's just as interested in yours. Would you trust Him or others with it? Similarly, He invites each of us to become more attentive to those silently hurting around us.

Jesus extends to you the same kindness he offered two hurting people in a crowd. And He longs for each of us to become an extension of His kindness to those around us.