

Rev. Dustin Daniels | River Bible Church
Matthew 9:18-26 | Death: The Eventual Enemy
Sunday, September 3, 2023

WELCOME:

- Please turn your Bibles to Matthew 9.
- Bibles in the back—our gift to you.

REVIEW:

Last Sunday, we learned how to *lose our religion*.

“Religion” is a set of rules and/or rituals people believe they must do to make God happy.

“Religion”—continuing to do something because we’ve always done it that way—many times, we don’t know why—but we will keep doing it anyway.

And not only must religious people keep their rules and obey them, but they also inflict their rules and rituals on everyone around them.

We met Larry the Legalist, last week—he meets young Johnny Christian and starts giving him things to do and not do.

He starts to “should on” people—“you should do this and shouldn’t do that.”

LW KEYPOINT 1:

Religious rituals and routines will always impact your relationship with Jesus.

Why? Because any religious activity is absolutely meaningless if it’s not connected to a spiritual need.

And those spiritual needs are found in God’s book—not Larry’s opinion.

In other words, whenever you divorce the physical activity from spiritual need, you'll find yourself carrying a religious burden you were never intended to carry.

LW KEYPOINT 2:

The Gospel cannot be contained through religious rules and rituals.

Because the Gospel is about a relationship!

The commandments in the OT were to do one thing: reveal our sinfulness.

It was to prove that we're not perfect, like God's justice demands.

The Gospel is about freedom—

John 8:32—You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.

Question: Where is the truth found? BIBLE!

It's for freedom that Jesus Christ set you free! (Gal. 5:1)

Does a criminal who just made parole want to go back to prison?

Now make sure that you stay free, and don't get tied up again in slavery to the law. (Gal. 5.1).

Here's the problem with freedom—we don't know how to act when Jesus sets us free.

Legalism is easy for a short time—just tell me what to do and not do—the problem is that we can't keep it up for long.

We try too—but we can't.

Jesus showed us that with His Sermon on the Mount.

If we continue to try and keep the rules, we'll be crushed by the giant boulder we're trying to roll up Mount Sinai.

LW KEYPOINT 3:

Today's Church has no more authority to issue rules and regulations than the Pharisees.

A new study that came out gave many reasons people are not attending church.

I found it interesting that one of the reasons NOT mentioned was legalism.

People stopped coming to church because churches were acting the same way the Scribes and Pharisees did throughout the Gospel—

Pastors are spiritually abusing people.

They're using their pulpits to beat people down into submission rather than raising them up and teaching them the promises of Almighty God.

We've got too many pulpits and not enough God-fearing pastors to fill them—so what happens?

The churches hire Biblically unqualified pulpiteers— who run the church like a local community center—as long as we got people in the seats—that's all that matters.

I hope last week we learned that the cure for legalism is the Gospel.

In the Gospel, we learn that God loves us without conditions.

God chose us and called us—and accepts us not because of our performance—

But because of the person and the performance of Jesus Christ.

Nothing impresses God more than His Son, Jesus Christ.

KEYPOINT:

God's promise + Jesus Performance = Grace.

INTRODUCTION:

Today, we're going to see Jesus' grace in action by meeting two new characters.

The first is a wealthy, educated, and well-known man in the Jewish community.

The second is a woman, a Gentile outcast.

As different as these two people are, we will learn some striking similarities.

Similarities not only between them—but also similarities with us.

What are they? Why do you care?

Let's find out.

Please stand for the reading and honoring of God's Word.

SCRIPTURE:

Matthew 9:18—As he was telling them these things, suddenly one of the leaders came and knelt down before him, saying, "My daughter just died, but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live."

Matthew 9:19— So Jesus and his disciples got up and followed him.

Matthew 9:20— Just then, a woman who had suffered from bleeding for twelve years approached from behind and touched the end of his robe,

Matthew 9:21— for she said to herself, "If I can just touch his robe, I'll be made well."

Matthew 9:22— Jesus turned and saw her. "Have courage, daughter," he said. "Your faith has saved you.", And the woman was made well from that moment.

Matthew 9:23— When Jesus came to the leader's house, he saw the flute players and a crowd lamenting loudly.

Matthew 9:24— "Leave," he said, "because the girl is not dead but asleep." And they laughed at him.

Matthew 9:25— After the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl got up.

Matthew 9:26— Then news of this spread throughout that whole area.

These are the very words from the authoritative, inerrant, inspired, and infallible Word of Almighty God.

PRAY:

*Lord, do not abandon me;
my God, do not be far from me.
Hurry to help me,
my Lord, my salvation.* (Psalm 38:21-22)

EXEGESIS:

Matthew 9:18—As he (Jesus) was telling them (John's Disciples) these things (fasting/manmade religious rules), suddenly one of the leaders came and knelt down before him (Jesus), saying, "My daughter just died, but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live."

Big picture first—these two stories are also in Mark and Luke's accounts.

Once again, Matthew summarizes what happened while Mark and Luke provide more details.

Matthew 9:18—suddenly one of the leaders came and knelt down before him (Jesus),

Who is the leader?

Luke 8:41 NLT—Then a man named Jairus, a leader of the local synagogue,

Jairus means “God Enlightens.”

Luke provides his name and occupation.

This is very important.

The synagogue in the first century was similar to the local church today.

Each synagogue had ten leaders, called elders.

Of those ten, one was elected by the other nine to be the ruler.

The ruler of the synagogue was a man of tremendous importance.

Not only was he in charge of the synagogue, but he would also settle civic disputes.

Synagogue rulers had power and, prosperity, influence, and impact.

Jairus was this man—the highest-ranking religious official in Capernaum.

Jairus may have been a Pharisee himself.

So Matthew paints the scene—Jesus is answering questions about fasting from the disciples of John the Baptizer.

Suddenly, Jairus comes into the picture.

Everybody knows Jairus, so people probably think that Jairus has a question for Jesus.

But Jairus does something very odd for a man of his stature.

Matthew 9:18—suddenly one of the leaders came and knelt down before him,

Both Mark and Luke say that Jairus... *fell at Jesus' feet*.

Your translation may say, “worship.”

Whenever someone runs up to someone else and falls at their feet, that will disrupt the current conversation, won't it?

Jairus barges on in and says....

Matthew 9:18—~~saying~~ “My daughter just died, but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live.”

Mark tells us that she is 12 years old.

This is an amazing statement from Jairus.

In it, we see two things:

First, Jairus has a deep need—his daughter has died.

Secondly, we see his faith in Jesus.

Pause—Where did this faith come from?

Jairus is the epitome of the Pharisaic religious establishment.

He's the poster boy for "religion."

He's Larry the Legalist!

Why didn't Jairus run to the Jewish doctors in town?

Why isn't Jairus at the synagogue receiving emotional and spiritual support from the other Elders?

well You can bet that Jairus knew about all the healings, miracles, and even the forgiveness of sins from Jesus.

But here's the thing—Jesus hadn't performed a resurrection miracle yet.

Regardless...

X **Matthew 9:18**— *but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live."*

Luke says that Jairus *pleaded with Jesus*. (Luke 8:41)

It's not very often you see a well-respected man with his credentials on his face begging for help—but that was the case with Jairus.

It's as if Jairus said this—

My daughter has died. But I have faith in you. I've heard the stories. I've listened to you preach. I may not know exactly who you are—a prophet or the Messiah—I don't know yet. But what I do know is that God is with you in a way that I don't understand. You remind me of Elijah (1 Kings 17:17–24) and Elisha (2 Kings 4:32–37). And just as they raised the dead, I think that you can raise my daughter from the dead, too.

Jairus was desperate and, emotional, and faithful.

He had nowhere else to turn—but to Jesus.

What were his religious friends thinking?

Has Jairus gone crazy? What is he doing? Am I really seeing Jairus groveling at the feet of some uneducated, unordained, preacher from Nazareth?

The answer is yes. Why?

What are his religious friends going to do?

What rule could Jairus keep to bring his daughter back to life?

What ritual could he perform to make God happy?

Answer: None. Why?

KEYPOINT 1:

Death changes everything.

Sooner or later, we all have to come to terms that we are going to die.

We have to come to terms that those around us are also going to die.

If we never think about death, we will absolutely freak out when tragedy strikes.

And make no doubt about it, Jairus is freaking out...

How does Jesus respond to Jairus' outrageous request of resurrection?

Matthew 9:19— *So Jesus and his disciples got up and followed him.*

Notice that Jesus didn't rebuke Jairus for his motive.

Jesus didn't say, "Oh, you of little faith."

For many of us today, desperation was a prime factor in our testimony.

There's no shame in asking for help—in fact, that's the whole point of Jesus' Gospel—asking for help is the only way to Heaven.

Someone once said that the theme song in Hell, is Frank Sinatra's "I did it my way."

Mark 5:24 NLT— *Jesus went with him, and all the people followed, crowding around him.*

Of course they followed—everybody wants to see this!

There is a problem—the crowd of people following ^{AK} ~~Jesus~~ is making this trip take longer than it should.

Not only that, look what happens next...

Matthew 9:20— *Just then, a woman who had suffered from bleeding for twelve years approached from behind and touched the end of his (Jesus') robe,*

Who is this woman?

We don't know—Matthew, Mark, or Luke don't know, and if they did, they didn't include her name.

All we know is that she has suffered from a certain bleeding condition for twelve years.

We don't know the exact cause of the bleeding.

We can take an educated guess that she was suffering from excessive menstrual bleeding.

Her condition renders her barren because of her constant hemorrhaging.

It's hard for us to understand the impact of this illness. *in first century.*

Whatever the cause, the bleeding would have weakened her.

She would have been anemic—pale, low energy.

She was susceptible to other diseases.

Now, there is a debate on whether this woman is a Jew or a Gentile.

If she's a Jew, her continual bleeding made her ceremonially unclean.

Leviticus 15 outlines those details.

This meant that she couldn't go to church.

If she did, she would contaminate everyone she touched, meaning they were now unclean.

Her own family couldn't be around her—she couldn't touch her husband if she married before the illness.

She is certainly single now if she was single when the bleeding started.

She's got no way to make a living—except to beg.

In other words, this woman has lived in nearly complete isolation for the past twelve years if she's a Jew.

But I don't think she's a Jew—she's a Gentile.

She reminds me of there Syrophoenician woman—a Gentile who asked Jesus for the crumbs of bread from the Jews table. (Mark 7:26)

Here's why: Let's look at the story more closely.

Luke says this woman could find no cure (Luke 8:43).

Mark says that she suffered greatly at the hands of many doctors—not only that—she spent everything she had to pay them. (Mark 5:26).

So this woman has gone from doctor to doctor, suffering physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

Doctors in the first century were primarily pagan.

Dr. Luke, our Gospel writer, is an exception to that rule.

Secondly, look at how she approaches Jesus.

Matthew 9:20— ... approached from behind and touched the end of his robe,

Mark 5:27 NLT—She had heard about Jesus, so she came up behind him through the crowd and touched his robe.

She comes up behind Jesus because she's an outsider.

She's coming before Jesus like the Syrophenician woman—who called herself a dog.

She's not Jewish, but she's so desperate that she cut in line.

She comes through the back door, wanting to be unnoticed.

How do most Jewish people approach Jesus?

If you're Jewish, you come to Jesus like Jairus—why? Because they're in the family.

If you're Jewish—

- You come boldly before Jesus like the leper that Jesus healed. (Matt 8:2).
- You bring four friends to cut a hole in the ceiling. (Matt. 9:1).

But she doesn't do that...

Matthew 9:21— *for she said to herself, "If I can just touch his robe, I'll be made well."*

Here's another reason I think she's a Gentile.

In Greek, verse 21 conveys the idea of repetition—she kept saying this to herself like a chant...

"If I can just touch his robe, I'll be made well." (x 3.)

What does this tell us about her faith?

It's filled with all sorts of pagan superstition!

This woman doesn't have great faith.

The woman's faith seems desperate and confused.

She thinks Jesus' clothes have power.

She plans to sneak up from behind, where Jesus can't see her, get healed, and then run off.

She thinks, "I have to touch him," which is both wrong and right.

She is wrong, since Jesus can heal without a touch.

But she is right that she does need to make contact with him.

Because of the crowd, she also comes into contact with dozens of other people.

If she is Jewish—she makes everyone she touches unclean as well—which everyone needs to go through a ritual.

Evidently, she doesn't give a rip about any of that.

Matthew 9:21— for she said to herself, "If I can just touch his robe, I'll be made well."

Luke 8:44 NLT— Coming up behind Jesus, she touched the fringe of his robe.

On the end of Jesus' robe were tassels.

According to Biblical requirements, Jewish men were to make blue tassels and place them on the four corners of their robes. (Num. 15:38; cf. Deut. 22:12).

The tassels were woven in a way that reflected God's Word.

So, whenever a Jew put his clothes on and took them off, he would see the tassels and be reminded of God's Word.

The apostle Paul said to put on righteousness, which the Jews did. It was a reminder. (Eph. 6)

We do something similar today with our crosses.

Whether it's a ring on our finger or a necklace around our neck, it's a reminder of grace.

Matthew 9:21— *for she said to herself, "If I can just touch his robe, I'll be made well."*

This is amazing!

At this moment, this woman forsakes her faith in human doctors—

She abandons her pagan gods— and turns to grab the Word of God represented in the Tassel.

Her reach represents a trusting in God and not pagan practices, myths, or superstitions.

She grabs the Word of God, wearing the Word of God!

Guess what happens?

Mark 5:29 NLT— Immediately the bleeding stopped, and she could feel in her body that she had been healed of her terrible condition.

So what's she thinking? "AHH! It worked!"

What's Jesus thinking, "AHH! What happened?"

Mark 5:30 NLT— Jesus realized at once that healing power had gone out from him, so he turned around in the crowd and asked, “Who touched my robe?”

Mark 5:31 NLT— His disciples said to him, “Look at this crowd pressing around you. How can you ask, ‘Who touched me?’”

Mark 5:32 NLT— But he (Jesus) kept on looking around to see who had done it.

Luke 8:45 NLT— “Who touched me?” Jesus asked. Everyone denied it, and Peter said, “Master, this whole crowd is pressing up against you.”

If ever there was an incident when the disciples became annoyed with Jesus, it was this one.

In other words— *Who hasn't touched you—come on we get going—we got things to do, people to see, and people to resurrect?*

Luke 8:46 NLT— But Jesus said, “Someone deliberately touched me, for I felt healing power go out from me.”

So picture the scene—Jesus stops, and He’s not moving until he finds out who this someone is.

Jairus is losing his mind right now!

Now, while all this is happening, what’s Jairus thinking?

Hey, we don't have time for this! You can't just barge in line, lady—me first! My daughter is dead!

Jairus may have resented the woman for getting in the way.

for JAIRUS
 But his real problem is not the woman at this moment—the real problem is with his own heart.

This woman being ministered to was a divine disruption to Jairus' life.

Jairus doesn't need Jesus to walk faster—He needs more faith.

+ **KEYPOINT 2:**

Interruptions are divine opportunities to build faith.

+ **Luke 8:47 NLT**—When the woman realized that she could not stay hidden, she began to tremble and fell to her knees in front of him. The whole crowd heard her explain why she had touched him and that she had been immediately healed.

She comes in fear and trembling because she is a Gentile.

She's not in the family of God.

She's not a daughter of the synagogue like Jairus' daughter.

Can you hear the panic in her voice as she weeps and trembles in telling her heartbreaking story?

She's been sick as long as Jairus' daughter has been alive—12 years!

And because God the Father chose and healed this woman through Jesus, Jesus takes the time for everyone to hear her story.

Jesus makes this woman give a public witness to God's glory. Why?

Because she's a Gentile in the presence of Jews.

Salvation has come to the Gentiles to make the Jews jealous.

Nobody gets privacy when it comes to salvation. — *SAVE for us*

Salvation is a personal matter, not private. — *BAPTISM / CELEBRATION (public)*
 God didn't choose to save you privately.

During the Exodus, where did they put the lamb's blood so the angel of death would pass over their home? — Under the welcome mat?

Nope, they smeared that blood all over the front door frame— They made a cross.

Their faith wasn't private.

Jesus didn't die in private.

He was crucified on the main road for all the world to see.

Believers don't get saved privately—nor are unbelievers judged privately.

BTW, Hell is not a private place either.

So after this woman gets healed and shares her testimony...

+ **Matthew 9:22**— *Jesus turned and saw her. "Have courage, daughter,"*

Jesus didn't say—Look lady I've got to get Jairus' daughter resurrected because he's such an outstanding godly man being an elder and all—if this works, we may have a revival.

No, Jesus calms her down by calling her 'daughter.'

BTW, if God calls her daughter, what does that mean?

It means she's now in the family of God.

She's been born again!

Matthew 9:22—*"Your faith has saved you."* And the woman was made well from that moment.

Time out! How in the world did her faith save her?

Her faith is not only imperfect like the rest of us—but hers was really messed up.

Her faith was a mixture of all sorts of pagan superstition—she lives in Sedona!

She didn't keep the Mosaic Law—she didn't even know who Moses was!

And yet, at the same time, her faith was childlike—she truly believed that Jesus could heal.

And she was right.

So, what's Jesus showing us here?

Good news! You don't need to have all your theological ducks in a row to come to Jesus.

You just need to come to him!

But with that said, what's really going on with her faith?

Matthew 9:22—*"Your faith has saved you."*

Did this woman have some type of inherent supernatural pagan power that was exploited when she touched Jesus' robe?

Did her little chant actually work?

The prosperity preachers will point to this passage and tell you—*All you have to do is believe! All you need to do is have the right amount of faith and you can name it and claim it!*

Is that what Jesus is saying?

No!

The answer to our question lies in the word, “saved.”

The verb in Greek is *sōzō*.

It can mean to save physically or spiritually.

The context of the story ~~says it all~~.

determines its meaning.

Let me give you an example. = *Lepers*

+ **Luke 17:11 NLT**— As Jesus continued on toward Jerusalem, he reached the border between Galilee and Samaria.

+ **Luke 17:12 NLT**— As he entered a village there, ten men with leprosy stood at a distance,

+ **Luke 17:13 NLT**— crying out, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!”

+ **Luke 17:14 NLT**— He looked at them and said, “Go show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went, they were cleansed of their leprosy.

They were healed physically.

+ **Luke 17:15 NLT**— One of them, when he saw that he was healed, came back to Jesus, shouting, “Praise God!”

physically

+ **Luke 17:16 NLT**— He fell to the ground at Jesus' feet, thanking him for what he had done. This man was a Samaritan.

A Samaritan is not only a non-Jew, a Gentile—but one of the most hated Gentiles by the Jews.

Luke 17:17 NLT— Jesus asked, “Didn’t I heal ten men? Where are the other nine?”

Luke 17:18 NLT— Has no one returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?”

Most have been Jews: Gentiles

Luke 17:19 NLT— And Jesus said to the man, “Stand up and go. **Your faith has healed you.**”

Jesus says the same thing to the leper as he does the woman in our story today—
Your faith has saved/healed you.

Jesus uses *sōzō* – It’s one thing to be cleansed/healed physically—as the woman and the leper.

It’s entirely different to be healed spiritually.

In other words, there is a cleansing of ten lepers. There is only a saving of one.

This is where our prosperity preacher friends get it wrong.

Jesus took this woman’s inadequate superficial pagan faith and first he healed her physically—and then saved her soul—as he did with the leper.

KEYPOINT 3:

Faith itself does not do the healing— God does.

She wasn’t healed by her faith —she was healed by the sovereignty of God—just like everyone else.

She believed the most famous verse in the world before the apostle John penned it:

John 3:16— For God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

Romans 10:9—If you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. Sozo

Romans 10:10— One believes with the heart, resulting in righteousness, and one confesses with the mouth, resulting in salvation Sozo - foot

Romans 10:11— For the Scripture says, Everyone who believes on him will not be put to shame,,

Romans 10:12— since there is no distinction between Jew and because the same Lord of all richly blesses all who call on him. Gentile Greek,

Romans 10:13— For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved (sozo).

And that's what she did.

We don't have the capacity in ourselves to bring about physical or spiritual healing—only God does.

One thing that the prosperity preachers miss when they come to a passage like this is that Jesus healed many people without faith.

physically

Jairus' dead daughter would be exhibit A—she obviously doesn't have faith—she's dead!

So, after all this drama, Jesus and the crowd start walking again toward Jairus' home.

Who knows how long that delayed everything.

Matthew 9:23— *When Jesus came to the leader's house, he saw the flute players and a crowd lamenting loudly.*

What's with all the racket? Is this a party? No, it's a Jewish funeral.

In our culture, we whisper, wear black the whole bit—not the first-century Jews.

To express grief, the Jews would hire professional mourners and musicians to weep, wail, and make noise.

Jesus shows up at Jairus' house...

Matthew 9:24— *"Leave," he said, "because the girl is not dead but asleep." And they laughed at him.*

And people have been laughing and mocking and scorning Jesus ever since.

"Sleep" implies that her death is not permanent.

Matthew 9:25— *After the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl got up.*

Matthew 9:26— *Then news of this spread throughout that whole area. At this point, we're not surprised that Jesus brought the girl back to life.*

The Old Testament prophets predicted that the Messiah would have resurrection power. (Isa. 30:26; 35:5–6; 53:5; Mal. 4:2; etc.).

And Jesus did exactly that. *- He'll do the same for you, - if you believe.*

PREACH:

It is interesting that Jairus and this woman—two completely and totally opposite people—met at the feet of Jesus.

Jairus was a leading Jewish man.

She was an anonymous poor and diseased Gentile woman.

He was a synagogue leader.

She worshipped man-made pagan idols.

Jairus' daughter had been healthy for 12 years.

The woman had been sick for 12 years.

As diverse as these two are—they have several things in common.

First, they came to Jesus because of their desperation.

They could not fix their problems on their own.

They humbled themselves.

Secondly, their faith was imperfect— but it was real.

I've titled this sermon, "Death: The Eventual Enemy."

Most of us don't like to think about death—let alone talk about it.

Jairus probably didn't think much about his 12-year-old girl dying—until she did.

On the other hand, the woman suffering for 12 years probably thought about death quite often.

The world we live in wants to escape death.

But who does that?

This twelve-year-old girl would grow up to only die once again.

The mortality rates holds steady at 100%.

This week, I hope you think about your death.

I hope you have your house in order when it comes to life insurance, will made out and funeral arrangements made. — Don't leave your family guessing what to do.
↳ financially prepared.

There is a Latin phrase that some monastic orders used to use—*Memento Mori*.

✝ It means: *Remember that you must die*—"remember death" for short.

In certain monastic communities (monks), they were encouraged to take one shovel of dirt per day to dig their graves.

Obviously, it is a vivid reminder of the reality of death.

Why is it a good practice to remember death?

Because you will only live your life properly unless you realize death's reality.

If you think that this life is all there is—if you think when you die, you just go into the ground and rot—and that's the end—

You will live your life entirely differently than someone who knows that this life is but a vapor.

Is everything you love on this side of death?

Are you afraid of death?

If you're a Christian, there is no need to fear.

The apostle Paul says, O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" (1 Cor. 15:52).

To live is Christ, to die is gain. (Philippians 1:21).

The Psalmist writes,

 **Psalm 42:2**— *I thirst for God, the living God. When can I go and stand before him?*

As Christians, we long to see Jesus face to face!

Memento Mori (Remember Death)

 **PRAYER**

BENEDICTION

For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:38-39)

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

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<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/sermons/healing-daughter>

