

The Compassion of Jesus

Mark 5:21-34

March 3, 2013

Introduction

One of the most beautiful descriptions of our Lord Jesus Christ is found in **Matthew 12:20**.

Matthew 12:20 *A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench.*

Matthew quotes this from **Isaiah 42:1-4**. This passage relates to Jesus the Beloved Servant, and it relates to how He serves those who are helpless and weak. This is a perfect descriptor of Jesus on earth. He came to be a servant and serve. He humbled Himself so that we might have life.

There is nothing more helpless than a bruised reed or a smoking flax. A reed is a plant that grows along the waters and it grows straight and tall. People use this plant for many things and when it is bent, it is worthless because it cannot support its weight or near death—it is often tossed aside. A smoking flax is what it says. The wick is smoking and has few embers left. There is barely any life in it. Those two items compose a picture of broken and helpless people trapped by circumstances, life or devastating sins. Yet Jesus will not break the bruised reeds or quench the smoking flax. He will not break these people. He will remake them and give them peace and strength. He will uphold them. This is a beautiful picture of the heart of God.

Psalms 103:13 *As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him.*

Isaiah 40:11 *He tends His flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in His arms and carries them close to His heart; He gently leads those that have young.*

Isaiah 63:7-9 *I will tell of the kindnesses of the LORD, the deeds for which He is to be praised, according to all the LORD has done for us—yes, the many good things He has done for the house of Israel, according to His compassion and many kindnesses. ⁸He said, "Surely they are My people, sons who will not be false to Me"; and so He became their Savior. ⁹In all their distress He too was distressed, and the Angel of His Presence saved them. In His love and mercy He redeemed them; He lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.*

Mark gives us the portrait of Jesus the Son of God and His compassion.

This story is also found in **Matthew 9:18-22** and **Luke 8:40-48**.

21 *When Jesus had again crossed over by boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around Him while He was by the lake.*

- Again, a familiar scene—Jesus by the lake and a large crowd
- We do not know which town He is in—it is suspected that He came back to Capernaum

22 *Then one of the synagogue rulers, named Jairus, came there. Seeing Jesus, he fell at His feet*

- Synagogue rulers—not a priest or scribe. He is not even a Pharisee
- He is a caretaker of the Synagogue—he is responsible for the preaching and who will be reading from the scroll (like what Jonathan is doing :)

- He is responsible for the upkeep of the building; security of the scrolls
- Apparently this synagogue has more than one ruler
- Note his reaction to Jesus—he falls at His feet...this even though the religious establishment is very hostile to Jesus (Luke records this as a surprise—“Behold” (8:41))
- Matthew said that the man worshipped Jesus (9:18)

23 *and pleaded earnestly with Him, "My little daughter is dying. Please come and put Your hands on her so that she will be healed and live."*

- He has seen the Lord perform miracles—maybe he has seen our Lord heal the man with the shriveled hand (3:1-9)
- Pleaded earnestly—this is a plea from his heart (depths of his soul)
- His daughter is at death’s door
- Luke says that this is his only daughter and she is twelve(8:42)
- “My little daughter” wow! What love this father has for his daughter!
- Jarius’ faith—he knows that Jesus can heal her
- Matthew adds that his daughter had died—he believes that Jesus can raise her from the dead! (9:18)
- There was no raising of the dead prior to this event so Jarius’ faith is genuine

24 *So Jesus went with him. A large crowd followed and pressed around Him.*

- Jesus responds to the man’s faith—He makes Himself available for him
- Note again the large crowd being an hindrance to His ministry
- Matthew adds that His disciples followed Him (9:19)

25 *And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years.*

- While Jesus and disciples were walking with Jarius to his daughter there is an interruption
- This woman does not have a name—contrast with Jarius
- This is a bruised reed and smoking flax if there was one
- This woman has been bleeding for 12 years—we are not told the nature of the bleeding
- She has had it as long as Jarius’ daughter has been alive
- This was a social problem—she was banned from the temple or synagogues because she is unclean
- **Lev 15** has much to say about women’s period and how they are unclean and anyone who touches them becomes unclean until sundown
- This has nothing to do with sin but to remind Israel of how sin soils, defiles, and corrupts

26 *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.*

- This is a physical problem—she suffered
- In **verse 29** “suffering” Mark uses the word “*mastigos*” which was a whip or scourge
- This was a painful illness
- Doctors could not help her—she got worse (one of the cure recommended is to have ashes of an ostrich egg in a linen sack and place it on the bleeding—not very helpful)
- Luke said (as a doctor) that this was an incurable disease (8:43)
- It was getting worse—she was probably dying

27 When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind Him in the crowd and touched His cloak, **28** because she thought, "If I just touch His clothes, I will be healed."

- This is her last hope—this is what faith is—"evidence of things hoped for"
- Because of her condition, she was hoping to be unnoticed—she is going through the crowds, knowing that she was making everyone unclean, but she wanted Jesus
- Matthew and Luke both agree that she touched the edge of His cloak—or His tassels

Numbers 15:38 "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'Throughout the generations to come you are to make tassels on the corners of your garments, with a blue cord on each tassel.'

- This was to identify the man as belonging to God
- She had faith in Jesus Christ and His ability to heal

29 Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering.

- I love what Mark says—Immediately!
- Health and vigor surged through her body (which was weakened)
- There was no magical solution in His robes—it was her faith
- God the Father had led her to Jesus so that He can heal her (**John 6:44**)
- There was no way she would have been healed unless God drew her to the Son!

30 At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from Him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched My clothes?"

- Jesus feels this divine power leaving him (Luke 8:42)
- This implies that God is not apart from us as a "force"
- God is personally involved with the creation and relationship with people
- This is what it means to be "in Christ"
- He is fully involved in our salvation to its fullness and its final completion in the power of the Holy Spirit
- He knew this woman's heart

John 2:25b for He knew what was in man.

- He came to seek and save the lost

Luke 19:10 for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.

- The woman came for healing physically, but the Son came to save her spiritually and wants her to acknowledge Him

Psalms 50:15 Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me.

31 "You see the people crowding against You," His disciples answered, "and yet You can ask, 'Who touched Me?'"

- Typical disciples' response—no spiritual understanding what has happened

32 *But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it.*

- Perfect example of irresistible grace
- Looking around—*peri*—perimeter
- Woman was persistent in obtaining healing; Jesus is persistent in meeting her!

33 *Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at His feet and, trembling with fear, told Him the whole truth.*

- Trembling with fear! Third fear mentioned by Mark—Disciples, Gardadese people and this woman
- This is holy fear—in the presence of God
- This is another pointer to Mark's theme that Jesus Christ is the Son of God
- Luke adds that she confessed before all the people (**8:47**)

34 *He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering."*

- Daughter! What a term of endearment—this is a phrase to dispel fear!
- Daughter of God
- Your faith has healed (saved) you
- She is saved spiritually—not only physically!
- Go in peace—Jesus does not give peace lightly (as the world does today) but to those who have indeed made their peace with God!
- He begins good work in you will be faithful to complete it! (**Phil 1:6**)

Are you glad that God is interruptible and that He will personally attend to your deepest needs? That He will save you and complete the work that He has begun in you?