

**Sermon Notes – June 30, 2024**  
**The Holy Gospel of St. Mark 5: 21-43**  
**Peace Lutheran Church**  
**“The Healing Touch!”**

Today's gospel account is an uncharacteristically long passage for Mark, and each detail drips with subtext. To do justice to this passage and its nuances, I might consider a message that is interwoven with the gospel reading itself. Rather than the traditional approach of reading the entire gospel text at once and then preaching on it, we may consider reading a short part of the text and then reflecting on it. Read several more verses, then reflect, and so forth. Slowing down the reading in this way can help us feel the desperation of Jairus as a father whose daughter is gravely ill, the tension of Jesus getting sidetracked along the way to Jairus's house, and the compassion with which Jesus treats both Jairus and the woman in the crowd.

By reading and reflecting on a few scripture verses at a time, I may help listeners take in each scene and reflect on the issues it raises. So many of these issues are relevant across times and cultures, such as the struggle within many world communities dealing with people and social factions. Do we truly hear the voices of all people in all places? Are all views taken to heart, or are they simply dismissed? Pause and take care when reading about the pain of hopes dashed again and again- “spent all that she had” (Mark 5: 26)-or lost for good-“Your daughter is dead” (5: 35). Imagine what the “whole truth” (5: 33) the woman told Jesus might have included. I wonder what it would look like if we were to lay our own whole truth before God. We might emphasize Mark's repeated use of the word *immediately* and connect it with God's immediacy and urgency toward us. Pause and consider what it is like to be in one's most desperate moment, and then to hear Jesus say, “Do not fear, only believe” (Mark 5: 36).

Interwoven in the message with this approach should be touch points with the other passages of the day: the deep distress and grief that both Jairus and David express, the rejection named in Lamentations that paints a scene of isolation and rejection but is somehow-unbelievably-laced with hope. Is this how the woman who was hemorrhaging felt? She had faced so many dead ends, so many failed treatments, yet still reached out

in hope that touching Jesus' cloak might bring healing. Her position of poverty and Jairus' position of power illustrate the contrast between poverty and wealth in 2 Corinthians. Paul proclaims that we live most fully in Christ when we share with one another both our needs and our abundance. Jesus became poor so that we may become rich. The wealth of life in Christ is greater than any material goods; it is the wealth of living in a promise that is both eternal and immediate: "Do not fear, only believe."