

The Gospel According to
Luke

“Foiling Four Fear Factors”

Part Two

Chapter 8:40-56

Introduction

These are episodes three and four of a reality series we're calling ***Faith Factor***. The cameras were rolling, following Jesus and His twelve disciples as He demonstrated how faith foils the four greatest fears we have as human beings:

1. In episode one, the disciples were caught in a **storm** as they were crossing the Sea of Galilee. Their fear of storms was foiled when Jesus rebuked the wind and waves.
2. In episode two, the disciples were confronted by **satanic** power as the demoniac of Gadera came out of the tombs to meet them as they hit shore. Their fear was again foiled as Jesus cast-out, not just one demon, but a legion of demons – leaving the man clothed and in his right mind.
3. In episode three, the woman with the flow of blood pressed forward to secretly touch the Lord. The fear Jesus foiled was our fear of **suffering** – especially chronic, incurable suffering.
4. Finally, in the season finale of episode four, Jesus foiled our greatest fear: The **separation** of our soul and spirit from the body at death.

Two of the episodes involve *physical* danger, and two involve *spiritual* danger. These four pretty well sum up all the circumstances you might fear, both in this life and in the next.

Suffering and **separation** at death are two things that can get very real and dramatic in your life. They still can strike fear in our hearts, even as Christians. But they shouldn't, and we want to explore the faith that is necessary to put them into perspective.

We'll organize our thoughts around two points: #1 Faith In Jesus Foils Your Fear Of Suffering, and #2 Faith In Jesus Foils Your Fear Of Separation.

#1 Faith In Jesus
Foils Your Fear Of Suffering
(v40-48)

Are you suffering? It doesn't have to be physical; it can be emotional... financial... social... even spiritual. Whatever you are presently suffering, or have suffered in the past, or will suffer tomorrow – this woman with the flow of blood is someone you can identify with.

The story begins with Jairus coming to Jesus, but the first few verses quickly turn our attention to the chronically suffering woman.

Luke 8:40 So it was, when Jesus returned, that the multitude welcomed Him, for they were all waiting for Him.

Jesus and the twelve had sailed across the Sea of Galilee. There the Lord confronted and cured a demoniac. The citizens of the region, instead of rejoicing, asked Jesus to depart from them.

It should not surprise you when folks reject the Lord in favor of their own lifestyle or livelihood. It should sadden you; but don't be surprised. More to the point: It would be good to examine our own hearts to see if there is some 'region' where we have not fully invited Jesus to remain.

Luke 8:41 And behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue. And he fell down at Jesus' feet and begged Him to come to his house,

Luke 8:42 for he had an only daughter about twelve years of age, and she was dying...

We'll return to Jairus and his daughter in a moment. For now, the stage is set for an unusual encounter:

...But as He went, the multitudes thronged Him.

Luke 8:43 Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any,
Luke 8:44 came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped.

Let's enter into the sad world of this woman and her suffering. She had a **flow of blood**. This was bleeding from her womb, probably as a result of what we today would diagnose as fibroid tumors of the uterus. I'm not a doctor; but I did stay at a Holiday Inn, so let me describe the condition. Fibroid tumors are benign. They can bulge into the uterus, causing bleeding. By bleeding I mean hemorrhaging and passing of clots. The larger the tumor or tumors grow, the heavier the bleeding. They can be painful, and cause *endometriosis* – a condition my stay at the Holiday Inn did not cover!. Also, because there is loss of blood, you suffer anemia and weakness.

This was a pretty severe and chronic physical suffering. But it involved much more than just the physical:

1. There was financial suffering. You're told she had **spent all her livelihood on physicians**. Luke, a doctor himself, understood the cost of seeking a cure. Her illness wiped her out.
2. There was emotional suffering. She **could not be healed by any**. Anyone with chronic pain will tell you it wears upon your emotions. It's all you think about, day and night; and it affects everything you do.
3. There was social suffering. It's not explained for you, but her flow of blood rendered the woman a social outcast from Jewish society. She was considered unclean and could not be touched, or touch, others.
4. Finally, she was suffering spiritually. Her unclean status prohibited her from attending synagogue services. She was cut-off from corporate worship.

You don't have to suffer from the same condition in order to understand someone else's suffering. Learn to think outside the physical pain, and consider how they are affected financially... emotionally... socially... and (especially) spiritually.

This woman should not have been in the crowd; she should not have pressed through the crowd. ***But she did!***

She pressed through the crowd to touch Jesus. Perhaps there are crowds in your life that hinder you from reaching the Lord: The crowd of unbelief, or of busyness, or of entertainments, or of activities. Press through the crowds of your life, through all the things that are blocking you from Him.

She **touched the border of** [Jesus'] **garment**. Jesus dressed as a rabbi, and that meant there were blue tassles along the hem of His outer garment. Why it is she thought touching Jesus in secret would help her is unknown. Commentators speculate she was superstitious. I say, it's really all she could do – given that she was not supposed to be in the crowd. And it was the least thing she could do, but it still required faith to do it - her belief that Jesus could heal her. ***And He did!***

Luke 8:45 And Jesus said, **"Who touched Me?"** When all denied it, Peter and those with him said, "Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?'"

Everyone was touching the Lord, but they **all denied it** when He asked them. They must have been afraid He was somehow upset. How sad that we often jump to the wrong conclusion about Jesus' attitude when He speaks. We read things into His words and into God's Word that are not there: anger, disgust, frustration, irritation, etc.

Peter's question is really very appropriate. He wanted Jesus to explain Himself. What kind of **touch** did He mean?

Luke 8:46 But Jesus said, **"Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me."**

It seems that God the Father gave Jesus a Word of Knowledge that a healing had just taken place as someone in the crowd **touched** the Lord. At any rate, Jesus was so sensitive to the Holy Spirit that He knew instinctively something had just happened.

Luke 8:47 Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately.

This was another one of those dilemmas for people to try to sort out. To touch her, or be touched by her, would render Jesus ceremonially unclean. Or would it? When she touched Jesus, she was immediately healed... So Jesus was not violating any law. (It's interesting to speculate, however, that any person in the crowd she had brushed against *before* her healing would have been rendered unclean!)

It's really a rebuke to the crowd. They were all *pressing* Him, but none were *touching* Him. It seems that she alone in that crowd had faith.

Luke 8:48 And He said to her, "Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace."

It was important for Jesus to expose her for two reasons:

1. It would allow her to immediately rejoin society - to **Go in peace**.
2. It taught her that it was **faith** in Him that healed her – *not* superstition, or technique, or tassles, or anything else.

What does this teach us about foiling the fear of suffering? I like the phrase, **the woman saw that she was not hidden**. I'm sure that as she later meditated upon her illness and her healing that she understood that she was *never* hidden from God – even during the twelve years of suffering.

You are never hidden from God. If you suffer, it is in the will of God. You need not fear it – **For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory (2 Corinthians 4:17).**

#2 Faith In Jesus
Foil Your Fear Of Separation
(v49-56)

Have you ever seen an ambulance delayed by the crossing of a train? Every second counts... But there's nothing you can do but wait.

We've almost forgotten about Jairus and his request. He must have been *anxious* for Jesus to press on, *annoyed* at the crowd in general, maybe even *angry* at the delay caused by the woman with the flow of blood. There are at several points of irony to keep in mind:

1. Jairus' daughter was **twelve years of age**. The woman with the issue of blood had been suffering exactly that same amount of time.
2. Jesus addressed the woman with the word **daughter**. It's the only time He ever called anyone **daughter**, and it's the same word used to describe Jairus' little girl.
3. The irony is reinforced further if you consider that Jairus, as **a ruler of the synagogue**, might have been personally involved in declaring her unclean and unfit for attendance and in putting the woman out of the synagogue.
4. One additional irony: Jairus was now risking his own place in the synagogue by coming to Jesus for help – against the wishes of the Pharisees and scribes who were against the Lord. Now he might be put out!

Their very different lives intersect in a way no one could have foreseen.

Luke 8:49 While He was still speaking, someone came from the ruler of the synagogue's *house*, saying to him, "Your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the Teacher."

Jairus must have been crushed! If only Jesus hadn't stopped to help the suffering woman, his own daughter might have been healed. How often do we get discouraged when we see God touching someone else's life while our own answers to prayer are delayed.

Not to worry; Jesus was capable of multitasking.

Luke 8:50 But when Jesus heard *it*, He answered him, saying, "**Do not be afraid; only believe, and she will be made well.**"

We are prone to believe the words of men while doubting the word of God. Jesus had indicated, by starting out for Jairus' house, that He would heal her. The little girl's death didn't change anything as far as Jesus was concerned.

Luke 8:51 When He came into the house, He permitted no one to go in except Peter, James, and John, and the father and mother of the girl.

Luke 8:52 Now all wept and mourned for her; but He said, "Do not weep; she is not dead, but sleeping."

Luke 8:53 And they ridiculed Him, knowing that she was dead.

The *mourners* quickly turned to *mockers*. Some of these were professional mourners - hired to intensify the emotion at a Jewish funeral. How do you act at a funeral? *Be yourself!* If the person **sleeping** was a believer - Smile!

What do we mean by **sleeping**? The Bible frequently describes physical death as **sleep**. When you are asleep, you will awaken again. When your body dies, it will rise again. Your physical body sleeps in this way; your soul, your spirit, do not ever sleep. When your soul and spirit are separated from the body at death - if you are a Christian - they are immediately present with the Lord in heaven; conscious, awake, and aware. If you are *not* a Christian, your soul is immediately in Hades at death - conscious, awake, and aware of an eternity of punishment that awaits you for having rejected Jesus as your Savior.

Jesus put everyone out except the parents and Peter, James, and John. Jesus is not into making public spectacles of His tender care. There is a time for testimony - as we saw with the woman who touched His garment. But we need to remain sensitive to the people we minister to and never use them for our own gain or glory.

Luke 8:54 But He put them all outside, took her by the hand and called, saying, "Little girl, arise."

Luke 8:55 Then her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He commanded that she be given *something* to eat.

This was another touch that should have rendered Jesus unclean, but didn't. Jesus comes to you just as you are, and He touches you at your point of need – regardless the magnitude or effects of your sin.

Scripture records three people who died and were raised by Jesus: Jairus' daughter, a widow's son, and Lazarus. Following her resurrection, Jairus' daughter was hungry. Following his resurrection, the widow's son began to speak (Luke 7:15). Following his resurrection, Lazarus came forth walking (John 11:44).

These same three things characterize those who are spiritually resurrected when they are born-again: They hunger for God's Word, they speak to others about the Lord, and they walk no longer bound by sin.

Luke 8:56 And her parents were astonished, but He charged them to tell no one what had happened.

I'm not sure why Jesus **charged them to tell no one what had happened**. I do know that everyone would know what had happened! She was dead, now she was alive. Like the woman with the flow of blood, there is a time for public testimony; and, like Jairus' daughter, there is a time for letting your life itself reveal the resurrection power of Jesus.

Jesus has conquered death. It causes us to shout these words of the apostle Paul, *O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?* (1 Corinthians 15:55). Unless, of course, you are not saved, not a Christian. Then you'd best be terrified.

Conclusion

Jesus calms your storms; He confronts Satan; He comforts your suffering; He has conquered death.

It is all done in His perfect timing, according to His will for your life. While waiting, you may as well walk in faith rather than fear.