

Hillcrest Congregational UCC

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Healing Touch

Mark 5:21-43

- I. Today we have a healing story wrapped around another healing story. What did you notice about these stories?

Leader of the synagogue

Rich man, lots of resources

Begging Jesus

His daughter is ill to the point of death

He believes that Jesus' touch alone will heal

He knows that touching her will make Jesus unclean!

Jesus says nothing but goes with him

Later we learn there is a crowd at his home- surrounded by support

The girl dies before he gets there- like his friend Lazarus

Do not fear only believe

Instead of a crowd there are those ready to mourn Jesus allows only selected people around her

She is not dead but sleeping, They laugh at him

He takes her hand, and tells her to get up

Tells them not to tell anyone

Give her something to eat

Woman in the crowd

Ill for 12 years-chronic illness and pain

Unclean

She has done everything she can, spent every penny

No one to speak for her

Believed that if she touched him she would be well

Knows that it is forbidden for a woman and unclean to be in crowd to risk making another unclean, especially to touch

She was immediately well

Jesus felt power had gone forth from him

He looks to see who it is

She comes forward trembling and tells him in public the whole story

Jesus says her faith has made her well, be healed of your disease

- II. Why are the stories wrapped around each other? Similarity Contrasts
 - A. Daughter
 - 1. Daughter of a synagogue leader- father willing to sacrifice it all for her
 - 2. Jesus calls the woman daughter- but she is a kind of abandoned daughter- has already sacrificed and lost all
 - B. Healing that is Public/Private (don't tell anyone- when he has already healed in public? Reverse psychology?)
 - C. Haves/have nots
 - 1. Believer with nothing left to lose/ (I am reminded of the 30% of all bankruptcies in our country that are the direct result of medical bills- there but for the grace of God go I, we need to fix the health care system in our country).
 - 2. Non-Believer with everything left to lose
 - D. Alone/Non-supportive community-would be better off without
 - E. Disease as punishment for sin, lack of righteousness

- II. Did this really happen
 - A. What of this is historical? What really happened? Were there really two healings? Do we believe that these could happen? Were they psychosomatic? Was it ovarian cancer and a diabetic coma? Could they have been cured without modern medical science?
 - B. What is part of this is metaphor? Literary form to show a broader level of truth
 - C. What is it that the author wanted his community to know about what Jesus revealed and taught about God?

- III. There are some basic concepts that need to be laid out here.
 - A. Jesus clearly had a healing ministry
 - 1. He heals in all of the Gospels. There are 41 instances of physical and mental healing
 - 2. But his ministry was not limited to personal situations but extended to social structures. ("the poor and captives," critique on religious and social structures that were oppressive)
 - B. Jesus said I have come so you might have abundant life John 10:10
 - 1. God wants for us to have a life of abundance and wholeness in mind, body, spirit, relationships and society.
 - 2. Both of these stories show brokenness or dis-ease on multiple levels. Show levels.

- IV. So can miraculous cures happen in our day and age?
- A. Depends on how we define miracle
 - 1. A God who is outside intervenes in a closed system of natural law of cause and effect
 - 2. things that are possible that we do not yet understand.
 - B. Beginning to understand how limited our perceptions have been
 - 1. Modernism
 - a. fact and science
 - b. dualism of body and spirit/human and creation/ God and universe
 - 2. Postmodernism
 - a. we are limited by our perceptions- modernism was just one way to describe/understand the world just as Greek mythology was one way that was used.
 - b. Imprisoned by what we do not believe versus empowered by what we have already in our midst.
 - c. Interconnectivity of all life/creation/God- the energy of quantum physics and chemistry
 - C. Healing touch
 - 1. Reiki- Mikao Usui Christian minister
 - 2. combine Christlike compassion with Buddhist wisdom to become a channel for God's universal healing energy/balance
 - 3. I have done it. I have experience its power and effectiveness
 - D. Healing and wholeness versus cure
 - 1. Cure- return the physical body to the state it was before the disease was diagnosed.
 - 2. Brokenness and Dis-ease versus Healing and wholeness
 - a) a family which the mother and daughter were estranged, resulting in the whole family having to choose to avoid and to work around having the two of them in the same place
 - b) the father became ill

- c) his illness, death and dying brought the family together as a whole and caused the reconciliation of the parties
- d) his faith/experience of God in his last months reassured them all

V. Faith

A. Belief

- 1. in God or in dogma
- 2. suspending disbelief, rational thought, criticism, questions

B. Relationship

- 1. with God
- 2. personal experience
- 3. questions that open up ongoing discovery deepen my faith or relationship with God

VII. Church-

A. Faith Community of faith-means a community in which we live out our relationship with God

B. Community of Healing- means a community in which we are supported in becoming whole

C. Community of God- where everyone is a daughter/son/child of God

- 1. Knowing that every one of us experiences brokenness in some way at some time in our lives
- 2. that we are all called to welcome and support each other in working toward mind/body/spirit/relationships/and responsibility to society