

## How to Handle Life's Interruptions

### Session 4

November 9, 2025

#### *When Well-Meaning People Interrupt Your Plans*

**The Point:** God-ordained interruptions call for a sensitive heart.

**Session Passages:** Luke 8:40-50, 54-56

#### **Luke 8:40-42**

**Connection to the Point.** Jairus requested Jesus come to his house and heal his daughter, and Jesus complied.

**When Jesus returned** (v. 40). Much of the activity of Jesus's Galilean ministry revolved around the Sea of Galilee—also called Sea of Gennesaret (5:1) and Sea of Tiberius (John 6:1; 21:1). The healing events in the focal passage most likely occurred in and around the village of Capernaum. Evidently Jesus had moved from Nazareth to Capernaum (Mark. 2:1). During His Galilean ministry, Capernaum served as Jesus's unofficial headquarters.

The account of these two miraculous healings is also found in Matthew 9:18-26 and Mark 5:21-43. Mark 4:1 sets the context for this narrative regarding Jairus's daughter and the chronically ill woman. Jesus had been teaching by the lakeside. As the crowd pressed in, Jesus got into the boat and taught the people from just off the shoreline. When evening fell, Jesus and His disciples sailed across the Sea of Galilee to the other side where they landed in the area of the Gerasenes (Mark 5:1; also Gadarenes, Matt. 8:28). Following Jesus casting demons out of a possessed man, He and His disciples returned to the place where He had taught the crowd.

**They were all expecting him** (v. 40). The large crowd was waiting, and they welcomed Jesus eagerly. The reception of this crowd near the village of Capernaum (Matt. 9:1) stands in sharp contrast to the Gerasenes' reception of Jesus. After Jesus cast the demons out of the possessed man and the resultant loss of the pigs, the Gerasenes had begged Jesus to leave their region (Mark 5:11-17). The crowd waiting on the shore, on the other hand, apparently wanted to see more miracles. In this crowd were two who were desperate for the healing touch of Jesus—a synagogue leader named Jairus and an unnamed woman who had been chronically ill for years.

**Just then** (v. 41) can also be translated "And behold." Suddenly, unexpectedly, Jairus appeared before Jesus with his request. Unlike many of the religious leaders of Judaism who criticized and opposed Jesus, this respected leader of the synagogue and representative of the Jewish establishment fell at Jesus's feet pleading for mercy and help. This certainly would have been unexpected!

**A leader of the synagogue** (v. 41). The synagogue was the primary center for religious education and worship in the first-century Jewish community. Following the destruction of the Jerusalem temple and exile to Babylon, synagogues emerged as the gathering places for Jewish prayer, worship, social interaction, and religious instruction. Each synagogue was administered by one or more local elders.

These lay leaders would have been responsible for the upkeep of the building, the coordination of religious training, prayer and worship, and the enlistment of those who would lead in Sabbath services.

**Fell down at Jesus's feet** (v. 41). The Greek term for *fell down* means to rapidly throw oneself to the ground when approaching a superior with a request. It can be a sign of devotion, humility, and/or worship. Again, Jairus was part of the larger group of the first-century religious establishment in Galilee and Judea that generally opposed and hated Jesus. Jairus's posture at Jesus's feet was in stark contrast to the usual actions of the religious elite. At this moment, Jairus was more than just a religious leader. He was a distraught father pleading with Jesus to come to his house and heal his critically ill daughter. His expression of faith in Jesus stands tall over the hatred and rejection of Jesus that was the norm of the Pharisees, scribes, and others among the Jewish religious leadership.

**Only daughter** (v. 42). Although this story is found in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the information that this was Jairus's only daughter is found only in Luke. The Greek term for *only* is used by Luke of Jairus's daughter, the son of the widow of Nain (7:12), and the demon-possessed boy of the man who pleaded with Jesus to heal his child the day after Jesus's transfiguration (9:38).

#### **Luke 8:43-48**

**Connection to the Point.** A woman sought healing from Jesus, and Jesus stopped in His tracks to speak with her.

**Suffering from bleeding** (v. 43) refers to a hemorrhage or flowing of blood. Speculation is that this was some sort of uterine hemorrhaging that she had dealt with for twelve years. The result was that she would have been considered ceremonially and socially unclean for the duration of the bleeding (Lev. 15:25). As a result, she would have been separated from Jewish society (Num. 5:2). Her misery was not just physical, but greatly emotional as she would have had very limited contact with family and friends. In addition, the shared worship experiences with fellow Jews were not available to her. Her seemingly hopeless situation left her almost completely isolated from society.

**Spent all she had on doctors** (v. 43). Mark's Gospel provides greater detail concerning the woman's situation. "Now a woman suffering from bleeding for twelve years had endured much under many doctors. She had spent everything she had and was not helped at all. On the contrary, she became worse" (Mark 5:25-26). Her seeking of medical treatment was ultimately of no value. In the end, she was left poorer monetarily and no better physically. Out of her desperation she made the decision to approach Jesus.

**Touched the end of his robe** (v. 44). The woman sought to be as discreet as possible because of her uncleanness. She shouldn't have even been in the crowd and to touch Jesus would have rendered Him unclean as well. The Greek verb for *touched* is the same word used by the resurrected Jesus telling Mary Magdalene, "Don't *cling* to me" (John 20:17; *emph. added*). Matthew's Gospel supplies that the woman was thinking, "If I can just touch his robe, I'll be made well" (Matt. 9:21). The *end* of Jesus's robe could refer to either the hem of the garment or tassels on the corners of the robe.

**Who touched me?** (v. 45). This question from Jesus was designed to bring out a confession from the woman. After all, Jesus was the Son of God and knew the identity of this woman. This would have forced the woman to come forward with her confession of faith. It also would have served as a public announcement that the woman was now clean of her bleeding and therefore would no longer have had to continue living in shame and isolation.

**Master, the crowds are hemming you in and pressing against you** (v. 45). His disciples most likely viewed Jesus's statement as somewhat ridiculous. The implication of their words was who hadn't touched Jesus in this mob of people.

**Power has gone out from me** (v. 46). Luke 5:17 indicates that the power of the Lord was the ever-present source of the healing power of Jesus. God in His grace had allowed this woman to receive His healing power through her touch of Jesus.

**The woman saw that she was discovered** (v. 47). Luke does not indicate how the woman knew she had been discovered. Perhaps she believed that Jesus already knew that she was the one who had touched Him. In any event, she approached Jesus and confessed her actions.

**She came trembling and fell down before him** (v. 47). *Trembling* refers to involuntary shaking. *Fell down before* translates a different Greek term from that used of Jairus's action in verse 41. It means to prostrate oneself at the feet of another. Her fear may have been caused by knowing that in touching Jesus she had made Him ceremonially unclean or due to a reverent awe for Jesus at having been healed by touching Him.

**Instantly healed** (v. 47). The woman's healing was so instantaneous and complete that she knew immediately that she was well. Having lived with the condition for twelve years, she was very aware when the physical symptoms suddenly stopped (Mark 5:29).

**Daughter** (v. 48). The Greek word for *daughter* was a term of endearment. Because of the fear that the woman had as she approached Jesus with her story of being healed, Jesus's words to her were given to encourage and reassure the woman of God's grace upon her.

**Your faith has saved you. Go in peace** (v. 48). Similar language is spoken by Jesus to the woman of ill repute who bathed His feet with her tears and anointed them with perfume (7:50) and is also used by Jesus to encourage Jairus that his daughter would be "saved" (8:50). The Greek term for *saved* is a common New Testament word for "salvation." The term appears several times in Luke's Gospel when Jesus stated to those who sought Him in belief, "your faith has saved you" (Luke 8:48; 17:19; 18:42). In this instance, Jesus was assuring the chronically ill woman of more than physical healing. It was her faith in Jesus that caused her to approach Him and touch His robe to be healed. Through her faith in Him as One who had come from God to bring healing, the woman had experienced spiritual healing as well. Her faith in Jesus had led to a restoration of her relationship with God. She now had peace with God.<sup>1</sup>

## **Luke 8:49-50,54-56**

**Connection to the Point.** Although Jairus's daughter died, Jesus continued to his house and brought the daughter back to life.

**While he was still speaking** (v. 49). No doubt having witnessed the healing of the woman with the chronic condition, Jairus's hopes would have been heightened. But then a messenger came with devastating news, "Your daughter is dead. Don't bother the teacher anymore." Evidently this messenger had a very limited understanding of the power of Jesus to not only heal but to raise the dead. Perhaps the messenger had not heard the recent news from the village of Nain of the miracle of Jesus bringing the only son of a widow in that village back to life (7:11-17).

**Don't be afraid. Only believe** (v. 50). Jesus gave Jairus encouragement and hope. Fear must be displaced by faith. These two are antithetical to each other. Often throughout Scripture we see a call to faith in the midst of fear. God urged Abraham to trust Him, saying, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield" (Gen. 15:1). After Moses's death and with the Israelites on the verge of entering the promised land under Joshua's leadership, God said to Joshua, "Haven't I commanded you: be strong and courageous? Do not be afraid or discouraged for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go" (Josh. 1:9). Belief in the power and presence of God in all situations should displace fear and discouragement. To the disciples in the middle of the storm on the Sea of Galilee, Jesus chided them for their fear and ask, "Where is your faith?" (Luke 8:22-25).

**Mourning.** While today grief is often expressed in somber and hushed tones, first-century Jewish mourning was done with loud crying and wailing. The term "mourning" (v. 52) literally means to beat one's breast in anguish. "Everyone" (v. 52) would have included family and friends. In addition, professional mourners were hired on such occasions, who in addition to loud grieving played musical instruments such as flutes (Matt. 9:23). Rather than being a somber and hushed occasion, the whole scene would have been loud and disorderly.

**Her spirit returned** (v. 55). The fact that the girl was dead is stated twice in this passage (vv. 49,53). By stating "She is not dead but asleep" (v. 52), Jesus was not denying the child was dead, but rather was saying that in this instance her death-like sleep was only temporary. Similarly, for those who place their faith in Jesus death is only a transitional state. Physical death is the door into the fullness of salvation. Furthermore, all who die will be raised bodily at the end of the age—some to the "resurrection of life" and some to the "resurrection of condemnation" (John 5:29).

*Her spirit returned* indicates that the girl returned to life. This was not a resurrection in the sense of Jesus's resurrection, but rather a resuscitation indicated by "she got up at once." She received the life she had possessed before her death, but one day she would die again.

**He gave orders that she be given something to eat** (v. 55). While this may have been a practical command given because she may have had very little to eat during her illness and therefore needed renewed nourishment, it also speaks of the care and compassion that Jesus had toward the girl and people in general.

**Tell no one what had happened** (v. 56). This command is diametrically opposed to Jesus's instruction to the man from whom He had cast out demons, "Go back to your home, and tell all that God has done for you" (v. 39). There are several possible reasons for Jesus's prohibition to Jairus's family. First, the parents and their daughter may have needed some quiet time away from curious crowds after the ordeal of the child's illness and death. Jesus may also not have wanted the little girl to become a curiosity and or oddity to the crowd. Or Jesus may have felt that the crowd of mocking mourners outside the house were too hypocritical to receive the truth about what He had done.

Jesus also may have been trying to avoid the kind of mob hysteria that was expressed on occasion in the desire of crowds to force Him to become their king (John 6:15). Their motivation for wanting to make Him king was their hope that He would drive the Romans out of Israel. Finally, more likely Jesus was so single-minded to fulfill His purpose of dying for the sins of the world (3:16), that He did not want to be known only as a healer and miracle worker. In spite of Jesus's command, the news of the miracle spread rapidly (Matt. 9:26).

1. Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, vol. 24, The New American Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1992), 262.