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Jairus Daughter, Issue of Blood (Part 1)



The Life and Teachings of Christ - Steve Gregg

In this talk, Steve Gregg explores the stories of Jairus' daughter and the woman suffering from an issue of blood in Mark chapter 5. He emphasizes the importance of faith in receiving help and acknowledges that sometimes individuals need to withdraw and pray in order to be refreshed. Gregg also addresses the fallacy of metaphysical cults that teach the power of positive thinking, instead emphasizing that faith is about relating to God and receiving from God. He concludes by revisiting the story of the rich young ruler who was afraid of the reaction to his encounter with Jesus.

Transcript

In this session we're going to be starting at Mark chapter 5 and verse 21 and looking at the material all the way to the end of the chapter 5 of Mark, that's chapters, that's chapter 5 verses 21 through 43. This material that we're about to read has parallels in both Matthew and Luke. If you're interested in making note of it, it's in Matthew chapter 9 verses 18 through 26.

It's Matthew 9, 18 through 26. And also in Luke chapter 8 verses 41 through 56. Now, this portion of The Life of Christ, there's a pretty good documentation in all three Gospels for it, for his crossing the sea and stilling the storm and casting the demon out of the man who had legion in him.

And then, because Jesus had cast the demon out of the man who had legion and cast the demons into the swine, and the swine then self-destructed, the owners and the people of the region wanted Jesus to leave. They were not really told exactly why they wanted him to leave. Possibly because of the destruction of property that it cost them.

Although it seems like if it was particularly those who owned the swine, they'd be a little more angry for having lost 2,000 pigs because of an action on Jesus' part. Actually, they should be quite happy to see a man delivered of demons even if it cost 2,000 pigs because a man's worth more than 2,000 pigs, but that's not the way a farmer might think if he's not got the right priorities. Anyway, Jesus was begged to leave the country.

That is, that part of the land where he'd done the miracle. The demon-possessed man

who was now delivered wanted to follow Jesus, but Jesus sent him back home, and he began to proclaim, it says in verse 20, in the Decapolis all that Jesus had done for him, and all marveled. So this man became quite a missionary.

Decapolis means ten cities. It's a reference to ten cities over on the east side of the Jordan, which were Jewish cities, although it was not Jewish territory. These ten cities were called the Decapolis, and this man apparently evangelized in all of them.

Instead of following Jesus, he went about in a region that Jesus had been banished from. In fact, that might be why Jesus made him stay there to minister. Jesus had intended for some preaching to be done there in the Decapolis, but since these people in that region asked him to leave, he instead commissioned this man who lived there to be his witness in that place.

Now, verse 21, now when Jesus had crossed over again by the boat to the other side, a great multitude gathered to him, and he was by the sea. Now, he had crossed the sea in order to have this encounter with the demon-possessed man, and it was on that crossing of the sea previously that the storm had arisen, and Jesus had stilled the storm. Now, we read in a single verse of his passing over to the other side again, apparently without incident, without a storm, and he was preaching by the seaside.

And behold, one of the rulers of the synagogue came, Jairus by name, and when he saw him, he fell at his feet. Rulers of the synagogues were not the same thing as rulers of a country. You know, the rich young ruler that came running to Jesus on another occasion was probably a ruler of a synagogue.

The Jews weren't ruling any nations at that time. They were under the rule of Rome, and it's quite clear that the rich young ruler, whom we're not studying at this point, but he was a Jew. He had kept the Jewish law from his youth, he said, and therefore he was probably a ruler in the same sense that this man is, a ruler of the synagogue.

Now, that wasn't really a lofty office. The rulers of the synagogues were laymen. They were not priests.

They were not necessarily scribes or trained individuals. They were just laymen in the synagogue who basically took care of the premises and made sure the services were conducted in an orderly manner. Sometimes the synagogue would have more than one ruler, but generally there was one for each synagogue, and that's the role this man held.

It was not a real high position, although the word ruler might seem to imply otherwise. The man came to Jesus, as we find out, because his daughter was ready to die, and he came and saw Jesus, and he fell at his feet, it says, and Matthew tells us, and worshipped him. This describes the outward form in Mark.

He fell at his feet. He prostrated himself before Jesus. Matthew tells us what he was

doing in his heart.

He was worshipping Jesus and begging Jesus, it says in verse 23. He begged him earnestly, saying, My little daughter lies at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her that she may be healed and she will live.

Now, this man had faith that if Jesus would simply touch his daughter, she'd be made better. His daughter, we are told in Luke, in the parallel in Luke 8-42, was his only child, or his only daughter anyway. And we're told there in Luke that she was 12 years old.

We're also told that here in this account later on in verse 42, that she was 12 years old, though he calls her his little daughter. Twelve years old is almost a mature woman, and in Jewish society, a girl not much older than that would be marriageable. But in any case, the man referred to her as his little daughter.

Maybe her size, maybe she was diminutive, maybe she was petite more than most, or whatever. But he was still thinking of her as a child, although she was almost old enough to be a woman. She was lying at the point of death, and she must have been near enough death, as we find out later, that already the professional mourners had begun to hover like vultures around the house.

We deduce that from the fact that she did die before Jesus got to the house, and by the time he got there, the mourners were already there. So they must have smelled the scent of death in the air before she died, and been sort of like the ambulance chasers, you know. They know where there's going to be some money to be made.

In Israel, they had professional mourners who didn't even know the deceased it may be, but they could hire them to mourn at the funeral. And a little later in this story, we read of them being there in the house. This girl must have been very close to death, as the mourners were already lurking about, ready to jump into the house as soon as she died.

And therefore, the man was in a very extreme state. Now, the girl must have taken ill quite suddenly, that Jesus had not been approached earlier about it. We don't know what her sickness was, we never learned of it.

But he was quite convinced, regardless of the severity of the illness, that if Jesus would simply lay his hands on her, that she would live. So Jesus went with him. The parallel in Matthew 9, 19 says, and so did his disciples.

Just so we don't make the mistake of thinking he left his disciples where he was and went alone. Matthew tells us that Jesus went with him and so did his disciples, and a great multitude followed him and thronged him. Now, a certain woman had a flow of blood 12 years, and this begins another story in the middle of the story.

It has occurred to me that the way this story is told is one of the evidences of the

genuineness of the story. Not that I ever had doubts about it, but some people, you know, would like to say that these are legendary accounts or myths or whatever of miracles. But the fact that he doesn't finish telling about one miracle before he introduces another one altogether.

That there's one miracle story couched in the midst of another miracle story suggests that he's not just making up stories. Because that's not, I mean, usually you'd come to the end of it first, and then you'd, if you're going to make up another story, you'd get to that after you'd finish the one. But this is more like a true memory of things that were really happening.

Jesus was on his way to perform one miracle, and before he got there, another miracle took place that was totally unrelated. It says in verse 25, now a certain woman had a flow of blood for 12 years. You know from Leviticus chapter 15 that this would make her unclean.

According to Leviticus 15, 19, and 25, any person with an issue of blood would be unclean for the period of time that it continued. Well, hers continued for 12 years, which not only would be very draining to her physical energy, but it would be very demeaning. Because she would have to make known that she had this issue so that she might be shunned.

Because contact with such a woman, according to the law, would defile anyone who came into contact with her. Even to sit on the same chair, the same bed she'd sat on, would defile them. We don't know if she was a married woman, but if she was, the law would have required her husband to have no contact with her these 12 years.

Nor would anyone else want to come near her, lest they be defiled. The defilement would be enough to keep somebody from being able to participate in worship and in ordinary society for a week. Now, her condition prevailed for 12 years, which meant she had become pretty much isolated from society.

If she had any family, they had to even kind of remain aloof from her and not come near her. And that was a pretty sad condition she found herself in. Now, contact with such a person would ordinarily defile a person.

We see that she's coming up to touch Jesus. If he were an ordinary man, her touch of him would defile him. His physical contact with a woman who had an issue of blood would make him ceremonially unclean.

Now, she took a bit of a risk here, because if she were not healed by the touch, and if she remained sick and having touched Jesus, she would have rendered him unclean, and she might even make him angrier for that, that she was so unthoughtful as to confer her defilement upon him. But her faith was great enough that she was sure that if she

touched him, that would not happen, that he would not be made unclean, but rather she would be made well. And we read of this in verse 26, She had suffered many things from many physicians.

She had spent all that she had, but was no better, but rather grew worse. When she heard about Jesus, she came behind him in the crowd and touched his garment. For she said, If only I may touch his clothes, I shall be made well.

Immediately, it says, the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of the affliction. And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that power had gone out of him, turned around in the crowd and said, Who touched my clothes? But the disciples said to him, You see the multitude thronging you, and you say, Who touched me? At this point Luke adds, And Jesus said, Somebody has touched me, for I perceived power going out from me. That's inserted by Luke 8, verse 46.

And he looked around to see her who had done this thing. But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before him and told him the whole truth. And he said to her, Daughter, your faith has made you well.

Go in peace and be healed of your affliction. Now, the woman apparently touched him and then tried to shrink back into the crowd and disappear. She touched his garment rather than himself, partly because she didn't want to draw attention to herself.

She didn't want him maybe even to know that she had done it. If she had touched his body, he would feel that and might turn around and be angry at her for being a woman in her condition, touching him and therefore taking the risk of defiling him. And it's quite clear she tried to hide herself.

She didn't immediately come forward when he said, Who touched me? In fact, it says in Luke 8, verse 47, when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling and told him about it. It implies that she tried to hide herself in the crowd. But when she saw she couldn't be hid, she came and confessed.

That's Luke 8, verse 47, that inserts that bit of information. Now, touching his garment, she thought, would not cause him to feel a thing. But she was sure that even that much contact with him would allow her to be healed.

She had that much faith in his anointing and in God's honor that was upon him that even to touch his clothes would be enough. Which raises an interesting point as far as what role physical contact does play in getting a healing or an act of power from God. It was typical for Jesus to lay his hands on the sick.

In fact, the ruler of the synagogue, Jairus, when he came to Jesus, asked Jesus to come and put his hands on his daughter. Now, we also know that Jesus could have healed the daughter without going there. Because he did that kind of thing for the nobleman's son

and for the Syrophenician woman's daughter and for the centurion's servant.

Three times Jesus was asked by parties on behalf of somebody else who wasn't there to heal them. And Jesus did so without going there. He didn't have to lay hands on them.

But ordinarily he did lay hands on them. And there's been much speculation as to what the value or the significance is of the laying on of hands. Or physical contact at all, because it wasn't just hands.

Contact with the hem of his garment was sufficient in this case to draw his healing power and to accomplish the miracle. Later on, in Acts chapter 5, we read that Peter had such a reputation in Jerusalem in the early days of the church that people who were sick went and laid out in the side of the street hoping that Peter might walk down that street and his shadow might pass over them. Because apparently, on occasions when his shadow did pass over them, they were healed.

Now that wasn't a physical contact at all. We also read in Acts 19 verses 11 and 12 that Paul, when in Ephesus, sent handkerchiefs and aprons from his body to sick people and demon-possessed people. And when they received them, the demons came out of them and they were healed.

Apparently Paul never laid eyes on these people, but the handkerchiefs and aprons sent from him accomplished this. In the Old Testament, we have Elisha, the prophet, who had done many great miracles in his lifetime. After his death, his bones were in a tomb and a man, this is in 2 Kings 13, a man who had been killed in battle was thrown into the tomb of Elisha by his friends and when his corpse touched the bones of Elisha, the corpse came to life.

Not the Elishas, but the other men. Elisha never did come back to life. He couldn't raise himself, but he raised up this other guy from the dead simply by contact with his dried up bones.

Now, how is that possible? It's true. Yeah, it is an amazing thing. How is it so? How does a shadow heal? How does an apron or handkerchief heal? That is a great mystery.

Some people think that these cases of the shadow or the handkerchief or the hands laid on or the touching the garment function simply to release the faith of the person needing the miracle. After all, this woman said, if I can just touch the hem of his garment, then I'll be healed. And sure enough, she touched it and she was healed.

Now, she apparently didn't believe she'd be healed short of touching the hem of his garment. She didn't have the faith to be healed without some contact with Jesus, but she felt quite sure psychologically it would release her faith, it would encourage her, it would give her boldness to receive the miracle if she would have a physical contact with even so much as his clothes. And that could also be an explanation for the shadow of Peter or

the hankies and aprons that were taken from Paul, people, if they were expectant of a miracle, that didn't have quite enough faith to just receive a miracle out of thin air, but they thought, well, if someone like Paul, if I had something from him, or if the shadow of someone like Peter would fall across me, then I really believe God would heal me, then at the moment that that happens, their faith is activated, because they believe it's going to happen at that time, and it does, because their faith leaps, rises to the occasion that this point of contact is a point of faith release.

This is how many people have understood the phenomenon of laying on of hands. And there is that possibility. I mean, let me just say, that could be a factor in many of these cases.

We know that faith is, as even Jesus said to the woman here, your faith has made you well. And she believed that when she touched him, she would be well, and sure enough, she did. When she touched him, she was made well.

Her faith worked. But unfortunately, that explanation can't answer all the phenomena. For example, the dead man whose body touched Elisha's bones.

That body sprang to life, but it can hardly be argued that the dead man had an expectation that when his body would touch the bones of Elisha, he'd come to life, and that his faith was released at that moment, since dead men have no expectations of this kind. And therefore, some other explanation has to be brought into a situation like this. Likewise, when Jesus healed people who were not even present.

The nobleman's son, the centurion's servant, the daughter of the Syrophenician woman, certainly those persons who were not present had no way of knowing at what point in time Jesus announced that they were healed. But they were healed at that moment anyway. There's something more sovereign about these things than just a matter of faith.

Now, I don't say it's either or. I think both are factors that have to be considered. It certainly is the case that faith is an important factor in miracles taking place and in healings.

And yet, apparently, it isn't the only factor. There are times when the command of Christ itself, that is the command, the word of God, accomplishes the miracle even upon people who don't have any particular expectation. Like the Syrophenician woman's daughter who laid somewhere else, never hearing Jesus' words, never seeing him, and being demon possessed, yet she was delivered by Jesus speaking a word without herself ever exercising any faith that we know of.

Actually, Jairus' daughter was raised, she couldn't have experienced any faith. She didn't even know Jesus was in the room. She was dead.

We haven't read that far yet, but we know that that's how the story ends. And therefore, there is something sovereign about miracles as well. God can accomplish miracles where there is no faith.

Though he generally does not, and he, of course, urges us to have faith. But it doesn't appear that faith is the only factor. There are cases where faith cannot have been a factor of the individual receiving the help.

In this case it was, though, very clearly it was. And the woman believed that if she would touch Jesus, that power would go out of him to heal her. And sure enough, it happened even as she thought.

It says, when she touched him, it says in verse 29, immediately the fountain of her blood was dried up. This, apparently, for the first time in 12 years, and she felt in her body that something had happened, that she was healed of the affliction. Now, she knew herself to be healed because she felt in her body that she was healed.

I would just point out that there are those today who would say that you are healed whether you feel it or not. You are healed even if your symptoms remain. But we never read of that in the Bible.

We never read of any case like that in the Bible, where somebody is healed but they still have their symptoms, and they are required to believe themselves healed even though they are not. You never find a case like that in Scripture. More typically, people knew they were healed because their symptoms went away.

She felt in her body that the bleeding had stopped, and she knew as a result of that that she was healed. Now, Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that power had gone out from him, turned around to the crowd and said, Now, I believe that he really didn't know. He asked a question in order to get information.

He could have just been playing a game and so forth, but I don't believe he was. I believe that when Jesus came to earth, part of the divine prerogatives that he laid aside for the time being were his omniscience, his omnipotence, and his omnipresence. And not knowing all things, he had to ask questions to get information.

Now, some might say, but Jesus often did know things that no one had given him information about. Like the woman at the well, he knew about her marriages in her past, and he knew about Nathaniel before Philip called him under the fig tree. What about these cases? Didn't Jesus know all things and see all things? I think not.

I think what we would understand is that on those occasions, Jesus was operating in a prophetic gift, like a word of knowledge, or what we call a word of knowledge today. That that was a gift of the Holy Spirit operating through him. Jesus, when he came to earth, took on the handicaps of a human being.

As a baby in the manger, he didn't know all things. And as a boy growing up, it says in Luke chapter 2 that he increased in wisdom, and in stature, and in favor with God and men. So since he had to increase in wisdom as a boy, it proves that he wasn't born possessing all wisdom, or else there's no room for increase in it.

And therefore, Jesus, in coming to earth, though he had been God and possessed all the prerogatives of God before coming to earth, he humbled himself, limited himself, emptied himself, and became a man who was God in man, but part of the process of becoming a man was to weaken himself and to lay aside some of his special privileges that he as God possessed. One of those was his omniscience. This can be proven beyond a shadow of a doubt, because all one would have to show to prove that omniscience is not present, all one would have to do is find one thing that someone doesn't know.

If there's one thing you don't know, then you're not omniscient. And Jesus was asked when his coming would be, and in Matthew 24 he said, I don't know. He said, the angels of God don't know that, no man knows it, even the Son doesn't know that.

Only the Father knows that. So it's clear that Jesus, in coming to earth, had laid aside his divine omniscience, and when he seemed to operate in superhuman knowledge, he was in fact operating in superhuman knowledge, but not in his innate divine knowledge, but in a gift of the Holy Spirit, which continues to operate through his body now. But, I think when Jesus said, who touched me, he was really asking for information.

He didn't know. Who touched my clothes, it says in verse 30, although in Luke 8.45 it has him asking who touched me. The disciples said to him, you see the multitude thronging you.

Luke 8 is a little more graphic about that. In Luke 8.45 it says, when all denied, see Peter said, who touched me? And it says, when all denied it, Peter and they that were with him said, Lord, you see the multitude. Apparently everyone said, not me, not me, not me.

Everyone was denying it, and Peter finally speaks up for the rest of the disciples and says, hey, this is kind of a silly question. What do you mean, who touched you? You're being jostled and bumped on every side. There's a multitude here.

Probably 50 people have touched you in the last 10 minutes. Why do you ask such a question as who touched me? I mean, you shouldn't be so touchy, you know. In a crowd like this, you've got to expect to be jostled a bit.

And Jesus ignored the statement and said, as it says in Luke 8.46, Jesus said, somebody has touched me for I perceive power going out from me. Now, what's interesting here is that Peter was probably right. A lot of people had probably touched Jesus, had jostled him, had come into physical contact with him there in the crowd.

But in none of those cases did Jesus perceive power going out of him. Only one person

touched him in a way that caused power to go out of him. And this may be instructive, because there were many people in as close contact with Jesus on that occasion as the woman was, who touched him just like she did.

But she alone received a miracle from him. Only her touch caused power to go out of him. And he felt that as an extraordinary thing happening there.

Many other people in touching him didn't cause any power to go out of him. They did not receive anything from him. There was nothing supernatural that occurred by the touch.

And we can easily say that the factor that made the difference was the faith of the woman. The woman believed that touching Jesus was going to cure her. And sure enough, he agreed with that.

Your faith has made you well. You're believing it. Those who jostled him without expecting or believing anything would happen, nothing did happen.

And the reason this may be instructive to us is because those of us who are in religious society, as it were, who are churched and who are Christians and in Christian fellowship, we're in contact with Jesus all the time. I mean, wherever two or more are gathered, there he is in the midst. And to touch Jesus is... I mean, we brush shoulders with Jesus all the time.

And as much as you do it to one of the least of these my brethren, you've done it to me, Jesus said. But we don't always receive anything out of it. It's possible to be in the midst of Christian fellowship, in the multitude that's brushing against Jesus, in his immediate presence even, and nothing happened.

Your needs go unmet, no power comes forth from him to you, if it's not with faith. Remember what it says in Hebrews 4, 1 and 2, how the gospel was preached to the Jews of old, but it didn't profit them not being mixed with faith. They had the word of God, which was capable of accomplishing miracles, but it didn't profit them because they didn't mix it with faith.

There was a multitude of people jostling Jesus out of curiosity and out of some interest, but only one touched him with faith. And that one touch is what drew power out of him to work a miracle. Now, perhaps our curiosity is piqued when we hear Jesus saying, I felt power go out of me, to wonder, you know, did he have some kind of a supply of power in there and he felt kind of the battery drain a little bit, you know, and he felt the power go down? I don't know.

This is a bit mysterious. I know that Jesus on many occasions did seek to get off alone and to pray before dawn for hours and things like that, and it may be that hours of ministry, healing people and feeding multitudes and doing things like this, casting out demons, maybe it did drain him. Maybe his spiritual reserves did get low, and he had to

go and be alone with his father and to be recharged, as it were, to be replenished in his spiritual power.

I don't know if that's the case. It sounds a little bit that way. Of course, on the other hand, it's possible that as power is drawn from him, power was added to him from the father.

The father just kind of channeled his power through him so that he felt power going through him. He felt power going out of him, but this didn't mean that he was somehow deficient or diminished in power, but simply it's like a river flows with water, you know, the water flows beyond a certain point, but that point doesn't get dry because more water comes in from behind it. It's possible that as power went out of him, that it was really just the power of the father channeling through him and kept coming in full supply.

I don't know, but I do know that we do get drained. It is an invigorating thing to minister, but it does drain one's spiritual reserves, and it is necessary, even as Jesus did, because of power going out of you, by your contact with the world and by your ministry to the world, it's necessary for you to get off alone with God, as Jesus often did, in order to be refreshed. And so anyway, he didn't, you know, the disciples felt like Jesus was asking a meaningless question since everyone was touching him, but he said, no, something special happened here.

I felt power go out of me. Someone has touched me in a different way than all these others. And it says in verse 32, he looked around to see her who had done this thing.

But the woman, fearing and trembling, as I said a moment ago, Luke tells us, when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling. She tried to hide, but apparently Jesus' searching gaze through the crowd fixed upon her, and she saw that she couldn't hide, so she came trembling, not knowing whether he'd be angry at her or not, but knowing what had happened to her, so she came and fell down before him and told him the whole truth. She confessed her misdeed, as it were.

Of course, it wasn't really a misdeed. It wasn't the kind of thing Jesus disapproved of. It's not the kind of thing that God disapproved of.

It was the kind of thing that would be certainly frowned on by society, and for all she knew, maybe Jesus would frown on it, too, that she, a woman with an issue of blood, would make physical contact with somebody, which would be a very inconsiderate thing to do. And now she had to come and tell all because she saw that she was not hid under Jesus' gaze. So she told him the whole truth and braced herself for his response.

His response, when it came, was very generous. He said to her, Daughter, your faith has made you well. Actually, both Matthew and Luke make that a little longer.

In Matthew and Luke, Jesus says, Daughter, be of good comfort. Your faith has made you

well. Go in peace and be healed of your affliction.

He said to her, Be of good comfort. In other words, don't be trembling like you are. She was definitely in need of comfort.

She was trembling and fearful and intimidated and wondering if she was in trouble. But he set her fears to rest. He said, Listen, be of good comfort.

Calm down. Don't worry. Everything's all right.

Your faith has made you well. Now, to say her faith has made her well is not the same thing as saying that faith alone is what heals. It was, of course, Jesus and the power that went out of him that made her well.

She accessed that power. She gained that power for herself by her faith. But it is not to be thought that faith itself is a healing power.

Now, the reason I say this is because there are metaphysical cults that do teach such things. Christian science and similar mind science cults believe that faith or positive thinking is itself a power, a force. And that if you simply will apply your faith to any situation, you will have it.

That you create your own reality by your thoughts. This is metaphysical religion's basic assumption. And many metaphysical cults teach this essential thing that faith is really a force.

And if you learn to use it, if you maintain a positive outlook, positive thinking is able to remove all difficulties and so forth. Now, back in the 50s, Norman Vincent Peale wrote a book called *The Power of Positive Thinking*. He was a Christian clergyman.

However, his book resembled much more the metaphysical idea that if you think positively, there's a power in that. Thinking positively would be roughly analogous to faith. Believing for something good.

Thinking positively has power in it, Norman Vincent Peale indicated. And his disciple, who is still living, actually Norman Vincent Peale I think is still living, but he's very old. But one of his more contemporary and more famous disciples is Robert Schuller of the Crystal Cathedral.

Robert Schuller has unashamedly admitted that he is a disciple of Norman Vincent Peale. And his message is the same as that of Peale. Although, whereas Norman Vincent Peale referred to it as positive thinking, the Crystal Cathedral guy, Robert Schuller, has referred to it as possibility thinking.

But it's the same thing. I remember hearing Schuller preach once about some couple in his congregation were pregnant and they were really hoping for a girl because they had

several boys and they really wanted to have a girl. And he said, I counseled them to think pink.

Think pink. Think pink. As if thinking about the color pink was going to influence the sex of the child.

If they wanted a female child, then thinking pink was a positive thought because it's thinking feminine, you know. And he was not ashamed to say this is the counsel he gave them. They wanted a girl child, so while pregnant, he told them to be thinking about the color pink.

Now, one has to wonder exactly what kind of a world view Robert Schuller has about this. As if the sex of a child is not already determined from the point of conception. They already had a child growing in there.

What if it was already a boy and they began thinking pink hard enough? Would the child in the womb have a sex change? I mean, does thinking something make it happen? This is what metaphysical cults teach and this is what has come into the church in the form of the Word of Faith doctrine because it is the same thing. The Word of Faith teaching is that there are forces in the universe, spiritual forces and laws, which if you learn how to use them, you will have whatever you want, you create your own reality. And the use of them means having positive faith and making positive confessions.

And whatever you confess you will have and whatever you believe will be reality. And therefore, even if you are sick and you have an issue of blood and it hasn't stopped, just confess that it's not so. Just believe yourself well.

And this will create that reality. This is really just metaphysical cults baptized with Christian terminology. Faith and so forth.

Now, such people would like to use a verse like this and often do. Jesus said to the woman, your faith has healed you. You see? Faith has a healing power.

Faith is a power that brings healing. If you have faith, you'll be healed. Because faith is a healing agent.

Because Jesus said her faith has healed her. Well, that's not taking into consideration other important factors like the fact that Jesus felt power go out of him and that's clearly what healed her, was his power, not her faith. Faith is not a power.

Jesus is the power. Faith is the means of receiving things from Jesus. James said, let not that man, the man who has little faith, whose faith wavers, let not that man think that he'll receive anything from the Lord.

It's true, faith is an important factor in receiving miracles. But it's not the faith that

produces it. It's faith that receives it from God who produces it.

It's God's power that produces the miracle, not the mental power exerted by having faith. Some Word of Faith teachers, Kenneth Hagin, for example, has actually written a book called *Having Faith in Your Faith*. Now, Jesus certainly never said to have faith in faith.

You have faith in God. But you see what that does? Have faith in God presupposes that God is the power you're looking to. Faith is your way of receiving from Him.

But having faith in faith suggests that faith is the power. And you need to receive by faith from that power which is called faith. Faith is the beginning and end of everything, instead of being the means of receiving from God and of relating to God.

In fact, Kenneth Hagin said in one of his sermons, if you don't have enough faith in your own faith, then have faith in my faith, and you'll be healed. Now, what a strange thing to say. Why not just say what Jesus said? Have faith in God.

Instead of putting somebody's own faith, or even not their own, but my faith, up as an idol. Look, trust in my faith. Trust in your faith.

Trust the force, basically, is a New Age metaphysical concept. It's not a Christian concept, but it's taught, like many other non-Christian concepts, within the church in certain sectors. And I just want to clarify that when Jesus said, your faith has made you well, he was not saying that faith was the power that made her well.

Faith was the means by which she received the power of Jesus. And the power of Jesus made her well, as is very clear from reading the whole narrative. Now, we find her going away healed, and then we get back to the original story about the rich young ruler.

No, I'm just kidding, not the rich young ruler, the ruler of the synagogue. The ruler whose daughter was near death. Well, by the time we're done dealing with the woman with the issue of blood, things have changed for that girl.

She's now dead. It says in verse 35, while he was still speaking, some came from the ruler of the synagogue's house and said, your daughter is dead, why trouble the teacher any further? Now, I love this passage, to tell you the truth, because the sensitivity of Jesus to this man's reaction is just so clear to me in this. It says, as soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he said to the ruler of the synagogue, don't be afraid, only believe.

Now, Jesus didn't wait for the man to react. He knew the kind of reaction that news was going to bring. This man was extremely concerned about his only daughter's life.

That's why he'd come desperately to Jesus to do something about it. Now he receives

news that it's too late, she's already dead. And Jesus doesn't have to wait to see it happen.

The man's countenance drop, his heart sink, his sense of all hope is lost. Instead, Jesus anticipates that and speaks to encourage him, listen, don't be afraid, don't listen to that news. Now, Jesus isn't denying that she's dead.

She certainly was dead, and the Bible makes that very clear. He's just saying that is not occasion for you to lose hope. Just because she's dead, that's no more of a hopeless situation than when she was sick.

Because the power of death is no more of a challenge to Jesus than sickness. And since Jesus had just healed a woman who had 12 years of sickness, he could certainly raise this 12-year-old girl from the dead too, and bring her back to life. And so he said, listen, don't be afraid, only believe.

In fact, in Luke's gospel, Jesus goes so far as to say, and she will be made well. He actually tells her that in Luke 8.50. And he permitted no one to follow him except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James. Now, these three men we sometimes refer to as the inner circle of the disciples because they were allowed to be present with Jesus, to accompany him on occasions when even the other nine of the apostles were excluded.

And they, for example, were with him on the Mount of Transfiguration, these same three, Peter, James, and John. The other disciples were left at the foot of the mountain, didn't see what they saw. The same three were in the Garden of Gethsemane praying with Jesus, and he asked them to stay awake for an hour.

The other nine were not taken in there. So, these three obviously had a special role, and of course later on we find them in the Book of Acts as being the leading spokesman for the apostles. Jesus apparently had them singled out for that, and gave them more intensive supervision and training, and let them come with him on this occasion, though the other disciples were not allowed to come.

We're not told why he didn't let the other disciples come. It may be simply for the logistical reason that the house was already full of people when he got there, and the room in which he was might have been a small room. He let the mother and the father and the three disciples and himself in, and there was already the girl there.

That makes seven people, and it may have been a small enough room that the other nine just wouldn't fit. So, he wouldn't let anyone else follow him, except these three men, who were under special training to observe more of what he did than the others, because they would be leaders and have to imitate him, and take the lead as he did on occasions in the future. Then he came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue and saw a tumult.

Now, a tumult suggests that there was a cacophony of sound. There was a lot of noise. It was chaotic.

In Matthew 9.23, we're told that this tumult was caused by minstrels and the people making noise, it says. In Matthew 9.23, it says, They came to the house and there were the minstrels and the people making noise. Now, the minstrels, obviously, were the mourners, the ones who came in and played the dirge to help encourage people to mourn.

It was considered to be an honor to a person who died to have many people mourn their death, and for obvious reasons. It says in the Proverbs, When the righteous die, the people mourn, but when the wicked die, the city rejoices. The people shout.

And if you died and no one mourned your death, it speaks poorly of how well you were loved. You might remember that Herod the Great, I told you this once earlier, Herod the Great, when he was dying of cancer, I believe it was, he knew he was dying, and so he had his servants arrest a thousand noble citizens of Jerusalem with the order that on the day of his death, those thousand citizens should be executed also. This was so that his death would not go unmourned.

He wanted to guarantee that there would be great mourning on the occasion of his death. And he knew no one would mourn for him because he was not well loved, but he thought, well, at least everyone will mourn the day I die because I'm going to have these thousand good people killed. Actually, the servants of Herod released the men after Herod died rather than killing them, so his wishes weren't carried out and no one did mourn on the occasion of his death.

But you remember how Jesus said that his generation was like children playing in the marketplace, and he probably described real games that children in that society played. They said, well, we piped for you, but you didn't dance. And we played the dirge for you, and you didn't mourn.

The children always like to imitate adults, and I know because I have children, they like to pick up either real or imagined musical instruments and play like they're a band or play like they're entertaining or just that they're musical. And that's something they do for fun. And so children in Jesus' day no doubt did the same thing.

They'd play like they were making music. They'd see their parents going to parties and feasts and so forth where there's entertainment and music, and so the kids would imitate that in their games. They also had no doubt seen funerals, and they'd seen these professional mourners with their instruments and the dirge being played.

And so they imitated that too, and Jesus referred to that in the case. Here, when he came into the ruler's house, there were minstrels there. It doesn't say so in Mark, but it

tells us that in Matthew.

Now, this makes it clear that the mourning going on in the house was not just the family. It wasn't just the family that was aware of the death and was mourning, but there were already there people brought in to enhance the mourning situation. See, it was an honor to the dead to have many people mourn, so there were actually people who hired themselves out just to mourn, even to mourn for people they'd never met who died.

They were just professionals. And that these people were professionals makes it very clear, because they're wailing and they're mourning and they're weeping, and Jesus makes a remark and they all start laughing. You can tell that they're not exactly sad.

It's all a sham. When you're really unhappy and really sad and really grieving, you can't burst into laughter instantaneously when you hear something that strikes you as funny. And yet they did.

So it's obvious that these people had no emotional stake, most of them. They were just the professionals. Now, as I said earlier, it makes you wonder, how did the professional mourners get there so quickly? When the man left to fetch Jesus, the daughter was not yet dead.

She was still alive, hovering at the point of death. He got Jesus, and it was just in crossing town, it would seem, just in that short time, that the girl died. And by the time Jesus got there, the mourners were already there.

As I said, this seems to indicate that they were ambulance chasers, hanging around, knowing when someone was about to die, and just waiting to run in and hire themselves out when the death would occur.