

Does Jesus Care

Around 1901, a Methodist minister named Frank Graeff was suffering through a time of self-doubt and depression. He read in 1 Peter the following scripture:

casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you. (1 Peter 5:7 NASB)

We are not sure whether these words offered him comfort or fueled his doubt. However, he wrote a hymn that raises several questions about various situations in which we may find our doubts about God's care for us. Some of those situations include the burdens and pressures of everyday living, unknown dreads and fears, personal failures to live as we should, and even the loss of a loved one. Following each situation, we may ask; "Does Jesus Care?"

In his song, the refrain answers each situation with:

*Oh, yes, He cares, I know He cares,
His heart is touched with my grief;
When the days are weary, the long nights dreary,
I know my Savior cares.*

Of course, we know the song just mentioned and we have sung it many times. Maybe next time, we will pause to reflect on the words and their meaning.

This morning, we will look at some events in an ordinary day for Jesus and we will look for evidence that Jesus cares. The initial passage we will read this morning follows the events we considered last week. The boat with Jesus and His disciples arrived safely to the other side of the Sea of Galilee to the region known as Gerasene or as some translate Gadara is located on the southeast of the Sea of Galilee.

We may remember that this is where Jesus cast the demon named Legion into the swine that jumped into the sea and drowned. Jesus was asked to leave (Mark 5:17) so we will pick up our reading in verse 21 of the 5th chapter of Mark.

When Jesus had crossed over again in the boat to the other side, a large crowd gathered around Him; and so, He stayed by the seashore. One of the synagogue officials named Jairus came up, and on seeing Him, fell at His feet and implored Him earnestly, saying, "My little daughter is at the point of death; *please* come and lay Your hands on her, so that she will get well and live." And He went off with him; and a large crowd was following Him and pressing in on Him. (Mark 5:21-24 NASB)

Jesus is once more pressed by a large crowd of people who have come to hear Him and perhaps witness some healing or other miracles. Jairus is described as an official of the synagogue. The officials were typically laymen whose responsibilities were administrative, not priestly, and included such things as looking after the building and supervising the worship.

Jairus broke through the crowd and without any socially accepted polite overtures, falls at the feet of Jesus. He we have a typical dad with a sick daughter. He wants help and he knows that the help he needs is what Jesus offers. Jesus does not stop to ask questions. Jesus does not tell Jairus that he must wait his turn. Instead, Jesus went with Jairus.

A crowd follows. Many of these may have been following out of curiosity. None the less, the crowd pressed on as they followed Jesus. While on His way to Jairus' house, we read that someone is healed from another disease.

A woman who had had a hemorrhage for twelve years, and had endured much at the hands of many physicians, and had spent all that she had and was not helped at all, but rather had grown worse— after hearing about Jesus, she came up in the crowd behind *Him* and touched His cloak. For she thought, “If I just touch His garments, I will get well.” Immediately the flow of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction. (Mark 5:25-29 NASB)

Without getting into the specifics or any speculations, we see that a woman that suffered for 12 years with a disease touched the clock of Jesus and was immediately cured.

A chance to touch that brought healing. As the crowd crushed in on Jesus, how could this simple touch be noticed?

Immediately Jesus, perceiving in Himself that the power *proceeding* from Him had gone forth, turned around in the crowd and said, “Who touched My garments?” And His disciples said to Him, “You see the crowd pressing in on You, and You say, ‘Who touched Me?’” And He looked around to see the woman who had done this. But the woman fearing and trembling, aware of 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.” (Mark 5:30-34 NASB)

Jesus pauses to ask the question. His disciples were more concerned about the sick daughter of Jairus and urged Jesus not to pursue this question of touch. But Jesus cared. He cared not only for the sick daughter but for the person who touched Him.

The woman is trembling when she falls at Jesus' feet. Under the Mosaic Law, coming in contact with a bleeding person would make you ceremonially unclean. Jesus was not concerned about this. Rather, He acknowledged her faith and then with the Jewish phrase “Go in peace” or the Hebrew word Shalom, He was ready to resume His trip to Jairus' house.

While He was still speaking, they came from the *house of* the synagogue official, saying, “Your daughter has died; why trouble the Teacher anymore?” But Jesus, overhearing what was being spoken, said to the synagogue official, “Do not be afraid *any longer*, only believe.” (Mark 5:35-36 NASB)

For us, death is a termination. It signifies that life is over. At this point, there is no longer any need for Jesus to proceed to the house. The girl whose healing was requested is now beyond the need for healing. She is dead.

Jesus tells Jairus, the daddy, not to be afraid but to believe.

And He allowed no one to accompany Him, except Peter and James and John the brother of James. They came to the house of the synagogue official; and He saw a commotion, and *people* loudly weeping and wailing. And entering in, He said to them, “Why make a commotion and weep? The child has not died, but is asleep.” They *began* laughing at Him. But putting them all out, He took along the child's father and mother and His own companions, and entered *the room* where the child was. Taking the child by the hand, He said to her, “Talitha kum!” (Which translated means, “Little girl, I say to you, get up!”). Immediately the girl got up and *began* to walk, for she was twelve years old. And immediately they were completely astounded. And He gave them strict orders that no one should know about this, and He said that *something* should be given her to eat. (Mark 5:37-43 NASB)

In the presence of the child's parents and three of Jesus' closest disciples, Jesus calls the girl back from the dead.

We have certainly seen at least two acts of compassion by Jesus. His healing of the woman with the hemorrhage and the calling the dead girl back to life. Even within the ending of this miracle, we see that Jesus truly cares. Notice He instructed them to feed the girl? Jesus cares.

The gospels are filled with examples of the compassion Jesus has for those around Him. Isaiah describes our great shepherd in this way:

**Like a shepherd He will tend His flock, in His arm He will gather the lambs
And carry *them* in His bosom; He will gently lead the nursing ewes. (Isaiah 40:11 NASB)**

While Jesus was on this earth, He healed the sick and raised the dead. We just read about Jairus' daughter. On another occasion, Jesus felt compassion for someone else who lost a child. We find this in Luke the 7th chapter.

Soon afterwards He went to a city called Nain; and His disciples were going along with Him, accompanied by a large crowd. Now as He approached the gate of the city, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and a sizeable crowd from the city was with her. When the Lord saw her, He felt compassion for her, and said to her, "Do not weep." And He came up and touched the coffin; and the bearers came to a halt. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise!" (Luke 7:11-14 NASB)

Not only did Jesus reveal His compassion through healing or raising the dead, He also showed His compassion by feeding those who were hungry. In Matthew the 15th chapter, the crowd had stayed with Him for three days and He knew their human needs.

And Jesus called His disciples to Him, and said, "I feel compassion for the people, because they have remained with Me now three days and have nothing to eat; and I do not want to send them away hungry, for they might faint on the way." (Matthew 15:32 NASB)

Jesus cares for us on multiple levels. He cares about us when we suffer from physical pain and disease. He cares for us when we are separated from Him spiritually and emotionally. As Jesus went about the people, He saw them as His sheep.

Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore, beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest." (Matthew 9:36-38 NASB)

Later, as Jesus was in Jerusalem for His final tie before His crucifixion, Jesus laments over this city with these words:

"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. (Matthew 23:37 NASB)

Does Jesus care? Without a doubt, He cares for us today just as surely as He cared for the daughter of Jairus. Jesus cares for us just as surely as He cared for the hemorrhaging woman. Jesus cares when we suffer pain, both physical and emotional.

Do we trust Jesus enough to **casting all your anxiety on Him**? He extends His hand toward us and calls us today. Will we extend our hand toward His? When He calls our name, will we answer?