

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus~~Prayer Guide

Jesus Heals a Woman and Jairus's Daughter—Mark 5:21-43

As you begin a time of prayer, it might be a good place to start by asking “*What is prayer?*” Very simply, prayer is seeking Jesus—turning the eyes of your heart toward him and seeking him Face to face—and in that encounter there is a sharing, a giving and receiving. The unnamed suffering woman in Mark 5 and Jairus, a synagogue ruler, invite us to pray our concerns along with them as they come Face to face with Jesus.



Meditate on the Gospel Passage: Mark 5:21-43

Before you begin, take a few minutes to just be quiet and relaxed. Become aware of God's loving Presence with you.

Turn the eyes of your heart upon Jesus as you read the scripture passage slowly several times with pauses. In contrast to reading for information, try to approach the scripture as though it is a door that you are knocking on, opened by Jesus, with an invitation to enter and be with him. Ask Jesus to guide you as you pray.

- *As you read, is there a particular word, phrase or image you feel drawn to?*
- *Why might God have drawn your attention to this particular detail? Does it convey something that connects to your life today? You might like to pray and journal your reflections.*

Meditate on the Pictures: The Woman and Jairus

Now turn your attention to the two pictures and fellow companions in your prayer.

- *As you look at the woman what do you see? Can you give one word...*
- *As you look at Jairus, what is he feeling? Can you give one word...*
- *What in the pictures seems to most draw your attention? Does it resonate with your life in some way?*

For Reflection and Prayer: Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

Where are you seeking? Mark says the hemorrhaging woman “heard the reports about Jesus” and went looking for him. Jairus left his daughter’s deathbed to seek Jesus. In contrast to seeking Jesus it can be easy to try and solve the situation on our own.

- *What are you seeking and have you been seeking elsewhere for answers trying to solve things on your own? Might this be a moment to turn your eyes to Jesus and reach out toward him?*

Come as you are: Both Jairus and the woman come to Jesus with a desperate situation. They have tried everything and they are at the end of their resources. Both come to Jesus with a posture of humility, falling at his feet. The woman is so desperate that she lays aside her fear of reprisal and risks touching Jesus. Jairus, an important figure in the community, falls before Jesus and begs his help.

- *How do you come to Jesus with your situation? Is there something in you that feels like it has been “bleeding” for a very long time? Or a situation you care deeply about that has seemed to go unanswered for a painfully long time? Imagine yourself at Jesus’ feet, or take the posture of humility and kneel. What happens when you come Face to face with Jesus?*

Prayer as a personal journey: Jesus takes both the woman and Jairus on a journey that is more than the healing of an illness. He invites Jairus to *believe more than what he hears* (“Your daughter is dead”). Jesus also tells him to move against his deep emotions of fear and grief when he says *“Do not fear, only believe”*. When we pray in our desperate circumstances we come face to face with our fears and struggles to trust. Jesus *joins Jairus* in walking with him through the uncertainty of the outcome of his request. Likewise, Jesus companions the woman’s anxiety by offering her peace in the midst of embarrassment and fear. Jesus cares about the outcome, but he also is nurturing our relationship with him as we pray.

- *In the midst of your prayer what is Jesus inviting you to? Is there a fear or doubt that he might be stretching you to lay aside in faith?*

Jesus is never too busy for you: In this story Jesus was preaching before “a great crowd” when he was interrupted by Jairus. He seems willing to go when and where he is called. He then pauses on the urgent road to Jairus’ house to engage the bleeding woman! He is never too busy or has more important things to do than responding to us!

- *Know that Jesus has stopped and listened to you today as you’ve prayed.. End your prayer time with a few minutes of silence, allowing yourself to experience Jesus’ gaze upon you.*