



“Desperate”  
Luke 8:40-56

**Idea:** Jesus is the resurrection and the life.

**Intro:** It was a normal Tuesday morning with a standard, simple surgical procedure on the calendar. Barbara had been anticipating this morning for a few weeks and the short recovery that would follow. Therefore, her husband Kent and daughter Holly went with her to the hospital. They got Barbara checked in at the desk, and after a short wait she was called back to pre-op. Kent and Holly sat in the lobby, reading the paper and waiting to hear from the surgeon. A lab technician named Susie walked through who was a friend of Barbara’s niece, so they chatted for a few minutes. Susie worked on the other side of the hospital and walked through that lobby to hit the ATM before she clocked in. She had awakened that morning feeling angry and abandoned by God because of constant pain associated with an infertility problem.

Around 10:00 a.m. the surgeon met Kent and Holly in the lobby and explained that everything went fine. Barbara would be in recovery for about ninety minutes, and they could see her then. Kent decided to run out and take care of a few errands, while Holly stayed at the hospital. When he returned, he learned that Barbara had just been taken back into surgery, which was expected to last only fifteen minutes. It turned into five anxious hours. When the surgeon finally returned to Kent and Holly, he explained that an artery had been nicked during the first surgery and Barbara had lost a liter and a half of blood, nearly dying.

Throughout the night, the nurses continued to change Barbara’s bandages. Her bleeding was not stopping, and she was getting weaker. Kent and Holly were very troubled as Barbara continued to decline. Many of their church friends came to the hospital to set and pray with them. Barbara needed a miracle. The medical staff did not understand why her blood was not clotting, so they did not have a solution.

The next morning, Susie came by the room when she heard that Barbara was still there. She overheard some people in the hall discussing the situation and how Barbara’s blood was not clotting. She suddenly remembered doing a blood test years earlier on Barbara’s niece while they both were bored, working in the lab one day. She ran to her lab and pulled up her friend’s records, which showed that her friend had a rare blood disorder that inhibited the clotting of blood. The bloodwork resembled Barbara’s. She called the hematologist with the remedy – cryoprecipitate. Once it was administered, Barbara’s hemorrhage began to slow down.

Later that afternoon, Susie came back by the room to check on Barbara. She mumbled to the nurse, “Do you know who this is? This is the young lady who saved my life.”

Susie had come to work the day before angry and feeling like God had abandoned her since she was still unable to become pregnant. Instead, God had providentially crossed her path with Barbara and her family twice in two

days, using her story and abilities to be the answer to the desperate prayers being offered up to God for Barbara. Not only was she the answer and help for Barbara, but her information led to the discovery that other family members also carried the same genetic disorder. This entire situation reminded Susie of God's goodness, grace, and glorious providence. As desperate as she might have felt because she could not or had not seen an answer to her and her husband's prayers, God in His grace loved Susie and was working on her behalf.

Desperate is how many people feel today. Perhaps, you feel desperate today too. Two characters and their families in the pericope we are examining today were also desperate.

Read Luke 8:40-56.

**Inquiry:** These verses contain two miracle stories that reveal Jesus' power over sickness and death. This completes the portrayal of Jesus' power, which has been the theme in 8:22-56. He is Lord over nature, demons, sickness, and even death. The present two stories are intimately associated, with the story of the woman with a hemorrhage (vs. 43-48) inserted into the story of Jairus' daughter (vs. 40-42, 49-56). The resuscitation of Jairus' "only" daughter parallels the resuscitation of the widow of Nain's "only" son in 7:11-17.

Luke's purpose in this section is to reveal to Theophilus that the Jesus in whom he had believed possesses all power and authority. He can save from all things those who call upon His name. Therefore, faith is the theme in these verses. Through faith the hemorrhaging woman was healed and could go away in peace (vs. 48). Jairus, too, if he believed would see his daughter brought back to life (vs. 50). The Greek term used to speak of the healing in both situations is σωζω. It means to save or deliver. The term is translated "made well" in both verses. The use of σωζω or "saved" would not have been lost on Luke's readers. It reminded them, and it reminds believers today of God's redeeming activity such as that of the Philippian jailer. Paul told this man, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved (σωζω), you and your household" (Acts 16:31).

Do you feel desperate today? Many of you probably do. If you are not desperate today, then you soon will. It is a fact of life and part of what it means to live in a fallen world. God, however, has not abandoned us to grope through it on our own. He is an ever-present help in time of trouble (Ps 46:1). God in His grace uses our trouble and sense of desperation to draw us to Himself. He calls us to faith, showing us that Jesus is the resurrection and the life. There are three realities for us to see in these verses.

### **1. Desperation is no respecter of persons.**

Jairus was a Jewish religious leader. He was the ruler of the synagogue in Capernaum (vs. 41). By all accounts, he would have been a respectable and honorable man. It was understood that Jairus believed and followed God. Therefore, he was a man of substantial prestige.

Jairus' daughter was the benefactor of her father's reputation and care. As a twelve-year-old girl, she was young and moving into a very exciting stage of life. As such, the reader assumes the young girl is innocent and nothing more than a loving, obedient daughter, yet she has become deathly ill (vs. 42).

On the other hand, Luke offers no details of the hemorrhaging woman other than that she has battled this condition for twelve years. Her condition was so bad, she had spent everything she had on doctors, seeking a medical remedy for her healing (vs. 43).

These two stories and their sufferings remind us that desperation never play favorites. Being a Christian does not make a person immune to the effects of the fall. Sickness comes to both the godly and the ungodly. Today, in every hospital in America there are Christians and non-Christians who are battling cancer, recovering from cardiac arrest, recuperating after a major accident, and mourning the death of child. The evils of this fallen world visit us all.

You might be struggling in the aftermath of a broken marriage, the immediate loss of employment, a health crisis, or poor decisions by a family member. Whatever the cause of your desperation, never think that it is not fair or something that should not come to you. Desperation is no respecter of persons. It will and does visit everyone at some point. Therefore, it is important to know that there is purpose behind our desperation. I am not saying that God directly causes your desperation, though there are times He might. But I am saying that He uses the brokenness of this fallen world for His purposes.

## **2. Desperation causes a person to seek a solution.**

Earlier in chapter 8, we read that Jesus had left the shores of Capernaum to escape the crowds, and in the interval, He had calmed a raging storm and delivered a man from the grasp of a legion of demons. As He returned, a vast crowd swarmed the shore to greet Him and to see what other miracles He might do. It was a dangerous, jostling, noisy crowd, but it was silenced momentarily by an extraordinary spectacle. Prostrated before Jesus was the leader of the synagogue, and he was pleading with Jesus to come with him and heal his dying daughter.

There is no reason for us to believe Jairus had been friendly toward Jesus before this moment. Jesus was an outsider. He had even been accused of heresy by other synagogues. His previous use of the Capernaum synagogue had been highly controversial (Luke 4). For this reason, we should not suppose that Jairus had become a disciple of Christ or a man of faith. His situation was desperate. More than likely, he had exhausted all other solutions, so upon hearing that the “miracle worker” had returned to Capernaum, he sought Jesus’ help. His love for Christ is not what brought Jairus to Jesus. It was his love for his daughter.

Likewise, the hemorrhaging woman had exhausted all her resources and energy seeking a solution for her condition. Jesus was her last hope. When she heard that Jesus had returned to Capernaum, she probably believed this was her last chance to be healed. Her discharge of blood made her ceremonially unclean, meaning she was an outcast in society. Therefore, she cloaked herself and approached Jesus from behind. She did her best to escape detection. The religious people in the crowd would have been angry had they known she was mingling with them and infecting them with uncleanness.

The woman probably believed like others did in her day that simply touching the garment or being in the shadow of the godly could bring healing. So as Jesus passed by, she reached out and grabbed hold of His cloak. In that moment, she felt healing begin to course through her body, and she knew she was whole again (vs. 44).

Two desperate individuals with two different stories and backgrounds were driven to seek solutions for their hurt. There was purpose in their hurt. Their brokenness put them on a quest for a solution. These stories reveal to us that despair is commonly the prelude to grace.

## **3. Desperation ought to lead a person to faith in Jesus.**

When Jesus asked who had touched Him, the woman’s heart was surely throbbing with both joy and fear. He was calling her ought for an unlawful touch and exposing her anonymity. Jesus, however, did not scold her. He praised her saying, *“Daughter, your faith has made you well: go in peace.”* The woman’s faith was an ignorant faith. She had sought a magical cure, as if Jesus was so charged with healing that anyone who touched Him would get zapped with health. Her faith was uninformed, superstitious, presumptuous, and imperfect. It, however, was real, and Jesus honored it. Her desperation led her to faith in Jesus.

Jairus was not yet there in his faith. He sought Jesus out because He had healed others. He probably had his doubts, but it would not hurt to try. As Jesus talked with the woman, word came to Jairus that

his daughter had died. There was no reason to trouble Jesus any longer (vs. 49). Jesus, on the other hand, called Jairus to faith...faith in Him (vs. 50). As they entered Jairus' house, the people mocked the idea that the girl could be brought back to life (vs. 53). Using only His voice, Jesus brought life back into the body of the young girl, which amazed Jairus and his wife.

This incident reveals to Jairus and you and I today that Jesus can save from all things those who call upon His name. Therefore, faith is the theme in these verses. Through faith the hemorrhaging woman was healed and could go away in peace (vs. 48). Jairus, too, if he believed would see his daughter brought back to life (vs. 50). Again, the Greek term used to speak of the healing in both is σωζω. The woman's ignorant and imperfect faith saved her. It resulted in her physical healing. Jairus, too, expressed faith in Jesus. It was a micro-faith, but it was faith, nonetheless. As a result, his daughter was brought back to life. She was healed.

**Conclusion:** Desperate...Jairus and the hemorrhaging woman were both desperate. Barbara, Kent, and Holly were desperate. Equally so, Susie was desperate in her own way. All of these individuals were desperate for a move of God in their lives. Their situations were beyond their control, and only the Lord possessed the power to step in and change the trajectory. Desperate is how many people feel today. More than likely there are people here today who feel this way. Are you desperate? Here is what you need to know:

- Desperation is no respecter of persons.  
It comes to all.
- Desperation causes a person to seek a solution.  
There is purpose in our brokenness. This is a common grace.
- Desperation ought to lead a person to faith in Jesus.  
He is the solution both physically and spiritually.

Are you desperate? If so, will you seek out Jesus and let Him be your solution? The Lord is available and ready. It is okay to come like the hemorrhaging woman with an ignorant, incomplete faith. Even if you do not think Jesus sees you and situation, come to Him like the woman. Our Lord welcomes you. Perhaps, you are more like Jairus. It is okay that your initial reason for seeking out Jesus is a solution for your desperation. It is okay if you are open to the fact that Jesus wants to do more than fix your current desperation.

The Lord wants to step into our desperation. He is good and gracious. The brokenness we feel and experience He uses to lead us to seek a solution, knowing that He alone is the solution. Therefore, today there are some people who need to turn from their sin and turn to Jesus as Lord and Savior.

Others need to turn to Jesus and allow Him to make you well. You are desperate for a move of God. If this is you, I invite you to come and allow us as a church to pray with and for you.