

WHEN YOUR FAITH STORY IS INTERRUPTED +++

SETH FLICK

Good morning, King of Kings. Man, it's great to serve a King, right? Man, the world can shift underneath us, and yet we can still look to our King. Everything can change, and yet we can look at the unchanging nature of our King. We can look at all the times, and we can look at our King. King Jesus is here for you today. His Word is alive and active, so let's dive into it. Yeah, Church? What do you think, Church? Yes!

All right, but in order to do so, we're going to need to kind of travel back in time, back to 2001, a simpler time, some might say. Back to a time where we had just recovered from, I don't know, thinking the entire world was going to be gone because computers couldn't read zeros and ones and all such things. But I want you to think back to football season of 2001.

So in 2001, there was one team that was seen as like the growth team, the one that will have, I don't know, the best chance to make it to the Super Bowl. Their quarterback, Drew Bledsoe, had just signed the richest contract in NFL history. If he would have played all 10 years, he would have made at least a combined total of \$103 million. That's a lot. That's a lot of church plants. We can think about it that way, right? But with all of that great money came a lot of expectations on Drew's shoulders.

Yes, they had an amazing coach. Yes, they had offensive weapons that they started to build around Drew. Their defense, which would become historic, was its beginning building stages at that time as well. But the Super Bowl conversations had started even before the season began. And so the first game actually looked pretty good. Patriots are up. They're playing the Jets. The Jets still stunk at that time, too. They've always stunk. Sorry, Jets fans.

Bledsoe takes the snap in the last quarter. The pocket kind of collapses around him. He's able to sneak out. He runs around the edge. And then that's when he gets absolutely trucked by Mo Lewis, the linebacker from the Jets. Trucked, for those of you, is what the kids say, for being hit very hard in a tackle. He got trucked, laid out on the side of the line. And the trainers run in. And Bledsoe can't get up. Like he can reach up, but he can't get up. He tries, and he gets back down again. So the coach has to call an injury timeout. And that injury timeout, it was like an interruption to all those hopes and all those expectations and all the dreams of where they thought that this season was going to go.

And this is also where we're going to interrupt the story because the title of this sermon series is, Pardon This. And this is the same storytelling technique that the Gospel of Mark uses to make people lean into the teachings of Jesus.

Now, if you remember last week, we said that there were interruptions that happened in the ministry of Jesus. And so that intro, the outer story was that Jesus was in his home, but outside of his home, his

biological brothers and mother and sisters were all plotting to seize him because they thought he was out of his mind. And so they questioned his integrity.

And then in the middle, there was a cut scene, an interruption that brings us to inside Jesus's home, into the inner story, where the scribes, that is the people whose job it was to like teach the word of God to the people in the area, were calling him filled with an unclean spirit, that he was possessed. So you had both the inner story and the outer story interrupting Jesus's integrity.

But then he resolves both of those stories at the end, where he says, you see these ones who are doing the will of my father, these are my mother and my brothers and my sister. And so we found that it's in God, not in the way that people perceive us, not in what we do per se, but in God and in his will, where we find our identity when our integrity is in check. So we line ourselves up with Jesus's integrity rather than our own. That was last week's part in the interruption.

But this week, we're going to find that the same thing is going to happen, although the storytelling is slightly different. We're going to have Jairus, a synagogue leader.

Now here's the thing. A lot of people get confused, so I'm just going to help out a little bit here. The temple is where the Jewish people would go just a few times in the year together for sacrifice and worship. But on a typical Shabbat, a typical Sabbath during the typical week, there were synagogues all over the regions where they would go to hear the word of God.

So we have a synagogue leader named Jairus whose daughter is dying. That's the outer story. Then the inner story will cut in where there's a woman with a bleeding difficulty. But in both of these stories, like every second matters, this interruption is an interesting interruption.

So let's start with the outer story first. We're going to start with Jairus's interruption because it's going to start to help resolve our question, which is what happens when your faith story, the miracle you've been waiting for gets interrupted? And maybe it doesn't even get interrupted by a bad thing. Maybe it gets interrupted by another good thing. But what do you do? Where does your heart go when your miracle gets interrupted?

Now for that, we're going to hop right into the outer story in Mark chapter five, verses 21 through 24.

I want you to pay specific attention to you interrupting me in the reading of God's word. So you get to read the highlighted words that are here.

Mark 5, 21 begins this way. Jesus got into the boat again and went back to the other side of the lake where a large crowd had gathered around him on the shore. Then a leader of the local synagogue, whose name was Jairus arrived. When he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet.

I want you to pay attention to that. He was pleading fervently with him. Our little daughter is dying, he said. Please come and lay your hands on her. Interrupt me. Heal her so she can live. Jesus went with him and all the people followed crowding around him.

Think about this. This man had no other option. Like he was a leader in his community. He knew the scriptures. He had heard it every Sabbath. He was actually in all likelihood, a teacher of the word in

some way, shape or form. But his daughter is dying. Like he is literally looking for a miracle and he can think of nothing better than to throw himself at the feet of Jesus.

I want you to get an urgency here as this is being read because the gospel of Mark is actually marked with urgency. The word immediately shows up in this gospel more than any other gospel. But it is an immediacy that we have here. He knows that time for his daughter, his 12-year-old daughter is running short.

Jesus says that he will go and they begin to make their way to walk towards that healing when out of nowhere, an interruption. Jesus is stopped. And we cut to the inner story. We cut to this woman with a bleeding issue. And what we're going to find out is that this bleeding issue didn't just cause her her own pain physically, but it caused an emotional pain that came along with this. And you'll find this from the scriptures as well.

But let's dive now in from the outer story to this cut in the inner story in Mark chapter 5, verses 25 to 29. And again, you're invited and you're invited to interrupt this with a highlighted reading.

A woman in the crowd had suffered for 12 years.

Oh, wait, let's just interrupt this right now. How old was the little girl? 12. How long has this woman been suffering? Hmm. Interesting connection that I want you to pay attention to.

She had suffered for 12 years with constant bleeding. She had suffered a great deal from many doctors. Over the years, she had spent everything she had to pay them, but she had gotten no better. In fact, she'd gotten worse. She heard about Jesus. So she came up behind him through the crowd and touched his robe. For she thought to herself, if I can just touch his robe, I will be healed. Immediately the bleeding stopped. She could feel in her body that she had been healed of this terrible condition.

Now, just some insights into the level of desperation that this young woman had. You see, it's not just some kind of pain because she did have pain. It said that she had suffered a great deal. She had suffered from many doctors. She had this constant bleeding. We don't know exactly what caused it, but there is a difficulty here. Yes, there's pain here. But if you look at the Levitical law, she also was going to be ostracized for her community.

Leviticus 15.25 says this about this specific woman's issue: If a woman has a flow of blood for many days, the woman will be unclean as long as the discharge continues. So think about that. For 12 years, how many hugs did this woman get to have with her family? None.

For 12 years, she would have to interrupt conversations mid-sentence to let people know that I've come to her. Whoa, wait, wait, wait, wait. I'm unclean. I'm unclean. You're going to have to move away because the unclean nature of myself because of things that I can't control might actually get you unclean, which means that you then won't be able to go into the presence of worship.

And so this is a woman who is full of desperation, but she's also full of isolation. She's got no community to support her. But then she sees Jesus. And she does something that is incredibly wise in her desperation.

Congregation, what does she touch of Jesus? No. It's translated robe. It's translated robe. But there's actually a different word that's there that actually has a specific location on Jesus that she is going to grab. That's right. It's these tassels that are sewn on the hem of a rabbi's garment.

And in desperation, she would see these tassels on the bottom of his garment, and she knows he's a miracle worker. And of all the pain that she's had and all the isolation, she actually get this in the middle of a crowd that was pushing around him.

What does she do in desperation? She lays down because that's the only way she's going to have access to this desperate act to grab the tassel at the bottom of his robe because she has nothing else.

And she knows her scripture because you see in numbers, it actually details out that there's actually going to be this blue cord that is to be sewn into the tassel at the bottom of the rabbi's robe. And it's to remember all the commandments of the Lord. To do them. Not to follow after your own heart or your own eyes.

Church, she's followed already after her own eyes and her own heart. She has gone to all of the doctors. She has done everything that has been asked of her, and yet still she is isolated.

And in her desperation, she remembers the promises of the word, and there's a location on this man that is where the lack of man meets the presence of God. And she lays herself out prostrate. That's a position of worship, and you find it all throughout the scriptures.

Prophets lay down on their face in front of their God. Priests, kings lay down in front of their God in desperation because of His holiness, and they know at this point they can reach out in desperation. Looking for His tassels. Looking for the place where the lack of man meets the presence of God.

And this is where we find this woman. And maybe this is where we find you. Because she's got nothing else. And in desperation, she reaches out, and she's healed. What a wonderful story. That's one that we should all move towards. We should all think about. We should all, like Jairus, throw ourselves at Jesus' feet.

Did you notice that in the scripture reading? Where Jairus threw himself at the feet of Jesus. Did you notice where this woman threw herself at the feet of Jesus? She saw a miracle. He saw an interruption. Because urgency was a divine matter for Jairus.

Have you felt that before? Like years of praying as a single person, like, Dear Jesus, please give me a faithful husband. Dear Jesus, please give me a faithful spouse. And maybe you're found in desperation on the ground. And you make that plea out, and then you get the phone call, Oh, I just got engaged. Isn't this great? And you're like, Yeah, isn't that wonderful?

Or you got the diagnosis. You're going through the cancer. You just got out of the restroom because you've just gotten rid of all of the things that were in the contents of your stomach. Because the chemotherapy is really tearing everything apart.

And then you see the posts of somebody else that had it as well. And they're like, Hey, clear scans. Isn't this wonderful?

Or maybe you have laid down in the quietness of whatever, maybe your prayer closet is or your bedroom, and you are laying flat on the floor or you're down on your knees, begging God to bring your prodigal child back to church. And then you hear, your best friend's child has come back.

Look, you all know the desperation of what this woman and what Jairus are going through. But particularly with Jairus, we know it too.

So I wish I could say like, as a pastor, I've got this all figured out. Whenever I'm in circumstances, I follow X, Y, Z. And so does my whole family and everything is hunky-dory. We have all the formulas, but that's not the case.

See, one of our kiddos was born in the hospital. Well, most of our, all of our kids were born in a hospital. But one of them was in there for a really long time. And there we were in the NICU. And we would make sure that this child was prayed over every single moment.

Melinda and I only saw each other for about an hour a week as we traded positions. One in advocacy and prayer over our baby. One taking care of the other kiddos. And we would pray, and then we would see other babies in the NICU. They would get to go home and parents barely showed up. We would pray for healing and he would get a tracheostomy and another baby would go home. We would pray for a miracle and he would get fed through a G-tube with a bag on a pole and another baby's gonna go home.

For 49 days, we knew what it felt like to be gyrus and see our lives interrupted by so many other people's miracles. So church, this is something that we're all gonna be interrupted with. We're all gonna have an injury timeout.

Now, our story is different. Our baby ended up coming home, alive, safe, doing great right now. But that's not the way it's gonna happen with gyrus at first.

Instead, in verse 35, gyrus receives this note, your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher any longer? And this is where jealousy begins to kind of take root and take heart right here.

Why God? Why them and not me? My faith story, my miracle's been interrupted and why do they all get to enjoy this favor but I don't? Where's my hem to grab onto?

So church, I want you to be equipped with the healing power of Jesus for when this does occur for you.

I want you to notice something else. We notice that, yes, they're both 12 years, 12 years old. You notice that both gyrus and the woman in desperation are at the feet of Jesus.

But I want you to notice something even bigger. And that is this. Jesus never moved away from the wounds of his people.

What was he doing when gyrus' daughter was sick? He was moving towards gyrus' daughter.

He could have been repulsed in the crowd in his omniscience knowing that this unclean woman was coming towards him. He could have pushed her away but instead she's drawn near to him in her desperation.

In one of these stories, blood stops moving and this is what happens with gyarus' daughter. This causes her death. In the other story, the blood won't stop flowing in the woman and that's caused exile and alienation.

One wound ended a life. One wound isolated life. Both are absolutely hopeless without Jesus.

So wherever you are, I want you to know something from Jesus, from his very word. Whatever your wound is, whatever pain you have, physical, emotional, spiritual, Jesus is moving towards you, not away from you. He's moving towards you for healing.

Some of us are gyarus. We're still waiting while others celebrate. Some of us are like the woman. We're isolated. We're forgotten. We're cut off and then sin starts to come into your mind and starts to play these cycles of Jesus isn't coming towards you. Don't bother the teacher. He's not on his way.

Maybe the last few days have really shaken things underfoot for you. Maybe you're kind of looking at the death of Charlie Kirk and you're like, wait a second, so I talk about Jesus and I talk about him openly. So that means the same thing can happen to me and you're down here because you're thinking about how that's going to affect your family or you're struggling with mortality because maybe, just maybe, you never really thought that this was going to be your life, that things are going to be ending, but instead you find yourself laying down on the ground, prostrate like both gyarus and the woman because you have no idea what to do now in this world, but actually you do.

My prayer is that you would see that Jesus is moving towards you and all that he's calling you to do is reach out for the hem of his garment.

Now, how does this work out now for gyarus? This is a beautiful story of a life interrupted.

In Mark chapter 5, verses 36 to 42, Jesus is now moving towards this daughter again, towards someone he knows is dead, but he knows that as he moves towards this act of desperation that he can do something about it, that this is merely an injury.

So interrupt me as we read this word, church.

Jesus overheard them and said to gyarus, don't be afraid, just have faith.

Then Jesus stopped the crowd and wouldn't let anyone go with him except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James.

When they came to the home of the synagogue leader, Jesus saw a lot of commotion and weeping and wailing.

He went inside and asked, why all this commotion and weeping? The child isn't dead. She's only asleep.

The crowd laughed at him, but he made them all leave.

He took the girl's father and the mother and his three disciples into the room where the girl was lying, holding her hand.

Isn't that neat to see that guy held his hand out for mercy and healing. And Jesus reaches out to this girl and holds her hand.

And I want you to hear this saying he's going to have. There's a reason why the translators kept these words in Aramaic, in Jesus' native tongue, because the translators, the scriptures, the spirit, wants your spirit to hear this in the way it would sound as he spoke it.

He says, talitha kum, which means, little girl, get up.

And the girl who was 12 years old immediately stood up and walked around. And they were overwhelmed. And they were totally amazed.

Church, this is a life interrupted by Jesus.

And it's not just the garment of the tassels of his robe.

I want you to think of a different garment of resurrection and restoration.

The garment that laid over his body as he laid down in his tomb for your sins and for my sins and for your sickness and my sickness that was supposed to proclaim death had won.

But instead, our Jesus kicks through resurrection power and folds that garment up like it was nothing, leaving it in the tomb, church, which means your death is not a final death.

You have life. And you have it to the full. But reach out. Have faith. And get up. Because he's moving towards you. Your healing, a physical, real healing, can actually happen now. It happened here twice.

Guess what? It can happen to you right now. As you reach for his robe and you see those death cloths wrapped and put away, what does this mean for you when you're struggling?

Well, maybe that healing will come now. Or maybe that healing is still to come when Jesus returns.

Revelation 21.4 promises you this. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more. The former things have passed away.

That means that Jesus is coming for you.

Hey, why don't we just act as a church for a minute like he's actually coming back today? What would that look like, church?

What would it look like if we actually believed that Jesus was moving towards us to actually provide healing? What would you do for all of the people that have been shook to their core over the last few days, for you to be able to step up, maybe out of lukewarmness, and say, Jesus has died for you? Come to him. Have faith. Get up.

Look, if you're at Northwest right now, this message is for you. Jesus is moving towards you. He's coming soon. If you're desperate and on the ground, he's coming for you. Have faith. Get up.

Fremont. What a wonderful thing that happened last weekend. The gospel has been proclaimed again, and it will be faithfully proclaimed in life time and time again. Have faith, Fremont. Get up.

Millard. I know you better than the other campuses, and I already know that there's pain here, and I already know that there is brokenness and sickness, and there's a lot of people laying down on the ground. Have faith. Jesus is on his way. Get up. He's calling you. He's calling you.

Jairus had an interruption, and it set up a resurrection.

The woman with the blood had an interruption in the way she could interact, and it set up a restoration.

I pray the same thing with you as Jesus comes to you in the season of your life.

Oh, no. I almost forgot. The story about Drew Bledsoe at the very beginning.

He went down. They called an injury timeout, but was the game over? No. They had to rely on somebody else to come in to get up, to have faith that maybe the rest of the season might be recoverable. Oh, it was so much more than recoverable.

They called in some six-rounders, some no-name guy, Tom Bibberdy, Tom Brady, and then he came to bring victory for that season, and then he won five more Super Bowls with that same team, and another one with the Buccaneers.

You all know that. I know that.

But there's victory even after an injury timeout.

So, church, as your life has been interrupted with so many different difficulties, I want you to know wherever you're listening to, wherever you're coming from, wherever you're at, Jesus is coming. He's coming for you. Have faith. Get up.

Amen, church?

Now, please stand so we can pray to Jesus.

Jesus, thank you so much. You have gotten us all up, out of our seats. You've given us grace. You've given us restoration. You've given us resurrection. Now give us courage and boldness to see so many

other people in this world laying down on the ground in desperation and allow us to be your hand to grab onto them and say, your Savior Jesus has said, have faith. Get up.

Amen.