

# Life Group Questions

## *Kingdom Power – a sermon series in Matthew 8-10*

**Desperation Makes New Life Possible** / Pastor Willy Reimer / Matt. 9:18-26 / Oct. 23/24, 2021

To the Life Group leader: thank you for your ministry leading this Life Group. **Take time to review the questions, selecting those you believe will be most helpful for your group study.** You will not have time to use all the questions. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you lead, as you select questions, and as you guide the discussion. As a team, we're praying for the Holy Spirit to guide you, lead you and speak through you.

Pastor Willy opened his message by asking, why are you here? What are you looking for? Are you looking to discover who Jesus is? Do you have a difficult situation or health condition that you're dealing with? If Jesus prompts you to give your life to him today, are you willing? Or, do you want to stay where you are?

What does it take for you to pursue change in your life? Do you need a crisis? Do you need to come to the point of desperation? What would motivate you to pursue following Jesus the way the key characters in today's text did?

## Reconnect

Come together with these preliminary questions:

- Reflect on your big life decisions. What motivated you to make the decisions you did?
- How did your decisions work out?
- Did any of your life decisions have spiritual implications? Please share them with the group.

## Open in Prayer

## Message Recap

**Review the message using these questions**

1. What stood out to you most in this week's message?
2. What was the most meaningful thing you heard in the message? Why?
3. What questions are still lingering?

## *Choose discussion and application questions*

### 1) **Do you hurt enough to move today?**

Matthew 9:18, "While He (Jesus) was saying these things to them, a synagogue ruler came and bowed down before Him, and said, "My daughter has just died; but come and lay Your hand on her, and she will live."

Read Mark 5:21-23.

- a) Jairus was motivated to reach out to Jesus for help because his daughter had died.
  - i) What was Jairus risking by reaching out to Jesus?
  - ii) Have you ever reached out to Jesus at great risk to yourself?

- (1) For most of us, choosing to follow Jesus did not lead to social, economic, or physical harm. What challenges, if any, did you face when you decided to follow Jesus?
- (2) If you have not chosen to follow Jesus yet, what challenges do you face in considering the decision to follow him?
- iii) Jairus was desperate due to the health of his daughter. Have you encountered “desperate” circumstances that led you to overcome your fears or concerns and take action to change your situation?
  - (1) Share your story with the group
- b) In Mt. 9:20, we read, "...a woman who had suffered from a discharge of blood for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment,<sup>21</sup> for she said to herself, "If I only touch his garment, I will be made well."  
 Mark 5:26ff tells us that [the woman] had suffered much under many physicians and had spent all that she had, and was no better but instead grew worse.  
 Jairus had a crisis while the woman was dealing with a long-term chronic health issue with significant social and spiritual implications.
  - i) How do you deal with chronic issues in your life?
    - (1) Are you a “fixer” who will try every human option known to humanity? Are you resigned to your chronic challenges? How do you handle chronic issues in your life?
    - (2) The woman had exhausted all of her financial resources looking for help. Have you invested in finding human solutions to problems only to discover you have not made any progress?
      - (a) Why do you think we are willing to try unique or “fringe” human solutions to our chronic problems even if they cost us a great deal of money?
      - (b) Have you ever felt excluded or ostracized because of your medical or social circumstances?
        - (i) How did you handle this challenge?
        - (ii) What did you learn about yourself and your relationship with God?

## 2) Let your desperation give rise to courage

Mark 5:27-28 tells us that, She had heard the reports about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment.<sup>28</sup> For she said, "If I touch even his garments, I will be made well."

- a) The woman reached out to Jesus, hoping that he indeed was the Messiah she had been told about. Her faith was rewarded with healing.
  - i) Have you ever reached out to Jesus in desperation for physical, emotional, relational or spiritual healing?
    - (1) What happened when you reached out to Jesus?
    - (2) Share your experience with the group.
  - ii) Like the woman, we often want Jesus to heal us or meet us in secrecy. We’re uncomfortable with having others see our need for healing, and we like to have people think we have our lives under control.
    - (1) Why do many people want to meet Jesus in private?
    - (2) Why do we struggle to be open about our needs or hurts?
      - (a) What are we afraid of?
- b) Mark 5:30-32 says, And Jesus, perceiving in himself that power had gone out from him, immediately turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my garments?"<sup>31</sup> And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing around you, and yet you say, 'Who touched me?'"<sup>32</sup> And he looked around to see who had done it.
  - i) Why would Jesus stop to talk when he knew that Jairus was desperate to see his daughter healed?
  - ii) Why did Jesus not simply let the woman walk away?
  - iii) Who was Jesus trying to help by stopping to talk to the woman?
    - (1) The disciples?
    - (2) The crowd?

(3) Jairus?

- c) Pastor Willy noted that Jesus was never in a hurry. It seems that he always had time for the person who his Father wanted him to connect with.
  - i) How can you live and minister with a “non-anxious” presence the way Jesus did?
  - ii) Perhaps God has someone that he wants you to connect with rather than walking by. Have you had experiences where God “interrupted” your day to have you minister to someone you had not planned to minister to? Share your experiences with the group.

### 3) Jesus meets our fear with his love

Mark 5:34 And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace and be healed of your disease."

- a) What is the significance of Jesus calling the woman “daughter?”
- b) What were the implications of Jesus’ public conversation with the woman?
  - i) What could only be accomplished for the woman with a public conversation?
  - ii) Jesus knows social healing requires social engagement. How does he provide that for her?
  - iii) How do our fears create a self-imposed prison?
  - iv) Why do people prefer secrecy to wholeness?

**Optional Group Exercise:** Take a moment for reflection with your group. Ask people to reflect on the things they are keeping secret, which they would not want anyone else to know about. Now ask them to reflect on what they fear if people find out their secret. Invite people to give those fears to Jesus. Ask people to share their fears without specific details. Now share the biblical truths that address each of those fears.

Matthew 9:23–24 describes the scene, <sup>23</sup> And when Jesus came to the ruler's house and saw the flute players and the crowd making a commotion, <sup>24</sup> he said, "Go away, for the girl is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him.

Pastor Willy said, When he entered Jairus' home, he saw the professional mourners, flute players, and others paid to mourn loudly for the deceased as was the custom of the day. Jesus spoke to the mourners as though they were not necessary. He knew what was going to happen. The professional mourners laughed at and mocked Jesus. Whenever Jesus wants to work in your situation, there will be mockers, saying, "It's not going to happen. The Lord's not going to help you, and he doesn't care anything about you." These little voices inside of us, the voices of unbelief, of demons, or even of well-meaning friends, say, "Grow up. Don't expect God to work in your life." Often when we want to move beyond our fear and take steps towards health in Jesus, there are voices that tell us that health will never happen.

- c) What are the messages that you “hear” that keep you from stepping out in faith?

### 4) Living in the joy of inviting others to experience new life.

Matthew 9:26, And the report of this went through all that district. This miracle serves as a climax for Matthew 8–9. None of the enemies Jesus had conquered so far in these two chapters (illness, demons, nature) had been as formidable as death. It is no wonder that news of this miracle spread through all that region.

- a) How have you experienced new life in Jesus? Share your stories.
- b) Have you had the joy of sharing new life in Jesus with others? Share your stories.

### 5) We're all equal when we come to Jesus in desperation.

The beauty of this story is that regardless of how we look on the outside, we are all the same when we come to Jesus. We're all broken people in need of healing. Healing of our sin, shame, fear, and rebellion against Jesus. Let

that desperation be a motivator to reach for Jesus, to go to Jesus in worship, to submit your life to him. Don't let your desperation become a prison of your own making. Go to Jesus in your desperation.

Sermon Reflection Questions:

1. Are there any "nails" in your life that are causing you pain but you are reluctant to deal with?
2. What is holding you back from giving the issues you are struggling to deal with to Jesus.
3. What is your next step in experiencing "new life" going to be?

## Choose Your Next Step

What next step will you commit to for the upcoming week (and beyond)?

**Individual**

- Do you have behaviors or attitudes that are stopping you from following Jesus into "danger?" If yes, confess those to God.
- If you are unsure if you have any areas of your life that are not submitted to Jesus, ask the Holy Spirit to show them to you.
- Ask Jesus to forgive you for not trusting him in the "danger."
- Commit each area of your life that you have held back from Jesus to him. Ask God to fill you with the Holy Spirit to walk in trust of Jesus' rule every day.

**Christian Community**

- Tell a trusted friend where you sense God calling you to step into "danger" and ask them to pray for you as you seek to trust and follow God in these areas.
- Reach out to your Christian community to talk through the things that pull you away from God and his ways. Ask the group to pray for you and tell them how they can support you in your walk with Jesus.

**The world**

- Ask God to guide you as you bring his kingdom wherever you go.
- Ask God for discernment to see where this earthly kingdom is in conflict with God's kingdom and how you can live out God's priorities in your world.

## Closing Prayer

A closing prayer is an effective way to point people back to our Loving Father as they seek to apply their new learnings throughout the week. If we remain connected to the power of the Holy Spirit, He will remind us of His call for us and give us the strength to follow through. Ask group members to share what they sense God calling them to. Pray for each other and commit to continue to do so during the week as people step out in obedience to God's leading.