

CHAPTER 8

Most of this chapter is a repetition of divers passages of Christ's preaching and miracles which we had before in Matthew and Mark; they are all of such weight, that they are worth repeating, and therefore they are repeated, that out of the mouth not only of two, but of three, witnesses every word may be established. Here is,

- I.** A general account of Christ's preaching, and how he had subsistence for himself and his numerous family by the charitable contributions of good people (v. 1-3).
- II.** The parable of the sower, and the four sorts of ground, with the exposition of it, and some inferences from it (v. 4-18).
- III.** The preference which Christ gave to his obedient disciples before his nearest relations according to the flesh (v. 19-21).
- IV.** His stilling a storm at sea, with a word's speaking (v. 22-25).
- V.** His casting a legion of devils out of a man that was possessed by them (v. 26-40).
- VI.** His healing the woman that had the bloody issue, and raising Jairus's daughter to life (v. 41-56).

LUKE 8:1-3

THE MINISTRY OF CHRIST

We are here told,

I. *What Christ made the constant business of his life* — it was *preaching*; in that work he was indefatigable, and went about doing good (v. 1), *afterward* — *en to kathexes* — *ordine*, in the proper *time* or *method*. Christ took his work before him and went about it regularly. He observed a *series* or order of business, so that the end of one good work was the beginning of another. Now observe here,

1. Where he preached: *He went about — diodeue — peragrabat*. He was an *itinerant* preacher, did not confine himself to one place, but diffused the beams of his light. *Circumibat — He went his circuit*, as a judge, having found his preaching perhaps most *acceptable* where it was *new*. He went about *through every city*, that none might plead ignorance. Hereby he set an example to his disciples; they must traverse the nations of the earth, as he did the cities of Israel. Nor did he confine himself to the *cities*, but went into the *villages*, among the plain country-people, to preach *to the inhabitants of the villages*, ~~OR~~ Judges 5:11.

2. What he preached: *He showed the glad tidings of the kingdom of God*, that it was now to be set up among them. Tidings of the *kingdom of God* are *glad tidings*, and those Jesus Christ came to bring; to tell the children of men that God was willing to take all those *under his protection* that were willing to return *to their allegiance*. It was *glad tidings* to the world that there was hope of its being *reformed* and *reconciled*.

3. Who were his attendants: *The twelve were with him*, not to preach if he were present, but to learn from him what and how to preach hereafter, and, if occasion were, to be sent to places where he could not go. Happy were these his servants that heard his wisdom.

II. Whence he had the necessary supports of life: He lived upon the kindness of his friends. There were *certain women*, who frequently attended his ministry, that *ministered to him of their substance*, v. 2, 3. Some of them are named; but there were *many others*, who were zealously affected to the doctrine of Christ, and thought themselves bound *in justice* to *encourage* it, having themselves found benefit, and in *charity*, hoping that many others might find benefit by it too.

1. They were such, for the most part, as had been *Christ's patients*, and were the monuments of his power and mercy; they had been *healed by him of evil spirits and infirmities*. Some of them had been troubled in mind, had been melancholy, others of them afflicted in body, and he had been to them a powerful healer. He is the physician both of body and soul, and those who have been *healed by him* ought to study what they shall *render to him*. We are bound in *interest* to attend him, that we may be ready to apply ourselves to him for help in case of a relapse; and we are bound in *gratitude* to serve him and his gospel, who hath *saved us*, and saved us *by it*.

2. One of them was Mary Magdalene, out of whom had been *cast seven devils*; a certain number for an uncertain. Some think that she was one that had been *very wicked*, and then we may suppose her to be the woman that *was a sinner* mentioned just before, ^(407B)Matthew 7:37. Dr. Lightfoot, finding in some of the Talmudists' writings that Mary Magdalene signified *Mary the plaiter of hair*, thinks it applicable to her, she having been noted, in the days of her iniquity and infamy, for that *plaiting of hair* which is opposed to *modest apparel*, ^(509B)1 Timothy 2:9. But, though she had been an immodest woman, upon her repentance and reformation she found mercy, and became a zealous disciple of Christ. Note, The greatest of sinners must not despair of pardon; and the worse any have been before their conversion the more they should study to do for Christ after. Or, rather, she was one that had been *very melancholy*, and then, probably, it was Mary the sister of Lazarus, who was a woman of a *sorrowful spirit*, who might have been originally of Magdala, but removed to Bethany. This Mary Magdalene was attending on Christ's cross and his sepulchre, and, if she was not Mary the sister of Lazarus, either that particular friend and favourite of Christ's did not attend then, or the evangelists did not take notice of her, neither of which we can suppose; thus Dr. Lightfoot argues. Yet there is this to be objected against it that Mary Magdalene is reckoned *among the women that followed Jesus from Galilee* (^(417B)Matthew 27:55, 56); whereas Mary the sister of Lazarus had her residence in Bethany.

3. Another of them was *Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward*. She had been his wife (so some), but was now a widow, and left in good circumstances. If she was now his wife, we have reason to think that her *husband*, though preferred in Herod's court, had received the gospel, and was very willing that his wife should be both a hearer of Christ and a contributor to him.

4. There were many of them that *ministered to Christ of their substance*. It was an instance of the meanness of that condition to which our Saviour humbled himself that he needed it, and of his great humility and condescension that he accepted it. Though he was rich, yet for our sakes *he became poor*, and lived upon alms. Let none say that they scorn to be beholden to the charity of their neighbours, when Providence has brought them into straits; but let them ask and be thankful for it as a favour. Christ would rather be beholden to his known friends for a maintenance for himself and his disciples than be burdensome to strangers in the cities and villages whither he came to preach. Note, It is the duty of those who are

taught in the word to *communicate to them who teach them in all good things*; and those who are herein liberal and cheerful honour the Lord with their substance, and bring a blessing upon it.

LUKE 8:4-21

THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

The former paragraph began with an account of Christ's industry in *preaching* (v. 1); this begins with an account of the people's industry in hearing, v. 4. He *went into every city*, to preach; so they, one would think, should have contented themselves to hear him when he came to their own city (we know those that would); but there were those here that came *to him out of every city*, would not stay till he came to *them*, nor think that they had enough when he left *them*, but *met him* when he was coming towards them, and *followed him* when he was going from them. Nor did he excuse himself from going *to the cities* with this, that there were some *from the cities that came to him*; for, though there were, yet the most had not zeal enough to bring them to him, and therefore such is his wonderful condescension that he will go to them; for *he is found of those that sought him not*, ²⁸⁸Isaiah 65:1.

Here was, it seems, a vast concourse, *much people were gathered together*, abundance of fish to cast their net among; and he was as ready and willing to *teach* as they were to be *taught*. Now in these verses we have,

I. Necessary and excellent rules and cautions for hearing the word, in the parable of *the sower* and the explanation and application of it, all which we had twice before more largely. When Christ had put forth this parable,

1. The disciples were *inquisitive* concerning the meaning of it, v. 9. They asked him, *What might this parable be?* Note, We should covet earnestly to know the true *intent*, and full *extent*, of the word we hear, that we may be neither mistaken nor defective in our knowledge.

2. Christ made them sensible of what great advantage it was to them that they had opportunity of acquainting themselves with the mystery and meaning of his word, which others had not: *Unto you it is given*, v. 10.

Note, Those who would receive instruction from Christ must know and consider what a privilege it is to be instructed by him, what a distinguishing privilege to be led into the light, such a light, when others are left in darkness, such a darkness. Happy are we, and for ever indebted to free grace, if the same thing that is a *parable* to others, with which they are only *amused*, is a *plain truth* to us, by which we are *enlightened* and *governed*, and into the mould of which we are *delivered*.

Now from the parable itself, and the explication of it, observe,

(1.) The *heart of man* is as *soil* to the *seed of God's word*; it is capable of receiving it, and bringing forth the fruits of it; but, unless that seed be sown in it, it will bring forth nothing valuable. Or care therefore must be to bring the *seed* and the *soil* together. To what purpose have we the *seed* in the scripture, if it be not *sown*? And to what purpose have we the soil in our own hearts, if it be not sown with that seed?

(2.) The *success* of the *seeding* is very much according to the nature and temper of the *soil*, and as that is, or is not, disposed to receive the seed. The word of God *is to us*, as *we are*, a *savour of life unto life*, or of *death unto death*.

(3.) The devil is a subtle and spiteful enemy, that makes it his business to hinder our profiting by the word of God. He takes the word out of the hearts of *careless* hearers, *lest they should believe and be saved*, v. 12. This is added here to teach us,

[1.] That we cannot be *saved* unless we *believe*. The word of the gospel will not be a saving word to us, unless it be mixed with faith.

[2.] That therefore the devil does all he can to keep us from *believing*, to make us not believe the word when we read and hear it; or, if we heed it for the present, to make us forget it again, and let it slip (~~3RD~~ Hebrews 2:1); or, if we remember it, to create prejudices in our minds against it, or *divert* our minds from it to something else; and all is *lest we should believe and be saved*, lest we should believe and *rejoice*, while he believes and *trembles*.

(4.) Where the word of God is heard *carelessly* there is commonly a *contempt* put upon it too. It is added here in the parable that the seed which fell by the way-side was *trodden down*, v. 5. They that wilfully shut

their ears against the word do in effect trample it under their feet; they *despise the commandment of the Lord*.

(5.) Those on whom the word makes *some* impressions, but they are not *deep* and *durable* ones, will show their hypocrisy in a time of trial; as the seed sown upon the rock, where it gains no root, v. 13. These *for awhile believe* a little while; their profession promises something, but in *time of temptation they fall away* from their good beginnings. Whether the temptation arises from the smiles or the frowns, of the world, they are easily overcome by it.

(6.) The *pleasures of this life* are as dangerous and mischievous thorns to choke the good seed of the word as any other. This is added here (v. 14), which was not in the other evangelists. Those that are *not entangled in the cares of this life*, nor inveigled with the *deceitfulness of riches*, but boast that they are dead to them, may yet be kept from heaven by an affected indolence, and the love of ease and pleasure. The delights of sense may ruin the soul, even lawful delights, indulged, and too much delighted in.

(7.) It is not enough that the fruit be brought forth, but it must be *brought to perfection*, it must be fully ripened. If it be not, it is as if there was no fruit at all brought forth; for that which in Matthew and Mark is said to be *unfruitful* is the same that here is said to *bring forth none to perfection*. For *factum non dicitur quod non perseverat* — *perseverance is necessary to the perfection of a work*.

(8.) The good ground, which brings forth *good fruit*, is an *honest* and *good heart*, well disposed to receive instruction and commandment (v. 15); a heart free from sinful pollutions, and firmly fixed for God and duty, an upright heart, a tender heart, and a heart that *trembles at the word*, is an honest and good heart, which, having heard the word, *understands* it (so it is in Matthew), *receives* it (so it is in Mark), and *keeps* it (so it is here), as the soil not only *receives*, but keeps, the seed; and the stomach not only receives, but keeps, the food or physic.

(9.) Where the word is well kept there is fruit brought forth *with patience*. This also is added here. There must be both *bearing* patience and *waiting* patience; patience to suffer the *tribulation* and *persecution* which may *arise because of the word*; patience to continue to the end in well-doing.

(10.) In consideration of all this, we ought to take *heed how we hear* (v. 18); take heed of those things that will hinder our profiting by the word we hear, watch over our hearts in hearing, and take heed lest they betray us; take heed *lest* we hear carelessly and slightly, lest, upon any account, we entertain prejudice against the word we hear; and take heed to the frame of our spirits after we have heard the word, lest we lose what we have gained.

II. Needful instructions given to those that are appointed to preach the word, and to those also that have heard it.

1. Those that have *received the gift* must *minister the same*. Ministers that have the dispensing of the gospel committed to them, people that have profited by the word and are thereby qualified to profit others, must look upon themselves as *lighted candles*: ministers must in solemn authoritative preaching, and people in brotherly familiar discourse, diffuse their light, for a *candle* must not be *covered with a vessel* nor *put under a bed*, v. 16. Ministers and Christians are to be lights in the world, *holding forth the word of life*. Their light must shine before men; they must not only *be good*, but *do good*.

2. We must expect that what is now done *in secret*, and from unseen springs, will shortly be *manifested* and *made known*, v. 17. What is committed to you *in secret* should be made manifest *by you*; for your Master did not give you talents to be buried, but to be traded with. Let that which is now hid be *made known*; for, if it be not manifested *by you*, it will be manifested *against you*, will be produced in evidence of your treachery.

3. The gifts we have will either be continued to us, or taken from us, according as we do, or do not, make use of them for the glory of God and the edification of our brethren: *Whosoever hath, to him shall be given*, v. 18. He that hath gifts, and does good with them, shall have more; he that *buries his talent* shall lose it. From him that hath not shall be taken away even *that which he hath*, so it is in Mark; that which he *seemeth to have*, so it is in Luke. Note, The grace that is lost was but *seeming* grace, was never *true*. Men do but *seem* to have what they do not *use*, and shows of religion will be lost and forfeited. They *went out from us, because they were not of us*, ~~(v. 19)~~ 1 John 2:19. Let us see to it that we have grace in sincerity, the *root of the matter* found in us; that is a good part which shall never be taken away from those that have it.

III. Great encouragement given to those that prove themselves faithful *hearers of the word*, by being *doers of the work*, in a particular instance of Christ's respect to his disciples, in preferring them even before his nearest relations (v. 19-21), which passage of story we had twice before. Observe,

1. What crowding there was after Christ. There was no coming near for the throng of people that attended him, who, though they were crowded very so much, would not be crowded out from his congregation.

2. Some of his nearest kindred were least solicitous to hear him preach. Instead of getting *within*, as they might easily have done if they had come in time, desiring to *hear him*, they stood *without*, desiring to *see him*; and, probably, out of a foolish fear, lest he should spend himself with too much speaking, designing nothing but to interrupt him, and oblige him to break off.

3. Jesus Christ would rather be busy at his work than conversing with his friends. He would not leave his preaching, to speak with his *mother* and his *brethren*, for it was his *meat and drink* to be so employed.

4. Christ is pleased to own those as his nearest and dearest relations that *hear the word of God and do it*; they are to him more than *his mother* and *brethren*.

LUKE 8:22-39

CHRIST'S POWER OVER THE DEVILS

We have here two illustrious proofs of the power of our Lord Jesus which we had before — his power over the *winds*, and his power over the *devils*. See Mark 4 and 5.

I. His power over the winds, those *powers of the air* that are so much a terror to men, especially upon sea, and occasion the death of such multitudes. Observe,

1. Christ ordered his disciples to put to sea, that he might show his glory upon the water, in stilling the waves, and might do an act of kindness to a poor possessed man on the other side the water: *He went into a ship with his disciples*, v. 22. They that observe Christ's orders may assure

themselves of his presence. If Christ sends his disciples, he goes *with them*. And those may safely and boldly venture any where that have Christ accompanying them. *He said, Let us go over unto the other side*; for he had a piece of good work to do there. He might have gone by land, a little way about; but he chose to go by *water*, that he might show his *wonders in the deep*.

2. Those that put to sea in a calm, yea, and at Christ's word, must yet *prepare for a storm*, and for the utmost peril in that storm; There *came down a storm of wind on the lake* (v. 23), as if it were there, and no where else; and presently their ship was so tossed that it was filled with water, and they were in jeopardy of their lives. Perhaps the devil, who is the *prince of the power of the air*, and who *raiseth winds* by the permission of God, had some suspicion, from some words which Christ might let fall, that he was coming over the lake now on purpose to cast that legion of devils out of the poor man on the other side, and therefore poured this storm upon the ship he was in, designing, if possible, to have sunk him and prevented that victory.

3. Christ was *asleep* in the storm, v. 23. Some bodily refreshment he must have, and he chose to take it when it would be least a hindrance to him in his work. The disciples of Christ may really have his gracious presence with them at sea, and in a storm, and yet he may seem as if he were *asleep*; he may not immediately appear for their relief, no, not when things seem to be brought even to the last extremity. Thus he will try their faith and patience, and quicken them by prayer to awake, and make their deliverance the more welcome when it comes at last.

4. A complaint to Christ of our danger, and the distress his church is in, is enough to engage him to awake, and appear for us, v. 24. They cried, *Master, master, we perish!* The way to have our fears silenced is to bring them to Christ, and lay them before him. Those that in sincerity call Christ *Master*, and with faith and fervency call upon him as *their Master*, may be sure that he will not let them *perish*. There is no relief for poor souls that are under a sense of guilt, and a fear of wrath, like this, to go to Christ, and call him *Master*, and say, "I am *undone*, if thou do not *help me*."

5. Christ's business is to *lay storms*, as it is Satan's business to *raise* them. He can do it; he has done it; he delights to do it: for he came to *proclaim peace on earth*. He *rebuked the wind and the raging of the water*, and immediately *they ceased* (v. 24); not, as at other times, by degrees, but all

of a sudden, *there was a great calm*. Thus Christ showed that, though the devil pretends to be the prince of the power of the air, yet even there he has him in a chain.

6. When our dangers are over, it becomes us to take to ourselves the shame of our own fears and to give to Christ the glory of his power. When Christ had turned the *storm* into a *calm*, *then were they glad because they were quiet*, ^{}Psalm 107:30. And then,

(1.) Christ gives them a rebuke for their inordinate fear: *Where is your faith?* v. 25. Note, Many that have *true faith* have it to seek when they have occasion to use it. They tremble, and are discouraged, if second causes frown upon them. A little thing disheartens them; and *where is their faith* then?

(2.) They give him the glory of his power: *They, being afraid, wondered*. Those that had feared the storm, now that the danger was over with good reason feared him that had stilled it, and *said one to another, What manner of man is this!* They might as well have said, *Who is a God like unto thee?* For it is God's prerogative to *still the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves*, ^{}Psalm 65:7.

II. His power over *the devil*, the *prince of the power of the air*. In the next passage of story he comes into a closer grapple with him than he did when he commanded *the winds*. Presently after the winds were stilled they were brought to their desired haven, and *arrived at the country of the Gadarenes*, and there went ashore (v. 26, 27); and he soon met with that which was his business over, and which he thought it worth his while to go through a storm to accomplish.

We may learn a great deal out of this story concerning this world of infernal, malignant spirits, which, though not working now ordinarily in the same way as here, yet we are all concerned at all times to stand upon our guard against.

1. These *malignant* spirits are very *numerous*. They that had taken possession of this one man called themselves *Legion* (v. 30), because *many devils were entered into him*: he had *had devils a long time*, v. 27. But perhaps those that had been long in possession of him, upon some foresight of our Saviour's coming to make an attack upon them, and finding they could not prevent it by the storm they had raised, sent for

recruits, intending this to be *a decisive* battle, and hoping now to be too hard for him that had cast out so many unclean spirits, and to give him a defeat. They either were, or at least would be thought to be, a *legion*, formidable as an *army with banners*; and now, at least, to be, what the *twentieth legion* of the Roman army, which was long quartered at Chester, was styled, *legio victrix* — a *victorious legion*.

2. They have an *inveterate enmity* to man, and all his conveniences and comforts. This man in whom the devils had got possession, and kept it long, being under their influence, *wore no clothes, neither abode in any house* (v. 27), though *clothing* and a *habitation* are two of the necessary supports of this life. Nay, and because man has a natural dread of the habitations of the dead, they forced this man to *abide in the tombs*, to make him so much the more a terror to himself and to all about him, so that his soul had as much cause as ever any man's had to be weary of his life, and to *choose strangling and death rather*.

3. They are very *strong, fierce*, and unruly, and hate and scorn to be restrained: *He was kept bound with chains and in fetters*, that he might not be mischievous either to others or to himself, but he *broke the bands*, v. 29. Note, Those that are *ungovernable* by any other thereby show that they are under Satan's government; and this is the language of those that are so, even concerning God and Christ, their best friends, that would not either bind them *from* or bind them *to* any thing but for their own good: *Let us break their bands in sunder. He was driven of the devil*. Those that are under Christ's government are *sweetly led* with the cords of a man and the bands of love; those that are under the devil's government are *furiously driven*.

4. They are much enraged against our Lord Jesus, and have a great dread and horror of him: *When the man* whom they had possession of, and who spoke as they would have him, *saw Jesus*, he *roared out* as one in an agony, and *fell down before him*, to deprecate his wrath, and owned him to be *the Son of God most high*, that was infinitely above him and too hard for him; but protested against having any league or confederacy with him (which might sufficiently have silenced the blasphemous cavils of the scribes and Pharisees): *What have I to do with thee?* The devils have neither inclination to do service to Christ nor expectation to receive benefit by him: *What have we to do with thee?* But they dreaded his power and wrath: *I beseech thee, torment me not*. They do not say, *I beseech thee*,

save me, but only, *Torment me not*. See whose language *they* speak that have only a dread of hell as a place of torment, but no desire of heaven as a place of holiness and love.

5. They are perfectly *at the command*, and under *the power*, of our Lord Jesus; and they knew it, for they *besought him that he would not command them to go eis ton abysson* — *into the deep*, the place of their torment, which they acknowledge he could easily and justly do. O what a comfort is this to the Lord's people, that all the powers of darkness are under the check and control of the Lord Jesus! He has them all in a chain. He can send them to *their own place*, when he pleaseth.

6. They delight in *doing mischief*. When they found there was no remedy, but they must quit their hold of this poor man, they begged they might have leave to take possession of a *herd of swine*, v. 32. When the devil at first brought man into a miserable state he brought a curse likewise upon the whole creation, and that became subject to enmity. And here, as an instance of that extensive enmity of his, when he could not destroy the man, he would destroy the swine. If he could not hurt them in their bodies, he would hurt them in their goods, which sometimes prove a great temptation to men to draw them from Christ, as here. Christ *suffered them to enter into the swine*, to convince the country what mischief the devil could do in it, if he should suffer him. No sooner had the devils leave than they entered into the *swine*; and no sooner had they entered into them than the herd ran violently *down a steep place into the lake*, and were *drowned*. For it is a miracle of mercy if those whom Satan possesses are not brought to destruction and perdition. This, and other instances, show that that roaring lion and red dragon seeks *what* and whom he may devour.

7. When the devil's power is broken in any soul that soul recovers itself, and returns into a right frame, which supposes that those whom Satan gets possession of are put out of the possession of themselves: *The man out of whom the devils were departed sat at the feet of Jesus*, v. 35. While he was under the devil's power he was ready to *fly in the face* of Jesus; but now he *sits at his feet*, which is a sign that he is come to his *right mind*. If God has possession of us, he preserves to us the government and enjoyment of ourselves; but, if Satan has possession of us, he robs us of both. Let his power therefore in our souls be overturned, and let *him* come whose right our hearts are, and let us give them to him; for we are never more our own than when we are his.

Let us now see what was the effect of this miracle of casting the legion of devils out of this man.

(1.) What effect it had upon the people of that country who had lost their swine by it: *The swineherds went and told it both in city and country* (v. 34), perhaps with a design to incense people against Christ. They told by *what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed* (v. 36), that it was by sending the devils into the swine, which was capable of an invidious representation, as if Christ could not have delivered the man out of their hands, but by delivering the swine into them. *The people came out, to see what was done, and to enquire into it; and they were afraid* (v. 35); they were *taken with great fear* (v. 37); they were surprised and amazed at it, and knew not what to say to it. They thought more of the destruction of the swine than of the deliverance of their poor afflicted neighbour, and of the country from the terror of his frenzy, which was become a public nuisance; and therefore *the whole multitude besought Christ to depart from them* for fear he should bring some other judgment upon them; whereas indeed none need to be afraid of Christ that are willing to forsake their sins and give up themselves to him. But Christ took them at their word: *He went up into the ship, and returned back again.* Those lose their Saviour, and their hopes in him, that love their swine better.

(2.) What effect it had upon the poor man who had recovered himself by it. He *desired* Christ's company as much as others *dreaded* it: he besought Christ that *he might be with him* as others were *that had been healed by him of evil spirits and infirmities* (v. 2), that Christ might be to him a protector and teacher, and that he might be to Christ for a name and a praise. He was loth to stay among those rude and brutish Gadarenes that desired Christ to depart from them. *O gather not my soul with these sinners!* But Christ would not take him along with him, but sent him home, to publish among those that knew him the great things God had done for him, that so he might be a blessing to his country, as he had been a burden to it. We must sometimes deny ourselves the satisfaction even of spiritual benefits and comforts, to gain an opportunity of being serviceable to the souls of others. Perhaps Christ knew that, when the resentment of the loss of their swine was a little over, they would be better disposed to consider the miracle, and therefore left the man among them to be a standing monument, and a monitor to them of it.

THE ISSUE OF BLOOD HEALED

Christ was driven away by the *Gadarenes*; they were weary of him, and willing to be rid of him. But when he had crossed the water, and returned to the *Galileans*, they *gladly received him, wished and waited* for his return, and *welcomed* him with all their hearts when he did return, v. 40. If some *will not* accept the favours Christ offers them, others *will*. If the *Gadarenes* be not gathered, yet there are many among whom *Christ shall be glorious*. When Christ had done his work on the other side of the water he returned, and found work to do in the place whence he came, fresh work. They that will lay out themselves to do good shall never want occasion for it. The needy you have always with you.

We have here two miracles interwoven, as they were in Matthew and Mark — the raising of Jairus's daughter to life, and the cure of the woman that had an issue of blood, as he was going in a crowd to Jairus's house. We have here,

I. A *public address* made to Christ by a ruler of the *synagogue*, whose name was *Jairus*, on the behalf of a little daughter of his, that was very ill, and, in the apprehension of all about here, *lay a dying*. This address was very humble and reverent. *Jairus*, though a ruler, *fell down at Jesus's feet*, as owning him to be a ruler *above* him. It was very importunate. He *besought him* that he would *come into his house*; not having the *faith*, at least not having the *thought*, of the centurion, who desired Christ only to *speak the healing word* at a distance. But Christ complied with his request; *he went along* with him. Strong faith shall be applauded, and yet weak faith shall not be rejected. In the houses where sickness and death are, it is very desirable to have the presence of Christ. When Christ was going, *the people thronged him*, some out of curiosity to see him, others out of an affection to him. Let us not complain of a crowd, and a throng, and a hurry, as long as we are in the way of our duty, and *doing good*; but otherwise it is what every wise man will keep himself out of as much as he can.

II. Here is a *secret application* made to Christ by a woman ill of a *bloody issue*, which had been the consumption of her body and the consumption

of her purse too; for *she had spent all her living upon physicians*, and was never the better, v. 43. The nature of her disease was such that she did not care to make a public complaint of it (it was agreeable to the modesty of her sex to be very shy of speaking of it), and therefore she took this opportunity of coming to Christ *in a crowd*; and the more people were present the more likely she thought it was that she should be *concealed*. Her *faith* was very *strong*; for she doubted not but that by the *touch* of the *hem of his garment* she should derive from him healing virtue sufficient for her relief, looking upon him to be such a full fountain of mercies that she should *steal* a cure and he not *miss it*. Thus many a poor soul is *healed*, and *helped*, and *saved*, by Christ, that is *lost in a crowd*, and that nobody takes notice of. The woman found an immediate change for the better in herself, and that her disease was cured, v. 44. As believers have comfortable communion with Christ, so they have comfortable communications from him *incognito* — *secretly*, *meat to eat* that the *world knows not of*, and *joy* that a *stranger does not intermeddle with*.

III. Here is a *discovery* of this secret cure, to the glory both of the physician and the patient.

1. Christ takes notice that there is a cure wrought: *Virtue is gone out of me*, v. 46. Those that have been healed by virtue derived from Christ must *own* it, for he *knows it*. He speaks of it here, not in a way of *complaint*, as if he were hereby either *weakened* or *wronged*, but in a way of *complacency*. It was his delight that *virtue* was gone out of him to do any good, and he did not grudge it to the meanest; they were as welcome to it as to the light and heat of the sun. Nor had he the less virtue *in him* for the going out of the virtue *from him* for he is an *overflowing* fountain.

2. The poor patient owns her case, and the benefit she had received: *When she saw that she was not hid, she came, and fell down before him*, v. 47. Note, The consideration of this, that we cannot be *hid from Christ*, should engage us to *pour out our hearts before him*, and to show before him all our sin and all our trouble. *She came trembling*, and yet *her faith saved her*, v. 48. Note, There may be *trembling* where yet there is saving faith. *She declared before all the people for what cause she had touched him* because she believed that a touch would cure her, and it did so. Christ's patients should communicate their experiences to one another.

3. The great physician confirms her cure, and sends her away with the comfort of it: *Be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole*, v. 48. Jacob got the blessing from Isaac clandestinely, and by a wile; but, when the fraud was discovered, Isaac ratified it designedly. It was obtained *surreptitiously* and *under-hand*, but it was secured and seconded *above-board*. So was the cure here. He is *blessed*, and he *shall be blessed*; so here, She *is* healed, and she *shall be* healed.

IV. Here is an *encouragement* to Jairus not to distrust the power of Christ, *though his daughter was now dead*, and they that brought him the tidings advised him not to give *the Master any further trouble* about her: *Fear not*, saith Christ, *only believe*. Note, Our *faith in Christ* should be bold and daring, as well as our *zeal for him*. They that are willing to do any thing for him may depend upon his doing great things for them, above what they are able to ask or think. When the patient is dead there is no room for prayer, or the use of means; but here, though the child is dead, yet *believe*, and all shall be well. *Post mortem medicus* — *to call in the physician after death*, is an absurdity; but not *post mortem Christus* — *to call in Christ after death*.

V. The *preparatives* for the raising of her to life again.

1. The *choice* Christ made of witnesses that should see the miracle wrought. A *crowd* followed him, but perhaps they were rude and noisy; however, it was not fit to let such a multitude come into a gentleman's house, especially now that the family was all in sorrow; *therefore* he sent them back, and not because he was afraid to let the miracle pass their scrutiny; for he raised Lazarus and the widow's son *publicly*. He took none with him but Peter, and James, and John, that triumvirate of his disciples that he was most intimate with, designing these three, with the parents, to be the only spectators of the miracle, they being a competent number to attest the truth of it.

2. The *check* he gave to the mourners. *They all wept, and bewailed her*; for, it seems, she was a very agreeable hopeful child, and dear not only to the parents, but to all the neighbours. But Christ bid them *not weep*; *for she is not dead, but sleepeth*. He means, as to her peculiar case, that she was not dead for good and all, but that she should now shortly be raised to life, so that it would be to her friends as if she had been but a few hours asleep. But it is applicable to all that die in the Lord; therefore we should

not sorrow for them as those that have *no hope*, because death is but a *sleep* to them, not only as it is a *rest* from all the *toils* of the *days of time*, but as there will be a *resurrection*, a waking and rising again to all the *glories* of the *days of eternity*. This was a comfortable word which Christ said to these mourners, yet they wickedly ridiculed it, and *laughed him to scorn* for it here was a *pearl cast before swine*. They were ignorant of the scriptures of the Old Testament who bantered it as an absurd thing to call death a *sleep*; yet *this* good came out of *that* evil that hereby the truth of the miracle was evinced; for they *knew that she was dead*, they were certain of it, and therefore nothing less than a *divine power* could restore her to life. We find not any answer that he made them; but he soon *explained himself*, I hope to their conviction, so that they would never again laugh at any word of his. But he *put them all out*, v. 54. They were unworthy to be the witnesses of this work of wonder; they who in the midst of their mourning were so merrily disposed as to laugh at him for what he *said* would, it may be, have found something to laugh at in what he *did*, and therefore are justly shut out.

VI. Her return to life, after a *short* visit to the *congregation of the dead*: He took her by the hand (as we do by one that we would awake out of sleep, and help up), and he called, saying, *Maid, arise*, v. 55. Thus the *hand of Christ's grace* goes along with the *calls of his word*, to make them effectual. Here that is expressed which was only implied in the other evangelists, that *her spirit came again*; her soul returned again to animate her body. This plainly proves that the soul exists and acts in a state of separation from the body, and therefore is immortal; that death does not extinguish this *candle of the Lord*, but takes it out of a *dark lantern*. It is not, as Grotius well observes, the *krasis* or *temperament* of the body, or anything that dies with it; but it is *anthypostatōn ti* — *something that subsists by itself*, which, after death, is somewhere else than where the body is. Where the soul of this child was in this interval we are not told; it was in the hand of the *Father of spirits*, to whom all souls at death return. When *her spirit came again* she arose, and made it appear that she was alive by her motion, as she did also by her appetite; for Christ *commanded to give her meat*. As babes newly born, so those that are newly raised, desire spiritual food, that they may grow *thereby*. In the last verse, we need not wonder to find *her parents astonished*; but if that implies that *they only* were so, and not the other by-standers, who had laughed Christ to scorn, we may well wonder at their stupidity, which perhaps was the

reason why Christ would not have it proclaimed, as well as to give an instance of his humility.