

FLOURISHING IN GRAD SCHOOL
WEEK 10: SEE THE INVISIBLE

"My whole life, I have been complaining that my work was constantly interrupted until I discovered that my interruptions are my work." - Henri Nouwen

MARK 5: 21 - 43

²¹ When Jesus had again crossed over by boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around him while he was by the lake. ²² Then one of the synagogue leaders, named Jairus, came, and when he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet ²³ He pleaded earnestly with him, "My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live." ²⁴ So Jesus went with him. A large crowd followed and pressed around him. ²⁵ And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. ²⁶ She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. ²⁷ When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, ²⁸ because she thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed." ²⁹ Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering. ³⁰ At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?" ³¹ "You see the people crowding against you," his disciples answered, "and yet you can ask, 'Who touched me?'" ³² But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. ³³ Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. ³⁴ He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering." ³⁵ While Jesus was still speaking, some people came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader. "Your daughter is dead," they said. "Why bother the teacher anymore?" ³⁶ Overhearing what they said, Jesus told him, "Don't be afraid; just believe." ³⁷ He did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James and John the brother of James. ³⁸ When they came to the home of the synagogue leader, Jesus saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly. ³⁹ He went in and said to them, "Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep." ⁴⁰ But they laughed at him. After he put them all out, he took the child's father and mother and the disciples who were with him, and went in where the child was. ⁴¹ He took her by the hand and said to her, "Talitha koum!" (which means "Little girl, I say to you, get up!"). ⁴² Immediately the girl stood up and began to walk around (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished. ⁴³ He gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this, and told them to give her something to eat.

Read the passage out loud together. Give everyone five or so minutes on their own to review it. Invite study members to note things that stand out and add a comment or question about it on their sheet.

Discussion Questions

In this section of Mark we have two stories — one sandwiched inside another. The initial story begins when Jesus is approached by a man named Jairus. What do we know about him? Why does he come to Jesus?

On the way to Jairus's house, Jesus gets delayed. Why? What do we know about this woman?

Why does Mark sandwich a story within a story? What connections does he hope we will see? What similarities and differences are evident between the woman and the little girl? Between the woman and Jairus?

What do you think Jairus was thinking or feeling when Jesus stopped to talk with the woman?

The woman has been restricted from the worshiping community for twelve years, as long as Jairus's daughter has been alive. What kind of responsibility would Jairus (the synagogue leader) have had to her? What might Jesus have been trying to show Jairus through this encounter?

This woman had been all but invisible to the crowd. Why does Jesus take the time to talk to her?

Interestingly, in Mark 1, Jesus refused to be distracted from his mission, but now he stops everything and even allows a little girl to die in order to help this woman. He is constantly faced with difficult decisions and so are we. How do you decide what to do with your time? Have you had a "distraction" that turned out to be a significant opportunity to love or serve someone?

How do both Jairus and this woman demonstrate risky faith?

Are there other things from the passage you want to comment on or ask about?

Spend a few minutes filling in the table below. When you are finished, discuss these final questions together and then pray for one another and for this group. Who in your world goes unnoticed? What can you do to change this?

<i>Who in your world goes unnoticed? (Think of people groups and specific people.)</i>	<i>What can you do to change this?</i>