

The Purpose of Grace Growth Groups:

Growth Groups help you take your next step with God by developing meaningful friendships built around God's Word. As we connect with one another and with God's Word, incredible things take place and we naturally grow. In community, this growth occurs through 4 primary activities:

We SHARE Life

Each week we'll take time to connect and share what is happening in our lives. This will become more natural as we begin to feel more comfortable with one another. Sharing life and accepting each other is essential to the healthy relationships needed for growth groups.

We STUDY God's Word

Each week we'll study the previous week's sermon text, though we will not rehash the sermon. Our goal is to learn how to live out our Christianity in everyday life. Accountability to God's Word is transformational and brings spiritual growth in our lives. We also take time to seek God in prayer for relevant needs and issues present in our group.

We SUPPORT Each Other

Each week we'll learn how to care for one another as Christ instructed us. People who know each other well, care for each other well. This care will take many forms, such as prayer, encouragement, listening, challenging, accountability, advice, and meeting real needs.

We SERVE Together

Spiritual growth is fostered not only by what we gain through the support and input of others, but also through service to others. Jesus reminds us that the world will know we're his disciples by our love. The role each member fills in serving one another and the local community is essential; for we were created to serve others, not ourselves. Throughout the semester, we will serve the other members of our group and together the group will serve the local community through one service project.



GUEST SPEAKER
Message #46: Whom or What do you Seek?
Sermon Text: Luke 8:40-56

Rick Lipira, *Elder of Grace Evangelical*
Grace Evangelical Church
November 12th, 2017

Whom or What do you Seek?

Main Theme:

- If you seek Him you [will](#) find Him.

4 Thoughts from Luke 8:

- 1) He has a need; his [solution](#) is Jesus.
- 2) Jairus will be moved to the [back](#) – [burner](#).
- 3) She told the whole world her [testimony](#).
- 4) [Bother](#) the Teacher.

Growth Group *Leader's* Guide

For the week of November 12th, 2017

Fall Growth Group Information:

- **Today begins Week 11 of our Fall Semester of Growth Groups.** Each semester lasts for 15 weeks. Sunday's mark the beginning of each new week.
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Where to begin...

- **1. Pray, 2. Read Luke 8:40-56 and 3. Know the context:**

Luke was a physician, who traveled along with the Apostle Paul, helping assist his ministry efforts. Luke is the only non-Jewish author in the New Testament. He meticulously investigated the claims of Christ and his gospel presents first-hand, eye-witness accounts of Jesus' ministry. The context of our passage in Luke 8 is immediately following Jesus' ministry in the area of the Gerasenes, where he had just delivered the Gerasene demoniac.

My Story:

1. In what ways did this week's message inform, inspire, or instruct your life? What stood out to you? What did you sense God speak to you?

[Open for discussion and member's feedback.](#)

Digging Deeper:

1. Of all the people pressing in for Jesus' attention, two get through to him in this story (*Jairus and the sick woman*); how did these two get Jesus' attention and how does that instruct us in our approach to Christ today?

Jairus came before Jesus, fell at his feet and pleaded with Jesus to come to his house to heal his only daughter. You can sense the urgency with which Jairus had for his daughter to be well. There's no time for pretense or formulaic religion in moments of extreme need; real need motivates us to be direct and honest with God. Falling at Jesus' feet indicates the hopeless nature of all other pursuits to help his daughter. This indicates that the key to hope is hopelessness. When we realize that Christ is our only hope, then we will abandon pursuing hope in all other arenas... and it will lead us to a desperate

pursuit of God alone as our sole source of hope. Jairus is fully dependent and reliant upon Jesus to intervene and save his daughter.

The sick woman, pressed through the crowd of people already pressing in and upon Jesus. She was behind Jesus, following him, which means that she had to work harder to get closer and closer to him, especially amidst the throng of others around. She was fighting against the flow of people, working hard to catch up with Jesus. Not only did she seek and pursue Christ, but when she was close enough, she reached out and touched his robe. Her faith was what motivated her, for she also reveals a desperate desire to reach Jesus. It's as if she's thinking, *'If I can just touch him; If I can just get close, then I know things will change!'* Her faith propelled her to pursue Christ, and to reach out and touch him.

Both Jairus and the sick woman show us determination and desire to get to Jesus. They reveal that the only source of hope, of healing, of change is found in Christ; what they both need, is found only with Jesus. If we could just have the same understanding and approach as they, then perhaps we would see God move in more ways in our own lives. Too often, we only bring the big things to God that we know we can't handle, but we rely on ourselves for the rest; but these two examples reveal to us that a determined desire to take everything to Jesus, leads us to the destination we want most. Jesus is our only hope; for everything we experience.

2. Why do you think Jesus made the sick woman reveal herself? Was it for his sake? Or was it for her own sake?

It's hard to imagine that Jesus, God's Son, incarnate in the flesh, wouldn't know who touched him, or that He would need help in identifying the person from his disciples. It appears that there was more to this exchange than first appears. This woman had been dealing with this sickness for twelve years, the text tells us. This sickness would have marginalized her in the community and prevented her from being able to take part in religious worship, as her sickness made her unclean for such practices or observances. One thought could be that by having her identify herself among the people, that this was a clear demonstration that only God can cleanse what is considered to be unclean; only God can heal what is sick; only God can call good, what everyone else calls bad. Only God can restore what has been lost. This woman would be marginalized no longer, and she would be sick no longer. It wasn't only her physical healing that Jesus was interested in, but He had in mind also, her relational healing. When God restores, he restores fully.

Follow-up question: What else do you learn about her character before and after she touches Jesus' garment? How was her faith obvious to Jesus?

Being the Son of God, Jesus knew the dynamics of what motivated her to push through the crowd, reach out and take hold of his garment. He knew who touched him; He knew why she had touched him, because He knew her entire heart. She had sought the Lord because she had faith that only He could heal her. She trusted God. When she realized that she couldn't hide what happened and after Jesus posed the question of who had touched him, the text says that she "trembled" and fell at his feet. These are signs of humility and worship. Not only did she have faith, but she also showed incredible submission to the authority of God's Son.

3. Jesus asks' Jairus not to fear, but rather to have faith to believe his daughter would be healed; in your opinion, what is the relationship between faith and fear?

Fear has the potential to rob us of the chance for faith. Fear immobilizes us into spiritual paralysis. It prevents us from doing anything to pursue Christ's help; things like prayer, reflection on God's promises found in His word, etc. Faith, is the conscious choice to believe, in spite of whatever fear we may feel. Fear is a feeling, but faith is more powerful when we choose to exercise it. Fear is a tool that Satan uses to keep God's people from trusting or believing God's promises and from seeking after God's help. The nature of fear preys on our imaginations; thus, it doesn't exist in reality. Faith, on the other hand, brings the supernatural hope and promises of God into reality. My grandmother used to say, *'When fear knocks at the door, open it with faith and you'll find that no one was there.'* Fear will try to create a reality, but faith tells us what is truly real. But, if we listen to fear it will keep us from God's truth and hope and promises; but if we engage our faith, despite our fears, then it opens our lives to the supernatural power and promises of God in the here and now of our lives.

Taking it Home:

This passage clearly reveals that fear is at odds with faith; yet, even though we're believers, we can still struggle with great amounts of fear when it comes to our lives. Have you ever been too frightened to come to God with a problem? Are you dealing with anything currently that you would like to ask God to take the fear away, and in its place, give you faith?