

Gospel Lesson for the Week

June 8, 2008

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

Please read

[Matthew 9:9-13](#)

[Matthew 18-26](#)

Read also

[Genesis 12:1-9](#)

[Psalm 33:1-12](#)

[Romans 4:13-25](#)

As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him.

While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and "sinners" came and ate with him and his disciples.

When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and `sinners'?"

On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick.

But go and learn what this means: `I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

While he was saying this, a ruler came and knelt before him and said, "My daughter has just died. But come and put your hand on her, and she will live."

Jesus got up and went with him, and so did his disciples.

Just then a woman who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak.

She said to herself, "If I only touch his cloak, I will be healed."

Jesus turned and saw her. "Take heart, daughter," he said, "your faith has healed you." And the woman was healed from that moment.

When Jesus entered the ruler's house and saw the flute players and the noisy crowd, he said, "Go away. The girl is not dead but asleep." But they laughed at him.

After the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took the girl by the hand, and she got up. News of this spread through all that region.

--- *Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26*

One Afternoon with Jesus . . .

When I am tempted to give in
to my own whims and fancies,
my inclinations and desires,
guarding my time;

when I draw into myself and mutter,
“I don’t have time,”
I’m caught up short
by the example of Jesus
who was always busy,
but never too busy.

He had a way of using his time
in service to the need at hand,
whatever, whenever it was,
whomever it touched.
Was there a social outcast, like a tax collector?
Nobody likes tax collectors.
But Jesus did.
And in his subtle way affirmed the man,
accepting his hospitality,
dining at his home.
Were there religious zealots
who looked down their noses
at other people they saw as sinners?
Jesus took time to firmly reprove them.
Reminding them that he’d come
to call sinners to repentance.
“Healing belongs to the sick,
not to the well,” he said
And then, caught in mid-sentence,
he’s summoned to the bedside of a dying child.
Well not quite dying; remember Jesus is there.
And on the way he’s interrupted once again,
this time by a woman
whose years of suffering
have made her desperate.
“Just let me touch him.
That’s all I need”
He could have brushed her off
(I probably *would* have)
But being who he was,
he granted her prayer,
making it plain
that it was not some magic touch,
but faith alone,
faith in him,
that wrought the miracle.
Then on to the sick girl’s house
to complete the job.
One afternoon’s work,
a couple hours filled with interruptions,
but Jesus was able to use each moment,
conveying saving grace along the way.

Next time,
when I am tempted to give in
to my own whims and fancies,
my inclinations and desires,
guarding my time;
when I draw into myself and mutter,
“I don’t have time,”
I will remember Jesus – one afternoon.

--- *rvc*