LIFE BIBLE MINISTRY

Matthew 9 (Part 4) :18-26

The Healing Ministry of Jesus

Pastor Paul LeBoutillier · April 18, 2026

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

We're going to be looking at a section from verse 18 through verse 26 that I like to call Changing the Unchangeable. Let's read these verses. While he was saying this, the 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, and the crowd, excuse me, 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. Stop there if you would, please, with me. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, open our hearts to the ministry of your word, and let this word fill us and touch us and encourage us and challenge us. You are the teacher, Lord, so speak now, we pray, in Jesus' name, amen.

Some of you were around last August when we did the Harvest 2012 kind of evangelistic crusade that we joined with several other churches around the country, and it was very, very cool. But Greg Laurie, who head up the crusade, he's a Calvary Chapel pastor out of Riverside, California, shared, I thought this was very interesting, shared that one of the most popular Google searches of the last few years has to do with people asking the question, can I really change, or can life really change for me? You know, there's probably nothing more difficult, more challenging, more discouraging than to be in a situation, to see a situation around you or whatever for which there's no change, and it's just not improving. It's just staying the way it is, and it's not going anywhere. It's very frustrating, and you feel helpless to do anything about it.

One of the most challenging of those would have to be the heart and the love that a father has toward his daughter when she is extremely sick and on the verge of death, and that is the situation that Jesus is confronted with here in Matthew chapter 9 in these verses. The Bible tells us here in verse 18 that a ruler came to Jesus and literally dropped to his knees. Your Bible, if you have a King James or a new King James, your Bible may say that he came and worshiped him. Actually that's not a really good translation. It literally just means in the Greek he fell to his knees, and that was to petition the Lord and to say, my daughter is very ill.

Now you'll notice here in Matthew's account that it relates the father saying to Jesus, my daughter has just died. Now come and lay your hand on her and she will live. Again, Matthew is the kind of a writer who uses an economy of words to kind of tell the story. He's not a detailed person, right? Some of you are like that.

You're not detailed people. We call you global people or general people. You get the shakes when you have to do something that's detail oriented. Others of you are detail oriented. You love getting into little minute details of things.

When Matthew tells stories in the Bible here, he doesn't necessarily spend time on a lot of detail. The fact of the matter is Mark and Luke also tell this story, and the man did originally come to Jesus and say to him, my daughter is very ill. In fact, she's at the point of death, and it was on their way to go to his home that you'll remember his servants came to him and said, your daughter has actually died. So you don't really need to bother Jesus anymore. So Matthew just cuts to the chase and says, a man came whose daughter had died and dah, dah, dah, dah, dah, and kind of tells the whole thing because he's not interested in all these details.

In fact, you'll notice he also refers to this man as a ruler. We find out in Luke and Mark's gospel, he was the ruler of the synagogue. So lest we might think he was some royalty, that wasn't the case. In fact, ruler is even a little bit strong of a word. A synagogue ruler was really just like kind of an administrator.

He would administrate the synagogue. He would open it up, make sure the doors were open. He'd take care of the building. He would even find a rabbi to teach, and he would be responsible for making sure that the school that ran there during the week was going as well. So you know, he was a man of some relative standing in the community.

He was a fairly important guy because of that particular position. But for all that, here he is with his little daughter who is deathly ill, and there's nothing he can do about it. It's an unchangeable situation for

him. He's probably, I would dare say, although the text doesn't say it, I'm sure he's done everything he could up to this point, he and his wife. But his daughter is not getting better.

In fact, she's growing worse. And so he does a pretty difficult thing, I would think, and that is to leave the bedside of his dying daughter and go search for Jesus. And as I said before, Mark and Luke are the ones that tell us that on their way, some of his servants met him as he was bringing Jesus to his house, and they said, listen, oh, by the way, Mark and Luke tell us the guy's name was Jairus. And they probably said something like, you know, Jairus, it's a done deal. So there's really no reason for you to bother the teacher any longer.

Let him go his way, because your daughter has passed. And what they were essentially saying to him at that point was, this unchanging situation that you've been dealing with is now completely and totally unchangeable, because your daughter is dead. So it's time to move on and make funeral preparations and whatever, go through that time of mourning and grieving that would naturally follow. I find it interesting that, you know, Jesus just turns to him, and again, we read this in Mark and Luke's account, but Jesus turns to him, and we'll see this in a bit, and just says to him, don't be afraid, just believe, have faith, and, you know, they carried on. And then to make matters worse, I mean, I don't know about you, but as a dad, you know, who loves my daughters to death and to think that one of them would be ill or even to the point of death or having died, and here I have Jesus, and we're heading toward my house, I want to get there now, you know, and I want to get there like yesterday.

And to make matters worse, there's this interruption, there's this situation that crops up that couldn't have been an easy thing for Jairus to contend with here. And it says in verse 20 that as they're on their way, a woman approached Jesus, who we're told here in verse 20 had been subject to bleeding for 12 years. By the way, the little girl we find out in Mark and Luke's account was also 12 years old, so the woman and the little girl have something in common as it relates to that number. And it says this woman came up behind Jesus and touched the edge of his cloak. Now once again, Matthew is retelling the story and not giving us a lot of detail because he's not a detailed person.

He leaves out the fact that this woman had spent everything she had on doctors. She'd been treated over this period of 12 years, and her condition remained unchanged in terms of any positive movement. In fact, if it changed at all, it only got worse. That's what we're told. Her condition got increasingly worse.

And that's a, oh man, what a horrible situation. But again, we have to find ourselves kind of appreciating this woman and all the dedication that she's showing here to go out and look for Jesus after

12 years of dealing with this physical condition. I mean, for 12 years. I don't know how you respond to physical suffering, but can you imagine being sick for 12 years? Oh man.

I gotta tell you, in all honesty, when it comes to having some kind of a physical problem, I am a big fat baby. And my wife will attest to that fact. I hate it. I mean, I just... Twelve years being sick?

Forget it. Twelve hours and I am just crying in my soup. Twelve days and I would completely forget I had ever been healthy in my life. If somebody came to me and said, how long have you been feeling bad? You ever do that when you go to the doctor and they go, how long have you felt this?

And it probably has been going on for like 48 hours. I just say, all my life. Ever since I was born. I'm just a big baby when it comes to stuff like that. Twelve years?

Are you kidding? I mean, the light of hope would have long since gone out in my heart and my mind. How about you? And yet here's this woman who has learned to live with this situation for all these years. And yet she hears that Jesus is in town and she pulls herself up and goes to look for him.

And that's that's that's crazy. And she is approaching unheard of challenges just to go and meet with him. Let me let me enumerate some of them for you. For starters, you need to understand that according to the law of Moses, any woman who is dealing with this sort of what the what the Bible calls an issue of blood, which is which is a hemorrhaging of blood was considered to be ceremonially unclean, which is a long term that simply says she was unable to go to the temple. She could not worship for 12 years now.

She has not been able to go and worship with her people. There are other things that the word has to say about this. They're actually found in the book of Leviticus. Let me put some of this passage on the screen here for you. It says here that when a woman has a discharge of blood for many days at a time other than her monthly period or has a discharge that continues beyond her period, she will be unclean as long as she has the discharge, just as in the days of her period.

Now, for this woman, it's been going on for 12 years. All right. And it says that any bed she lies on while her discharge continues will be considered unclean, as is her bed during her monthly period. And anything she sits on will be unclean as during her period. And whoever touches her bed or anything she sits on, let alone touching her, will be unclean.

And he or she, you know, must wash his clothes and bathe with water. And he will be unclean till evening. Did you see the part about, you know, anybody who touches anything that she's touched or

obviously it would refer to touching her too. They would be considered unclean, ceremonially unclean and so forth. They got to wait, you know, before they can go into the temple and this and that.

That's a terrible stigma for someone to carry around. And you can see that this woman is risking a lot to go and look for Jesus. Here's why. Once again, something Matthew doesn't tell us, but Luke and Mark do, is that there was a crowd following along as Jesus was making his way from where he was to Jairus's house. There was a huge crowd pushing and pulling and shoving.

And they're all trying to be close and hear what Jesus has to say. And they're crowding around and so forth. That is absolutely the worst possible situation this woman could think of approaching. She, I mean, if somebody even just recognizes her along the way, she stands to lose a lot. Now, this also says nothing of her physical condition.

When a woman is passing blood like this, she is in a physically weakened state. For someone who has been bleeding like this for 12 years, this woman knows what it is to be perpetually fatigued and exhausted. Walking along the road is probably a physical challenge to this woman, let alone fighting her way through the crowd, because you'll remember her goal as we saw in verse 21. If you look there again in your Bible, it says she said to herself, she didn't tell anybody else this, but she said to herself, if I only touch his cloak, I will be healed. And so you see, she's not just going to see him, to call out.

She doesn't want to bring any attention to herself, right? Because she's got this physical condition that makes her unclean. And anybody who touches her is unclean. And yet she's got to fight her way through a crowd. Not just, she doesn't even want to get Jesus's attention.

She wants to get in there. And in her mind, in her heart, she just decided, if I touch his cloak, that's all it's going to take. All I got to do is just touch his garment and that's going to be good enough, right? Well, guess what I got to do to do that? I got to get in to where he is.

I got to get through the crowd that is pressing and pushing and shoving all around him. And I got to make my way in there. And that's hard for a woman who's probably as physically fatigued as she is at this particular point. She says, I just need to touch his cloak. Now, your Bible may say fringe.

It may say, if only I touch the fringe of his garment or something like that. And what she wants to touch, she's referring to the four tassels that would be on the outer garment of a Jewish person. Kind of like an over-the-shoulder shawl type thing. They didn't call it that. But it was a thing they would just put over the top of their clothes that had four tassels.

And that's what she's trying to touch. It's actually given to us in the book of Numbers. Just for the sake of information, let me share this with you. It says, speak to the Israelites and say to them, throughout the generations to come, you are to make tassels on the corners of your garments with a blue cord on each tassel. And you will have these tassels to look at.

And so you will remember all the commands of the Lord. So God told them to fashion their garments in this way. And it was to be a constant reminder to them of just the word of God and to whom they belonged. Now, by this time, this was also a very distinguishing mark of a Jew. If you saw somebody with that over-the-shoulder throw thing with the four tassels, you would say, well, there's a Jew.

It literally marked them as being different from a Gentile. So anyway, that's what she is wanting to touch. She's believing in her heart that if she just touches one of those tassels, that she's going to be healed. Which, you know, almost sounds a little superstitious, doesn't it? When you stop and think about it.

Because she kind of came up with this all on her own. I mean, there's nothing in the Bible about tassels having any kind of healing property or anything like that. It was just something she decided, this is what I got to do, right? And she believed with all of her heart, if I touch this tassel, it's going to happen, you know? It's pretty interesting, isn't it?

For her, it just became a point of contact where faith would be activated. Do you know what I mean by that? That point of contact? Everybody's got a point of contact. Everybody, well, at some point, I mean, depending on your faith.

Remember for Jairus, he came to Jesus, fell down on his knees and said, my daughter, come over to my home. And then what did he say? If you just lay your hand on her, she'll get well. That was Jairus' point of contact. Do you remember the centurion who came to Jesus to ask for healing for his servant?

What was his point of contact? It was actually words. It wasn't physical contact at all. In fact, when Jesus started to go to that man's house, he said, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, no, no, no, no, you don't have to come to my house. Just give the word.

It's done, right? Just give the word. And Jesus, you'll remember, was amazed by that level of faith. In fact, he said, I don't think I've ever, I've never seen faith like this even in Israel. Because for that man, the point of contact was just in Jesus' spoken word.

Just say it, and it's done, and I believe it, and so forth. But everybody's got a different point of contact, depending on where their faith is. And here's the thing that's really interesting. I have found that God meets them at their point of contact, their place where their faith is, you know? And I think God always knows what we need.

You know, when Jesus went around and did his healing ministry, there were times, remember, there were times he made mud out of spittle and rubbed it on somebody's eyes and said, now, go wash in the pool. And the guy did, and he came back seeing. Well, he didn't do that all the time. There was another time a guy was mute, and he spit on his hand and touched the guy's tongue. And he says, he started to talk, you know, and so forth.

Different sort of things. But have you ever... I remember years ago hearing a story about somebody who was watching a TV preacher. And the TV preacher, you know, was doing this, you know, if you need God, just walk up to your TV and lay your hands on the TV and do this sort of thing. And I remember hearing about that and just scoffing and saying, that's the dumbest thing I've ever heard in my life.

You know, go up and lay your hands on your TV. I mean, how dumb is that? But you know in the years since not that I would tell anybody to do that I've learned something about the grace and mercy and tenderheartedness of God he meets people where they're at And without finding fault, you know if somebody's got faith in the power of God and And some yo-yo tells them to go, you know put their hands on their TV or something Let and you know God's gonna do this great work You know what God is not going to say to that person, you know, I was gonna move in your life But that was really stupid So I'm not I'm I'm just gonna withhold because I mean touch a TV come on Let's get real he's not gonna do that, you know, God loves his people so much he he he loves He Loves when they just put simple faith in him and if it's even if it's something stupid, he'll honor that faith wherever that Contact point is you know, wherever it might be He's like, you know what? That was pretty stupid, but I love you anyway and I'm gonna meet you right where you are and I'm gonna show you how much I love you and how willing I am to work in your life because this is this is where your faith is at and and so Here's this woman that says if I just touch the tassel, right? There's no healing property Do you think there were there were a lot of other people that touch those tassels just by fact that they were running into Jesus I mean there's whole crowds pushing and shoving and boom and people a lot of people are touching that's anything happening in their lives No, but when this woman boom it happens because it is her faith that Activates that and and and really that's kind of the point that we need to make here a little bit This is the point to remember faith is the instrument Not the power Itself.

Are you with me faith is the instrument not the power Itself. We don't have faith in our faith. We have faith in God and And and faith is kind of like, you know, the lightning rod, you know, you don't see lightning rods around This part of the country all that much because we don't have that much lightning Comparatively anyway where I grew up in Minnesota. It was not uncommon to see barns and and silos and and even homes with that were taller with lightning rods on top and the whole idea was you know, It's going to conduct the electricity from a lightning strike and and and safely Channel it to to the ground and so forth But You know, it's not the lightning rod that that frankly is the power. It's the it's the lightning itself Same thing with faith faith is not the power The power is God and and this woman was putting her faith in God But the action point of that faith became when I touch that tassel and so forth And and so here here's this woman now she's fighting her way through the crowd reaching out to touch one of the tassels on the outer part of his garment and it's at this point we need to Kind of check in on the story from Luke.

Let me put it on the screen for you from Luke chapter 8 It says she came up behind him member. She doesn't want to be seen she's not this is not a frontal attack and and and she touched the edge of his cloak and immediately Her bleeding stopped now I love this part who touched me Jesus asked and when they all denied it Peter said well master The people are crowding and pressing around you what he's saying is frankly everyone has touched you But Jesus said no no, no, no somebody somebody touched me I know that power has gone out from me and then the woman seeing that she could not go unnoticed Came trembling it fell at his feet and in the presence of all the people she told why she had touched him and how she had been instantly healed and then he said to her daughter your faith is healed you go in peace I love that because She's obviously trembling. She doesn't know how he's going to respond Is he going to be offended that I an unclean woman with this this issue of blood? Comes and touches him and makes him unclean. Is he going to be upset is the crowd going to be upset?

She she wanted to get in and out of there You know with without being seen and Jesus stops the entire you know parade of People and says whoa whoa whoa stop who touched me and Peter's like Who didn't touch you you know? What are you talking about who touched you? No? No? No?

I felt power I felt healing power and so he's looking around who touched me who'd she realizes that That she's not going to get away, and so she comes and confesses the whole thing I had this issue of blood 12 years spent all my money came to doctors never got any better And I I just felt in my heart that if I just touched the edge of your cloak I would be healed I've touched you and I know that I am healed and and and Jesus responds and he uses this word daughter, which is a Which is the kind of the way a dad would talk to his girl his little girl? You know it's that sort of a thing and he just says sweetie Good for you Your faith has healed you now go in peace. Oh, what a wonderful thing Can you imagine this woman and the

change in her life the difference in her life after 12 years of? of this physical infirmity and the ongoing Hopelessness and helplessness to do anything about it expending all of your money on Doctors and you've only gotten worse and now in a moment of time Hope is reborn and she is a she's a healed woman And then we turn back to the daughter of Jairus It says in verse 23 that when Jesus Entered the rulers house, and he saw the flute players and the noisy crowd he turned to him And he said he said go away It's great now. Here's what he's doing here.

These are these are hired mourners This is something they did in in in the ancient East and It was considered to be an honorable thing to do and the more wealthy you were the more Mourners you could hire to come to your house and let me tell you something They knew how to wail and that's what they did and the louder it was The the more pleased they were and the more honoring it was to your deceased loved one and so even people of very little means could at least hire a Flute player and a woman who could scream her brains out and that's really what you're kind of, you know doing it It and let me taste them. Have you ever seen somebody from the Middle East? Mourn, it's like I mean, it'll raise the hair on the back of your neck It really is something and frankly, I think they've kind of I Think they they know something we don't We talked about this on Wednesday night when we were dealing with Joseph mourning for his father Jacob when he passed, you know, they did a 70-day period of mourning for Jacob for Israel and then when they were taking his bones from Egypt back to To Canaan they got to the border of Canaan and they stopped and they observed another seven day period of mourning 77 days of Not just mourning weeping You know, I remember going to a funeral a number of years ago for It was a funeral for actually a young child who'd been taken from disease and and You know, we went in we went to the service and I Wasn't doing the service. I was just attending and and we all kind of piled out of the building after the service was over and The the hearse was driving away and the mother who had lost this child just Lost it emotionally. I mean just began to weep and wail and I remember at the time kind of sensing the attention of the people, you know and Kind of thinking whoo, this is a little kind of strange, you know But that's an American thing.

I think that's purely American made and not one of the things we should be proud of It's like man weep and wail Howl and and cry out and and and scream and and you know We talked last Wednesday about how death is an enemy It's not a friend never has been never will be it's an enemy in fact, the Bible says the last enemy to be destroyed will be death and It's an intrusion and I tell you these people in the Middle East they knew how to Kick it up and and so they would hire people and and so forth And so this is what Jesus is coming to he comes to the house and there's these hired mourners And they really don't care much about anything except probably getting paid But you know, that's why when Jesus rebukes them they

laugh at him and it's kind of a laugh of scorn So, what do you know, you know, we were in there we saw she's not breathing She's dead and so forth and he puts them in verse 25. It says he puts them out of the house And he and we know from Luke and Mark that he takes the girls parents and three of his disciples Peter James and John takes them into the inner room where the little girl is lying and Mark tells us that he actually says to the to the little girl I say to you get up and then she and she rises she comes back to life and and He tells them to give her something to eat. These are things mentioned in the other gospel accounts and verse 26 tells us what is probably pretty obvious, and that is the news of this spread throughout all the region. Now, once again, we're seeing that Jesus is dealing with a situation that desperately needed change, but was not changing, because the girl, in this case, had already died, and everyone else was helpless to do anything to make a change of it, and so here's the point that I'm trying to make with you this morning, in case you've missed it so far. Jesus Christ can make the difference when all hope appears to be lost.

And, you know, even though we're using examples here of physical healing, I believe that the hope that Christ communicates into our lives goes far beyond it. I believe that Jesus also brings healing to broken relationships. Maybe today, you're laboring under the heavy burden of a relationship that used to be warm and tender and gracious, and now is very cold and dead. And it doesn't seem to be changing, and you've done what you can to try to resolve the issue or bring reconciliation, but the other person just won't have it. I believe that the Lord can still do a work of repair there.

I believe also that Jesus can bring healing into our own broken lives. You know, we talked here during the announcements, you heard Ken talking about our broken chains ministry on Monday night, which is geared specifically to people who are struggling with addictive behavior patterns that kind of rule their lives. I believe Jesus can bring us freedom from those addictive habits. I mean, that's why we're doing that group, because we believe that He has the power. He has the ability.

I believe that if you have gone through a emotionally damaging, traumatic experience in your life, maybe you've been abused or maybe someone has hurt you in a very serious sort of a way, I believe the Lord can bring forgiveness and healing to any emotional scars that you might be struggling with and that don't seem to be getting any better. There's no change. And you seem helpless to be able to bring any kind of healing into that situation. If your situation seems hopeless to you, I believe that's where Jesus does His best. In fact, I've seen many times where the Lord will allow someone to get to the end of themselves.

They'll try to fix it or change it in whatever way they can, you know? And they get to the end of themselves eventually, and there's just nothing more they can do. And they'll even say it. Sometimes

they'll come to me and say, Pastor, I've done everything I can to try to heal that relationship. I've done everything I can to get over this bitterness.

I've done everything I can to do this or rectify that. And you know, that's the time when God begins to work. It's when you and I have come to the end of ourselves. We've come to the end of whatever we can do. And if we will just bring it to Him and lay it at His feet and say, you know, I can't do anything here.

This is hopeless for me. I am helpless to bring any level of change into this situation. I can't do it, but you know, I believe that you can. I believe you can do the impossible or at least what's impossible for me. Now here's the point about this whole thing.

I'm not going to guarantee you what God is going to do. Many times, you know, we bring things to God with our own personal list of expectations. And that's where we get into trouble because we basically give God advice. And you know what? That's really never a good idea.

You might be shocked to hear this, but God doesn't need your advice on how best to work in a situation. What He is looking for you and I for is an attitude of surrender and a willingness to place it in His hands that says, you know what, Lord? I don't know what you're going to do, but all I know is I'm out of options. And I give you this, whether it's my marriage or my relationship with my children or someone else or my financial condition or my emotional scars or the habits and addictions that have seemed to now just take over and begin to ruin my life. I give this to you.

I can't change this. I am helpless to do anything to rectify this. And I don't know what you're going to do, but I do know this, you are trustworthy and you are good. And you are full of loving kindness and mercy and tenderness. And I don't know what you're going to do, but I give this to you in the name of Jesus.

I lay it at your feet and I'm going to trust you with it. And the Lord would say to you the very same thing He said to Jairus on the way to his house, don't be afraid, just trust. Have faith, because believe me, just like the servants stopped Jairus along the way and said, hey, Jairus, forget about it. She's dead, she's gone. Don't go to the Lord, don't bother the Lord anymore.

Believe me, life is going to present that same message to you over and over again. Don't bother anymore, don't worry. What was unchanging has now entered into the unchangeable. And there's nothing anybody can do anymore. And that is when Jesus would say to you and I, don't be afraid, just have faith.

Now, He's not telling what He's going to do. He's just saying, don't be afraid, have faith. And you know, when people come and they want prayer for a particular thing, well, I usually know, because they usually tell me, but I usually know what they want when they want prayer. Would you pray for me that, boom. And they've got a, you know.

And you know, when I'm praying with somebody, I don't know if that's what God's going to do. And frankly, neither do you. It's what we want. But is that what He's going to do? I don't know.

But can we trust Him to do what is best for us? Yes, we can. Did He promise us in His word that He would work all things together for the good of those that love Him and called according to His purpose? Yes, He did. And that's where our faith rests.

Not in the particular request that we've made necessarily coming to pass exactly the way we, you know, envisioned it. But by putting that thing into the hands of the Lord and just saying, God, I trust you. You know, when we are living in that place of hopelessness, when things aren't changing, when things aren't getting any better, it's just really easy to set up camp there and just live there and just let that be our address. Like I was saying earlier, you know, that woman in that condition for 12 years, I would have long since given up. 12 years, are you kidding?

I would have just pitched my tent and said, this is my address, 121 Sickness Way. You know, write me a letter when you get a chance. This is where I can be found. But you know what happens when we do that? We're no longer living for what God can do.

We're living for what has happened and what happened in the past, we see as something that cannot change in the present or the future. And then we miss what God wants to do in our lives. There's this powerful prophetic passage in the book of Isaiah that I want to share with you. This morning, it's super powerful. This is so cool.

Isaiah 43, look what, this is God talking here. He says to you, forget the former things. Do not dwell on the past. And then he asks, or he makes a statement. He says, see, I am doing a new thing.

Now it springs up. Do you not perceive it? I'll tell you what I'm doing. I'm making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland. Well, a way in the desert, streams in the wasteland, those are things that you and I can't do on our own.

We can't change those. Those are unchangeable situations. But God says in this passage, I'm doing that. I'm making a way where there seems to be no way. I am bringing streams of water and refreshing in those areas of your life that have been absolutely, you know, devoid of any kind of moisture.

But I want you to notice what he says at the beginning. See, you and I aren't even gonna be able to tap into this because if we're still living in the past, if my address is just my situation, my circumstances, and I'm not looking beyond it with faith, God would say to you and I, hey, listen, don't dwell on the past. You know, there's something about this idea of dwelling on the past. I don't care what kind of advice you've been given from psychological, you know, stuff. Dwelling on the past hinders you from seeing ahead of you.

You cannot sit and dwell on the past and look toward the future at the same time. You just can't do it. It is physically impossible. And if this becomes my address, this area of whatever. that is unchanging and unchangeable, and I've given up on it, I've lost hope, and I've basically decided this is just where I live.

Then this is, all I'm doing is just living in the present and what has happened in the past, and I've given up hope of any change, any kind of alteration or whatever, and suddenly now, I am blind to the work of the Lord. And that is why he says, when he says, I'm doing this new thing, he says, do you not perceive it? That's a question he's asking to say to you, can you see what I am doing in your life? Well, the answer to that question is going to be no, as long as you're looking that direction. You will not perceive the hand of God.

You will not perceive by faith the work that he's wanting to do in your life, because your address is misery right here, and it's not changing. And you're not looking toward the future, you've given up toward the future. You're not like Jairus, who says, I've got this little girl who's next to dead, and I'm going to go find Jesus. Or this woman who's been suffering for 12 years and says, you know, this has been my situation for practically as long as I can remember, but I'm going to go find Jesus. There's something ahead, there's some kind of hope, there's some kind of faith that's still alive, you know.

You can't do that if you're looking in the back, you're looking behind you, just looking at the past and dwelling on the past. So he says, forget the former things, don't dwell on the past, I'm doing a new thing. Can you tell? Can you see it? That question is meant to challenge you and I to look within ourselves and say, can I see the work of God that's ahead, or am I blinded to it?

Because I am so stuck within the circumstances of my life right here, right now, that I can't see a way out. And I've just decided to live here and not move on. You know, in other words, you're living your life

like it doesn't get any better than this. Let me share with you, by the way, when that happens, when we come to that place of saying it doesn't get any better and I'm just going to live here, we do it because of discouragement. And I believe in my heart that one of the most powerful weapons of the enemy is discouragement.

Boy, when I get discouraged, oh, it's like putting on colored glasses, and they're not rose-colored either. They're dark, and everything you see is dark. Everything you see is bad. Everything you see is depressing because you've literally put on the glasses of discouragement, and life is viewed through the lenses of discouragement. And when you're discouraged, oh, man, that's tough, isn't it?

You've been there? Here's what God says, Deuteronomy 31, up on the screen here for you, the Lord himself goes before you and will be with you. He will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid. Do not be discouraged.

That's the word of the Lord for you today. God has promised his children that he would never leave them nor forsake them. Don't be afraid. Don't let discouragement take over. Don't let the enemy win by bringing the big D into your life because discouragement will ruin everything.

And then as you begin to pray and as you begin to experience once again a renewal of hope that God can take this situation that you've long since just kind of given over to discouragement and hopelessness, I want to give you yet one more important promise in God's word, and I love this passage from Ephesians chapter 3, which says, Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we can ask or imagine according to his power that is at work within us, to him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations forever and ever. Amen. Do you know that you and I need a good, healthy booster shot of Ephesians chapter 3? Especially if you've been dealing with a situation for which you've given up, for which hopelessness has become just the word of the day and where you're sitting and you're saying, This is as good as it's ever going to get. But now you're seeing here from the word of God that there's always hope in Jesus Christ.

There's always hope in him. And if you will bring that to him, I want you to take these verses literally like a booster shot. If this is something you need to memorize and just meditate on, let the Lord just bathe your heart. Some of your hearts are prickly and yucky and they've got oozing sores, and you need to let these truths of God just wash over them. Like the one I did in Deuteronomy 31, the Lord himself goes before you.

Don't be afraid. Don't be discouraged. Let that just wash over your heart. And then take Ephesians chapter 3 and just bathe in it. And let it remove the impurities and the prickles and the thorns and the issues that have just caused your heart to just become so weighed down.

Listen, there's always hope. I don't know what God is going to do. You give it to him. I don't know what he's going to do. All I know is there's a promise in his word that he will not leave it alone, but he will work it together for good.

That's all I know. How he does that, that's up to him, you guys. Let's stop dictating how he's going to answer our prayers. And let's start giving those things into his hands and just putting our hand in his, you know, like a little child that just, you know, I still love it when we had little kids. Now I got little grandkids, but, you know, I used to love it when you'd go places with your kids and you'd just say, come on, we're going to go.

And they never said, where? They do that when they're teenagers. But when they're a little tiny, like, you know, four or five, they go, okay. And you do, you put out your hand and they go, grab on your hands, go. And, you know, you could be taking them to the dentist for all they know.

And sometimes we were, and it's like, let's go. They're like, okay, you know, and, and, but they don't question. They don't, they just put your hand, their hand in yours and they follow along. And that's what we need to start doing with God. Just put your hand in his Lord.

You're, you're, you're in the lead here. You know, I, you know, I don't know what to do, but you do. I trust you. Help me to trust you more and more every day.