

Reflection

I imagine the scene to be chaotic, hot, dusty, highly charged. Jesus has stepped off a boat and the crowds press in on him. He responds to one call, a matter of life and death, for someone from the religious community: the daughter of a local Jewish leader. Then something happens. Someone who shouldn't even be there, an unclean woman gets through to him. She touches the edge of his clothes. Power goes out from Jesus and she is healed.

Whilst this is an interruption to the timeline of the story, it is no way a disruption to the ability of Jesus to heal: the woman is healed, the girl is healed. Both the outsider and the insider are healed. It is a win win situation!

We are understandably deeply concerned about the impact of the coronavirus on ourselves, our families, on our NHS, economy and everything that affects our lives in the UK.

Then this week my concern about this was interrupted by a reminder of how Covid-19 is affecting the global majority who live in places where life is already hard, poverty is prevalent resources to deal with the virus are very scarce.

For instance, the Central African Republic currently has 3 ventilators for 5 million people.

64 countries in the world today spend more on debt repayments than they do on healthcare. There are massive challenges in so many of the poorest countries in the world: in rural areas; in cities and towns; in refugee camps.

And just as Jesus of Nazareth was concerned for the wellbeing of both the dying daughter of the synagogue leader and the unnamed woman, he is concerned, actively so, for us and for our global neighbours, who are suffering so badly and have so few resources to help them get through. He loves us all and wants the best for us all. If we are to be as Christ-like as we can, we should hold people "at home" and our "neighbours" in our hearts and love them both, actively so.

Some places to look about helping our global neighbours in this time:-

www.opendoorsuk.org

www.tearfund.org

www.christianaid.org.uk

www.jubileedebt.org.uk

www.bmsworldmission.org

A Prayer of thanks and confession

We thank you God, that through Jesus, we have the route to freedom.

We thank you that through Jesus we can be made well.

We thank you that through Jesus we are welcomed whatever.

Forgive us Lord for the times when we do things that limit other people's freedom.

Forgive us when we crowd out people who are in need.

Help us to have the faith to know that you are freedom!

Amen.

Prayer for healing and freedom

*We thank you Loving God,
that in Jesus*

we see your love and hope in action,

we see how you want us to live

we see such a good way to be.

We thank you that Jesus healed then and that he heals now.

Help us to believe enough to reach out to you.

Help us to have faith in your power

Help us to be there for those who are reaching out

Help us to be answers to prayer

And to trust in your great mercy and forgiveness and mighty healing power.

We pray in Jesus name.

Amen.