

Faith Challenge *Mark 5: 21-43* **June 28th**

1. LIFE HAS ITS CHALLENGES: a dead girl and a sick woman. Age, sex, position, money, prestige, education, nothing changes the fact that everyone has challenges. Today we see two:

- a. synagogue ruler with a dying (then dead) daughter
- b. woman who was sick for 12 years

2. HOW WE CAN MEET THE CHALLENGES. What God wants from us is the same thing a parent wants from a child—belief and trust, love and dependence. God wants us to believe and trust Him, to love and depend upon Him. This is clearly seen throughout this passage.

3. GOD RESPONDS AS WE EXERCISE OUR FAITH.

a. the woman:

Mark 5:34 He said to her, "Daughter, your **faith** has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering."

Faith = *pistis* (a noun): the conviction of religious truth

b. the ruler

Mark 5:36 Ignoring what they said, Jesus told the synagogue ruler, "Don't be afraid; just **believe.**"

Believe = *pisteuo* (verb): to place ones trust in another, used 90 times as a verb in John and denotes that one must accept that something is true, could be translated "keep believing like you have."

John 5:46 If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me.

John 14:11 Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves.

Important: Our faith is only as strong as *the object of our faith*. The power of faith does not rest in a person's own faith but in God and in God alone (Mark 6:30). Christ can do anything no matter what it is, but the question is, will He? It always depends upon two things.

- a. Is the request good? Is it good for all, both for the people involved and for the world? And is it good for God Himself and His glory? Only God can know if a request is good; that is, does it embrace good for all persons involved. This is what is meant by asking according to His will. But note this: a great deal of what is good (His will) is already revealed to us in His Word. We can ask according to His Word and He will answer—if we truly believe.
- b. Is the request really asked in faith? Do we really believe that God can and will do the good that we ask?

Monday, June 28th *Read Mark 5: 21-43*

How can a person lay hold of Jesus and His power? This passage deals specifically with the desperate and hopeless person; it shows how the desperate person can approach Jesus and secure His help in any situation and live by faith. The lesson breaks out in the following manner..

1. The crowds gathered around Jesus (v.21).
2. Scene 1: a ruler's desperate approach (v.22-24).
3. Scene 2: a woman's hopeless approach (v.25-34).
4. Scene 3: a ruler's believing approach (v.35-43).

In 5:21 crowds gathered around Jesus again. He had crossed back over the Sea of Galilee, apparently near Capernaum, His headquarters. The events that follow happened near the Sea of Galilee.

In 5:22-24 the first scene is that of a ruler's desperate approach. Let's talk about being desperate. The man who cried for help was a ruler and a father. Luke says that the ruler's name who oversaw the administration of the synagogue at Capernaum was Jairus. The synagogue ruler was an elected position among the religious leaders. The person was highly respected, both capable and popular, a person who wielded great power. He determined who was to teach in the synagogue worship and supervised the whole operation. He was one of the most important men in a community.

Jairus' daughter was only twelve years old. Jairus was a man who loved his daughter ever so deeply; and he was a man of strong courage. He showed remarkable courage in approaching Jesus, for he went against the tide of the other religionists who were violent in their thoughts against Jesus. The other religionists were bound to react against Jairus. Only the sense of desperation would stir him to approach Jesus, and then he would approach Jesus only as a last resort. It was the desperate need of his daughter that drove him to Jesus.

1. Note four things about the man and his desperation.

- a. His hopelessness:** he was so hopeless he interrupted Jesus while Jesus was preaching and teaching. His little daughter was dead, gone forever. He loved his daughter and he apparently loved her more deeply than most. He stood up against the world, that is, against the censoring and hostility of his peers. He was an elected official by the religious elders; therefore, he was probably risking his position by coming to Christ. Only an unusual love and belief would have driven him to approach Jesus in the face of so much opposition (cp. Matthew 9:34). One thing should always receive priority over all else—the cry of a hopeless and helpless person. When the hopeless and helpless approach us, we should immediately stop and go to them and do what we can. Prayer, study, preaching—all are to take a back seat to helping those who have need. Note: the need Jesus met was immediate and urgent. There was not even time to say a word. Jesus was silent. He simply responded by arising and going as requested.
- b. His attitude:** he worshipped Jesus; he fell down at the Lord's feet. Remember this was a distinguished man, an elected official who oversaw the administrative responsibilities of the most important institution in a Jewish city—the synagogue. He was a dynamic example of how leaders should approach Christ: in humility, worship, and faith.

Matthew 18:4 Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

James 4:6 But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

Too often, the desperate needs of loved ones drives us into a state of helplessness and hopelessness, of depression and self-pity. The need may be severe illness, terrible trouble, or death. However, despair is not the answer to desperate needs. The answer is to lift up our heads to Jesus for the salvation of our loved ones. We are to come before Christ and ask Him to help us. He never turns away. God can do more than you can.

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- c. His request:** he asked Jesus to come and touch his daughter.

Psalms 91:15 He will call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him.

Isaiah 58:9 Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I. "If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk,

Jeremiah 33:3 'Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.'

Ask Jesus for *His touch*—to touch us, to touch our need—and He will.

- d. His faith:** "...so that she will be healed and live." This man was a man of great faith. He believed that if Jesus would just come, his daughter would live. He believed Christ could raise her from the dead.

Note two lessons.

- 1) This is the very same faith, a great faith, that we must have.**

- a) We must believe that Jesus can meet our desperate needs.

b) We must believe that Jesus can raise us up from the dead (John 6:39-40, 44, 54; 1 Cor. 15:12-58; 1 Thes. 4:13-18).

- 2) **This man was driven to Jesus by a tragic event.** God uses tragedy to drive us to Jesus. Every man should approach Jesus in tragedy, but he should approach in a spirit of worship and belief—truly believing and trusting that Jesus will help.

Matthew 21:22 If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer."

John 14:14 You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

Psalm 91:15 He will call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him.

2. **Note Jesus' response to the father's desperation.** Jesus arose and acted by following the man, by going to his house where the need was. There was no hesitation whatsoever.

Jeremiah 33:3 'Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.'

Note three lessons.

- 1) **The ruler was so desperate that he interrupted Jesus while Jesus was preaching and teaching.** Jesus did not stop him nor rebuke him. He said nothing. He simply *responded to the man's* desperate and hopeless cry. Jesus always receives and responds to a man...
 - who is desperate,
 - who confesses his hopelessness and helplessness,
 - who acknowledges his need and believes that Jesus can help.
- 2) **Jesus never turns from a desperate person who comes to Him.** In fact, He does not even hesitate to help the person. He will not even take the time to speak. He will arise and follow the desperate person to meet their need. Jesus is ever ready to help. He longs to help. So, what's your problem?
- 3) **Note that Jesus will visit us wherever our need is.** In this event Jesus left his meeting and the opportunity to preach and teach in order to meet the desperate need. What a lesson for us! How much we need to learn what the priorities really are!

Wednesday, July 1st Read Mark 5: 21-43

Maybe it's good to be really desperate. Why? Well, a desperate approach always lays hold of Jesus. Jesus sees and answers a person who comes to Him in desperation. A desperate approach involves four attitudes.

1. **There is a selfless attitude.** Jairus was a ruler, one of the most important men in the community. The rulers were now violently opposed to Jesus and were publicly expressing their opposition. By coming to Jesus, Jairus was running the risk of arousing the hostility of his peers and of being censored. He could have easily lost his position and profession.

Something else is also noticable. Jairus himself was approaching Jesus. Why would he leave his dying daughter's side to seek Jesus' help instead of sending someone else? Could it be that even they of his own household feared approaching Jesus because of the heated opposition? Jairus would most likely not have left his daughter's side if there had been another person willing to come to Jesus. The point is that Jairus was desperate for help. No man could help him; this much he knew. But he had heard that Jesus could help; therefore, he set aside everything—profession, friends, family—he forgot self completely; and he went to Jesus for help.

2. **There is a humble attitude.** Note the words, "he fell at His feet" (Mark 5:22). Jairus pushed and shoved his way through the crowd as rapidly as he could. When he caught his first glimpse of Jesus, his pace quickened; and when he finally reached Jesus, he "fell at Jesus' feet." This is humility at its height. The ruler willingly humbled himself and willingly...

- laid aside all his pride and dignity.
- laid aside his family and friends in all their prejudice and opposition.
- laid aside his profession with all its security, fame, and authority.

Matthew 18:4 Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

James 4:6 But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

James 4:10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

3. **There is a pleading attitude.** The word "besought" (*parakaleō*) means to call to one's side for help, to plead, to entreat, to beg. The ruler pleaded and begged Jesus to help him.

Psalm 91:15 He will call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him.

Isaiah 58:9 Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I. "If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk,

Jeremiah 33:3 'Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.'

4. **There is an expectant, believing attitude.** The man had a little daughter twelve years old, and she was dying. Note the man's great faith: if Jesus would come and lay His hands upon her, she would be healed and live.

Matthew 21:22 If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer."

John 14:14 You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

Thursday, July 2nd Read Mark 5: 25-34

The second scene is that of a woman's hopeless approach. This approach always lays hold of Jesus. Jesus senses the touch of the hopeless and always helps the hopeless who come to Him. A hopeless approach involves four attitudes.

1. There is the last resort attitude. The woman had been hemorrhaging for twelve years; it was uncontrollable. No one could touch her nor anything she had touched. By law she was considered unclean, so unclean that she was to be divorced by her husband (Leviticus 15:25-27). She was to be totally cut off from society and religious worship. This particular woman had tried all she knew. She had seen "many physicians" and "spent all that she had," and yet she "grew worse." There was nowhere else to turn except to Jesus.

Matthew 11:28 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

When all else fails, there is Jesus. However, most people try all else before Jesus. Nevertheless, He loves us and He cares for us—enormously so. We should turn to Jesus, for He is always waiting for us—waiting even if we turn to Him as a last resort. A person who has been brought to the point of helplessness and hopelessness can be helped. When there is no hope anywhere else, there is hope in Christ. There is no need to reach the point of hopelessness; no need to reach the *end of our ropes*; no need to become utterly depressed. Circumstances should never be allowed to destroy us, not to the point of utter hopelessness. Nevertheless, many reach that point. The one thing to remember is that Jesus does care and will never turn away from the hopeless. He opens His arms to all who come—even to the hopeless.

2. There is the shy, embarrassed, unworthy attitude. Note the woman elbowed her way through the crowd and came up behind Jesus. She wanted to touch Jesus without being seen or noticed. Why? She was embarrassed and felt unworthy. Her hemorrhaging was a personal, intimate matter for her, something she did not want to be known and discussed. She was considered unclean; therefore, she felt unworthy to approach Jesus. It is the sense of unworthiness and hopelessness that touches the heart of Jesus; it is not being shy and fearing embarrassment. Being shy and fearing embarrassment are only the attitudes that create a sense of unworthiness and hopelessness. Jesus accepts any of the hopeless who truly come to Him, no matter what causes their sense of unworthiness. Embarrassing matters, personal matters, secret matters—all are understood by Christ. He wishes no one to suffer ridicule or shame. He will accept the shy, quiet approach that comes to Him.

Friday, July 3rd Read Mark 5: 28-34

3. There is the expectant, believing attitude. Note that the hopeless woman believed what "she had heard of Jesus." She believed the gospel, that Jesus loved and cared and would make her whole. Note the thoughts of her mind, "If I may touch but His clothes, I shall be whole" (Mark 5:28). She believed in her thoughts, in her heart. She believed two things: the gospel (what she had heard about Jesus) and the power of Jesus to make her whole. The same expectant, believing attitude is essential for any person to come to Christ, whether hopeless or not. One must believe in the gospel and in the power of Jesus to make one whole.

Mark 1:15 "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"

Romans 1:16 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

Mark 9:23 "Everything is possible for him who believes."

4. There is the confessing attitude. Jesus had made the way easy for her. He had allowed her to be healed without embarrassment, but it was not enough to believe in secret. The secret disciple had to be brought to the point of confessing her faith.

a. The healing had cost Jesus. Spiritual virtue had flowed out from Him into the woman. The expenditure of virtue took its toll, sapping His physical strength. Jesus felt virtue drain from His body. He turned and asked the pressing thing surrounding Him, "Who touched my clothes?"

b. The disciples were unaware of what it cost Jesus to minister. They were insensitive to the spiritual energy He was exerting. They were ignorant of what Jesus was doing:

⇒ "Himself took our infirmities, and bore our sicknesses" (Matthew 8:17; cp. Isaiah 53:4).

⇒ He was teaching that public confession of Him was essential.

The disciples were somewhat surprised at Jesus' question: "Who touched me?" He was completely surrounded by a mass of people. In their surprise, they asked Him why He was asking such a question in the midst of so many people. How could He possibly expect not to be touched?

c. The woman confessed. When Jesus asked the question, the woman came up to Jesus "fearing and trembling." She had approached Him *being unclean* and had not requested permission to touch Him. But she had still been healed. Now she felt that she must respond to His question and identify herself lest He rebuke her and reject her faith. She feared that somehow her healing might be reversed if she did not confess that she had touched Him. So "knowing what was done in her, [she] came and fell down before Him, and told Him all the truth." It was difficult and embarrassing, but she did it.