

DON'T BE AFRAID, JUST BELIEVE

Mark 5:21-43 (Key Verse 36)

"Overhearing what they said, Jesus told him, "Don't be afraid; just believe.""

In today's passage we are going to witness Jesus' encounter with two characters, Jairus the Synagogue ruler whose daughter was dying and the woman who was subjected to bleeding for 12 years. Both Jairus and the woman had faith that Jesus can change their situation. When Jesus saw their faith, he could help them to have more faith, a faith of a lifetime. Jesus said to the woman who was subjected to bleeding, *"Daughter your faith has healed you"*. He said to Jairus when he was told his daughter is dead, *"Don't be afraid, Just believe"*. Jesus words changed the woman and Jairus' life of faith. So, through today's passage we are going to learn about the faith of Jairus and the woman. We are also going to learn about the meaning of Jesus's words: *"Daughter your faith has healed you"*, and *"Don't be afraid, Just believe"*. May God have mercy on us today, to receive one word, come to Jesus even with our little faith and allow him to stretch it so that we can experience more of his power.

The passage today begins at a point where Jesus had crossed back to the other side of the lake, Jesus crossed over after he was chased away by the community on the other side after he drove out impure spirits from a man. They chased him out because he sacrificed the thousands of their pigs for the life of the one man. Now when Jesus crossed back, large crowds were waiting for him and were happy to receive him back. They were happy because they were moved by Jesus' teaching, they were happy because he healed many of them and showed them great love and compassion. So, when Jesus crossed over to the other side of the lake, large crowds gathered around him. While the crowds gathered around him, something amazing happened. Let us look at **verse 22-23**: *"Then one of the synagogue leaders, named Jairus, came, and when he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet. / He pleaded earnestly with him, "My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live."* Jairus was no ordinary man, but a synagogue leader, a prominent figure in society. Yet when Jesus came, he knelt down before him in front of the very large crowds, he did not care what the people said, his position in society did not matter. Why did he do this? He did this because his daughter was dying, from his actions we can tell that his daughter was very important to him. Having a daughter myself I can understand this man, Ona is so precious to me, I would do anything for her.

Furthermore, Jairus knelt before Jesus and earnestly pleaded with him, because he believed that Jesus could do something about her daughter, he believed that if Jesus can put his hands on her she will be healed. Because of the teachings he heard from Jesus, the healing Jesus had done in the society, he was convinced that Jesus has power and authority to heal her daughter, he had faith in Jesus. How about us, what is our response to Jesus' teaching? Is Jesus teaching leading us to have faith in him? When we are in a crisis do we come to Jesus? Do we earnestly plead with Jesus in front of the crowds for him to help us? Jairus came to Jesus and fell at Jesus feet and pleaded with him because he had faith in Jesus. When Jesus saw this, in **verse 24a** it says: *"So Jesus went with him."* When Jesus saw Jairus faith, he did not hesitate but immediately went with him. When we come to Jesus by faith, he will not reject us, Jesus values faith so much and he will respond when we come to him by faith.

While Jesus was on his way to Jairus home, the large crowds followed him and pressed around him. Among the crowd there was a woman who was subjected to bleeding for 12 years. She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. Life for a woman in her condition, during those times was very tough, in **Leviticus 15:25 & 27** it says: *"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 Anyone who touches them will be unclean; they must wash their clothes and bathe with water, and they will be unclean till evening."* She was regarded unclean; she was not allowed to be among the crowds for she will make them unclean. Her life was more like that of the leper, living in isolation. But when Jesus came, she went to the crowd, she broke the laws, putting her life in great danger, she risked being stoned by the crowd by coming to the public in her unclean condition.

Why did the woman, take such a risk? Why did she put her life in such danger? Is it because her life was already hard enough, so it did not matter if she dies? Let us look at **verse 27-28** to see why she took such a great risk: *"When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, 28 because she thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed."* Just like Jairus, the woman had faith that Jesus had power and authority to heal, she had faith

that if she can just touch his clothes then she will be healed. Probably the woman did not see Jesus physically before, she just heard about him. She just heard about his teachings and healing ministry because she was not allowed to go to the crowds because of her condition. But when she heard, she was deeply moved by the power of Jesus. And she was filled with faith that she too can be healed if she can just touch Jesus clothes. And so she took the risk, she broke the law and came to Jesus and touched his clothes. When she came with this faith, and touched Jesus clothes, some thing amazing happened. In **verse 29** it says: *“Immediately her bleeding stopped, and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering.”* When she came to Jesus by faith, she could experience the healing power of Jesus, she was freed from her suffering. To experience the power of Jesus, we need to come to him by faith.

After the woman was healed, Jesus turned around in the crowd and said: *“Who touched my clothes?”* He said this because he realised power had gone out of him. However, his question confused his disciples dismally, they even said to him: *“You see the people crowding against you, and yet you can ask, ‘Who touched me?’”* Even then Jesus kept looking who had touched him. Knowing who touched him was important to Jesus, he did not let it go. Why was it important for Jesus to know who touched him? To understand why it was important for Jesus to know who touched him, let us look at what happened when the woman finally revealed herself. Let us look at **verse 33-34**: *“Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. / He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering.”* Jesus asked the question, who touched me and insisted that whoever touched him must come out, because it was important for the woman to come out. Jesus is Lord, the creator of the heavens and earth with power and authority over all things. So, it would be easy for him to find out who touched him.

Him insisting on the woman to come out, was more important for the woman. When the woman revealed herself, she fell at Jesus feet, trembling with fear and told the whole truth. For a long time, the woman lived in isolation, in sorrow and pain, she hated those around him who did not want to associate with her because of her condition, she probably hated God for her condition, she probably blamed herself, her parents. Basically, her life was a mess, even though she was physically healed, her inner self was still broken and filled with bitterness. What the woman had sounds like a sin problem, this is what sin does, it keeps man in isolation, fills men with guilt, blaming God, blaming other people, hating oneself. And to overcome the power of sin, one must come before Jesus in front of the crowds and confess their very sin. To experience true healing and freedom, we need to come to Jesus, confess our sins before others. Jesus asked, who touched me, to help the woman to come out, to tell the whole truth, confess her sins, to be stripped naked before God in desperation.

When the woman had finished confessing her sin, stripped naked in desperation before the people and God. Jesus said to her: *“Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering.”* Jesus said this because now the woman had complete faith, before she had faith that Jesus can heal her, and she was indeed healed physically. But we are not just physical beings, we are spiritual being as well, to be completely healed we need to be healed spiritually as well. To be healed spiritually we need to have faith that overcomes the dark spiritual realms, we need faith that overcomes the power of sin. Faith that overcomes the power of sin, comes when we tell the whole truth, when we come before Jesus and confess our sins before the people. That is why when Jesus heard the woman tell the whole truth, confessing her sins before the people, he said to her: *“Daughter your faith has healed you.”* When we do not confess our sins, we will only experience temporary healing, after a day something will come and torment us again. But when do we expel sin completely from our lives, we can experience complete healing.

While Jesus was till speaking to the woman with excitement over this victory against the power of sin, some very sad news was delivered. Let us look at **verse 35**: *“While Jesus was still speaking, some people came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader. “Your daughter is dead,” they said. “Why bother the teacher anymore?”* It was reported to Jairus that his daughter was dead, and this news crushed him greatly for he loved his daughter so much. It crushed him for he did all he could, even knelt before Jesus begging him to come with him to his home to heal his daughter, the man begged Jesus in front of the crowds. When Jairus learnt about the healing of the woman who was subjected to bleeding for 12 years, he was encouraged that his daughter will receive healing too. But when they delivered the sad news to him that his daughter was dead, he was filled with so much discouragement, anger and disappointment that Jesus did not hurry to go and heal his daughter, but instead was concerned about useless things, wasting time asking around who touched him.

When the sad news was delivered to Jairus, it challenged his faith in Jesus, he started questioning the love and care of Jesus for him. Have you ever been in this situation? Where other people's prayers seem to be answered but yours not? You have been praying for a long time for a job and still don't have it, but yet it seems some pray once and their things are sorted? Struggling in your studies or with a sin problem and yet things are not getting better? Even though you earnestly knelt before Jesus countless times, pleading with him to take away your situation? My wife is currently in Lesotho, she went there over 2 months ago because her passport had expired so she needed to get a new one, and the process just took very long, we are still waiting. This other day she told me that there are people who applied for the passport long after she did and they already received theirs. Her eyes were filled with tears, and I could see this heavy discouragement her.

So, what Jairus was going through, is not foreign to us, it is something that we experienced before and it is something we will experience in the future. And this does not mean Jesus does not care about us, perhaps because we are worse sinners, or our prayers are weak or have done something wrong. What does it mean then? Why is this happening to us? Let us look at the key verse together, **verse 36**: "*Overhearing what they said, Jesus told him, "Don't be afraid; just believe."*" First Jesus responded to Jairus saying, "*Don't be afraid.*" Jesus said this to assure him that he cares for him, that he is with him and will not forsake him. When Jairus heard the bad news he was filled with so much fear, just like the woman who was subjected to bleeding he tried everything and Jesus was his last hope and when he could not get his help. He felt so lonely and afraid, he did not know where to put his hope on. And this left him filled with so much fear, fear about his future security and protection. So, Jesus wanted Jairus to overcome this fear, for that is what the devil uses to take away our peace, to drive us away from God. Students for example, sacrifice Bible studies, Sunday worship service out fear of failing saying they need to study.

Jesus said to Jairus, don't be afraid. Jesus said this to assure Jairus that he is with him, that he loves him and will continue to protect him, provide him and be there for him. When we are filled with fear, we nullify the presence of Jesus in our lives, so Jesus is urging us today to not be afraid for he is with us. Furthermore, Jesus said to Jairus: "*Just believe.*" What does this mean? This means Jairus must continue to keep the faith, when Jairus came to Jesus he had faith that if Jesus puts his hands on her daughter she will live, so Jesus wanted him to keep that faith though the situation has changed. Jairus lost his faith because her daughter is now dead, the situation has changed. Even though Jesus agreed to go with Jairus to heal her daughter, Jairus lost his faith because his daughter is now dead. To help him, Jesus said just believe. Today as well, Jesus wants us to keep the faith even though the situation changes, Jesus does not want us to be logical and limit him, but to keep the faith. In this world, Satan will plant things to make us doubt if Jesus will do something about our situation. Satan will send people to us saying, your daughter is dead, do not bother the teacher anymore, saying you are a hopeless person, don't bother Jesus he has no time for people like you. But Jesus says, no matter what sin you might have committed, how impossible the situation might be, just believe. Jesus wants us to have a challenging faith, a crazy kind of faith.

After Jesus had planted this faith in Jairus heart, he went with him to his house and went into the room where the child was and did something amazing. In **verse 41-42** it says: "*He took her by the hand and said to her, "Talitha kum!" (which means "Little girl, I say to you, get up!"). 42 Immediately the girl stood up and began to walk around (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished.*" Jesus rose the girl from the dead, Jesus rewarded Jairus' faith and rose his dead girl to life. Jesus proved to Jairus his love and care for him, he proved to him that he was always with him. But importantly Jesus taught Jairus about the importance of faith, how he values faith and how through faith anything is possible. Through this Jesus also stretched the faith of Jairus, before Jairus had faith that Jesus can only heal her daughter if he puts hands on her before she dies. But now Jairus knows that dead or alive, Jesus can bring her to life, whether he puts hands on her or says your daughter is healed a thousand kilometres away, her daughter will be healed. In the same way, when we feel like Jesus is not answering our prayers, we should not be discouraged and afraid. But rather we must keep the faith, just believe. For Jesus uses this waiting and uncertainty to stretch our faith, to make us strong and prepare us for much greater things.

Conclusion

Today we have learnt how Jesus' values faith, he values faith for it is through faith that we can experience Jesus' power. We have learnt that true faith that lasts is very linked to confessing our sins before Jesus in front of the people, if we do

not confess our sins we cannot fully access and experience the power of Jesus. We have also learnt that to have true faith, means we should not be afraid, but believe that Jesus is with us, he cares for us, he will always provide for us. Also true faith is about continuing to believe, even when the situation changes. We have learnt that when the situation- changes, we must continue to believe for it is an opportunity for our faith to be stretched, to grow and be prepared for greater things. When Jairus faith was stretched, he could experience Jesus' power of resurrection. Jesus power to do the impossible, and this changed Jairus completely. He became a great man of faith.

Amen

Key Verse