

DON'T BE AFRAID; JUST BELIEVE

Luke 8:40-56

Key Verse: 8:50

"Hearing this, Jesus said to Jairus, 'Don't be afraid; just believe, and she will be healed.'"

Today's passage contains two stories. One is Jesus' healing Jairus' daughter. The other is Jesus' healing a woman with a hemorrhage. In this passage, Jesus wants his people to have absolute faith when they come to Jesus for healing. Jesus also teaches us that we must confess our faith as the woman with a hemorrhage did.

First, Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue (40-42a).

Jesus returned from Gerasa where he had healed a demon-possessed man. When Jesus returned, a crowd welcomed him, for they were all expecting him (40). And each may have thought that his expectation was the most urgent and serious. Jesus saw that they needed shepherds to take care of them (Mk 6:34). Just then, a man named Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, came and fell at Jesus' feet, and pleaded with him to come to his house, because his only daughter, a girl of about twelve, was dying (41,42). A crowd of people was pressing Jesus. But Jesus, putting aside the demanding crowd of people, chose to go to Jairus' house to see about his dying daughter. Probably Jesus thought that a dying person was more urgent than ailing people because of their sicknesses.

Jairus was a leader in his community, the ruler of the synagogue. He was wealthy, so he had many servants. No doubt Jairus had made a great effort to earn recognition and prestige from the people. With wealth and success, he married. Perhaps he wanted to have five sons and two daughters. But God gave him a one and only daughter. So the daughter was very precious to her family. Probably, as a girl of twelve, she looked beautiful, like the bud of the Sharon rose about to bloom. To Hebrew people, an heir to a family was significant. But it did not matter. As long as his daughter was around him, Jairus was happy. Even when he was upset and angry, his anger

subsided as soon as his daughter appeared before his eyes. He was happy with his one and only daughter.

One day, his daughter suddenly got sick and was getting worse and worse, to the point of death. Jairus wished that it were a nightmare. But it was a solemn reality. When he looked at his ailing and dying daughter, he trembled with fear. Also, his heart sank. He was overwhelmed with sorrow when he thought about his future without his only daughter. He was afraid of how his neighbors would criticize him, saying, "Hum! He has no son as his heir, and now his daughter is dead. He has no blessing from God!" When his soul was greatly distressed by his own sorrow, the devil channeled through his distressed heart and planted fear of the devil.

Jairus felt fearful. But he remembered Jesus who was healing the sick and preaching the kingdom of God. He decided to come to Jesus, asking his mercy to heal his dying daughter. It was not easy for Jairus to come to Jesus. First of all, he had to overcome fear the devil planted in him. At that time, even before being examined, the Pharisees branded Jesus as a dangerous heretic or cult leader. He knew that coming to Jesus would invite disaster because of his people's blind prejudice against Jesus. But Jairus overcame the fearful situation and came to Jesus.

Jairus also had to overcome his proud mind. Humanly speaking, at that time, Jesus was nothing but a country evangelist, and Jairus was the ruler of the synagogue. So before overcoming his human pride, Jairus could not come to Jesus. One professor loved his only daughter so much that he would give anything for her. But when his daughter looked as if she had respected her fiance more than himself, his pride was hurt. So he did not attend his own daughter's wedding ceremony. But Jairus curbed his pride. When he came to Jesus, he knelt down at Jesus' feet and pleaded with him to come to his home to heal his dying daughter. He was a great man because he was humble. James says, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble" (4:6b). Jesus really wanted to help Jairus because he had a humble heart. May God give us a humble heart like Jairus.

Most of all, Jairus could come to Jesus because he loved his daughter. Luke comments in verse 42a, "...because his only daughter, a girl of about twelve, was dying." This verse tells us that Jairus came to Jesus for the sake of

his dying daughter. Here we learn that parents should love their children more than themselves. It is parents' divine duty. But there are many ungodly parents who run away to enjoy their sinful pleasures, abandoning their children like piglets oinking for a little more milk. But this father, Jairus, loved his daughter more than himself. When Jesus saw Jairus' love for his daughter, he was most pleased. This is the reason why Jesus left the crowd and started on his way to Jairus' house.

Second, Daughter, your faith has healed you (42b-48).

In the crowd of people who were pressing and crushing to see Jesus, there was a woman who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years, but no one could heal her (43). According to Mark, all the medical doctors emptied her pockets. But she was not healed (Mk 5:26). On seeing this woman, out of compassion, Jesus took time with her on the way to Jairus' house. This happened in the hubbub of the crowd. She was a poor, unimportant suffering woman with an unclean disease. But Jesus spoke to her and treated her as if she were the only person in the world.

Who was this woman? As we have studied, this woman had been sick with bleeding for twelve years--ten years plus two. During that time, many people had been born and passed away, and the world had been changed into a different shape and color. It is said that such a hemorrhage causes fretting wounds within, and intractable sores which nothing can heal. She had spent all her youth in suffering. The woman's malady was not only distressing to her, also her illness made her a shameful social outcast, for she was regarded as ceremonially unclean (Lev 15:25). This woman had done all she could. Now she could only give in to her ill-fate, awaiting the day of her sorrowful death. But when she felt like dying, she remembered that Jesus heals the sick and preaches the kingdom of God.

When she decided to come to Jesus, there were many obstacles to overcome. The crowd of people were pressing each other around Jesus (42b). She was afraid of offending others with her offensive smell from her bleeding. But when she determined to come to Jesus, God graciously enabled her to come to the place where Jesus was. Her coming to Jesus was a beautiful act of faith.

She had spent all of her youth in dark privacy. Because of her bleeding problem, she was so withdrawn into herself that she could not stand in front of Jesus. But she came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak. Her touching the edge of his cloak from behind secretly seemed to be nothing. But the result was indeed marvelous. Jesus' divine power of healing went out to her, and the poor suffering woman was completely healed. Her blood-stained body was cleansed as white as snow and she looked beautiful, as beautiful as Mona Lisa.

Look at verse 45. "'Who touched me?' Jesus asked. When they all denied it, Peter said, 'Master, the people are crowding and pressing against you.'" Peter protested. But Jesus said in verse 46, "Someone touched me; I know that power has gone out from me." Jesus asked again and again about this matter. The woman's strategy was "hit-and-run" like a clever baseball player. But Jesus did not allow her to disappear from the crowd unheeded. For she was healed physically, but she needed spiritual healing. If she had gone back unnoticed, soon this fallen woman would forget God's grace and become a woman of bitterness again. There is a story about a man who had suffered from paralysis for 38 years. After being healed he completely forgot what Jesus had done for him. To our surprise, this man, in order to save his own skin, reported to the Jewish CIA that Jesus had healed him, violating the Sabbath law (Jn 5:15).

Jesus knew that it was not easy for this woman to confess what kind of woman she was and what Christ had done for her. But it was necessary for her to make a confession of faith so that she may not forget God's grace. Then the woman came trembling and fell at his feet. In the presence of all the people, she confessed that she had touched him, and that she had been instantly healed (47). In this way, Jesus healed her spiritually, also. Romans 10:9 says, "That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." Now she has a confession of faith: "You know I was a smelly woman with no hope of marriage because of my hemorrhage. But by God's grace I was healed." Here we learn that those who have no confession of faith are cultural Christians who have nothing to do with our Lord Jesus Christ. When she made a confession of faith, Jesus was happy to see her beautiful act of faith. So Jesus admired her,

saying, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace" (48). When she came to Jesus by faith, she was not only healed from a hemorrhage, she received the peace of God as well.

Third, "Don't be afraid; just believe" (49-56).

Let's come back to Jairus' story. Look at verse 49. While Jesus was still speaking, someone came from the house of Jairus and said, "Your daughter is dead. Don't bother the teacher any more." The messenger, though unintentionally, made Jairus fall into the darkness of unbelief. Look at verse 50. "Hearing this, Jesus said to Jairus, 'Don't be afraid; just believe, and she will be healed.'" How could he just believe when he had just heard the news of his daughter's death? It was a moment of a great storm of doubt in Jairus' heart. But to our surprise, he overcame the fear which made his teeth chatter and his knees knock together and just believed Jesus' words. We learn two things about Jairus' faith.

We see firstly Jairus overcame fear by faith. From the time Jesus was stopped by the woman with a hemorrhage, Jairus had waited very patiently for Jesus. Jesus spent quite a long time to help her make a confession of faith. At the moment, Jairus felt that his blood pressure went up and he was about to faint. Still, Jairus was waiting on Jesus quietly and patiently. He was a man of great faith in the word of God which had enabled him to overcome fear in his heart.

We see secondly Jairus had "just believing" faith. At the news from his servant that his daughter was dead, Jairus might have thought that "everything was over." It is common sense that fallen men become devils when their expectation is not achieved. But when Jesus said, "Don't be afraid; just believe," Jairus just believed Jesus' words. In order to believe Jesus' words Jairus fought against Satan's doubt as a matter of life and death. In this way, he became a warrior of faith in a tragic situation. Jairus faced the situation in which he would lose his daughter. But when he believed Jesus' words, "Don't be afraid; just believe," he could win the spiritual victory by just believing in Jesus.

When Jesus arrived at the house of Jairus, Jesus did not want to

demonstrate his resurrection power to those who were unprepared. So Jesus took only Peter, John and James, and the child's parents and went into the house. On the way, he saw people who were wailing and mourning for her. "Stop wailing," Jesus said. "She is not dead but asleep." Jesus said this because there is no death in Jesus (Jn 11:25).

At his word, people began to laugh at him--"Ha, ha, ha"--for they knew she was dead. At the moment, the unbelieving atmosphere hardened people's hearts and they became cynical and rebellious toward Jesus. But Jesus took the little girl by the hand and said, "My child, get up!" Her spirit returned, and at once she stood up (55a). In this way, Jesus revealed the glory of God because of Jairus' faith. When Jairus was not afraid and just believed, he could experience the power of faith in God Almighty. Jesus knew that teenagers are always hungry. So he told them to give her something to eat.

May God grant us faith that overcomes fear; just believing faith, so that with our faith many children of God may grow to be warriors of faith.