

# Stop Fearing, Keep On Believing

We have been following Jesus from one hopeless situation to another. We have witnessed the Lord Jesus demonstrate His power over a stormy sea; a demon-possessed man and a very sick woman. Jesus has proven that He is more than adequate for any situation He faced.

Jesus spoke and, when He did, a raging storm and a tossing sea suddenly became calm. At His command a man held captive by the forces of evil was set free. His power instantly healed a woman caught in the grip of an incurable illness. Jesus is the Master of the hopeless situation! Thank God, we serve a Lord Who possesses all power, (Matt. 28:18; Eph. 3:20). We serve a Lord with Whom nothing is impossible, (Luke 1:37).

Today, our text takes us into another hopeless situation. This time Jesus faces the greatest enemy known to man. Jesus faces death in these verses and He walks away the Victor!

As we watch our Lord conquer one hopeless situation after another, it should give us hope when our own desperate times come.

As I do, I would like for us to see a father's faith in action. We will see how his faith is matured by the struggle he endured. What we learn here can help us to overcome fear with faith during the hard times of life. Notice the phases this father's faith passes through as this story develops.

## I. Faith Begins By Coming to Jesus (v. 21-24)

Jesus has just returned from a night at sea. He and His disciples went to the other side of the lake. While He was there, Jesus delivered a poor man from the grip of Satan, by casting out the demons that possessed him.

Now, Jesus has returned to Capernaum and is immediately met by a crowd of people. Some have gathered to hear His words. Some have come in the hopes of experiencing a miracle. All are there to see Jesus.

A man named Jairus rushes into the crowd surrounding Jesus. It is his story that serves as the focus of these verses. He is a man whose little faith is about to grow very large.

This man is "a ruler of the synagogue". This means that he was one of the officials who oversaw the business of the synagogue. He was not a priest, but he would have had a part in the services of the synagogue. He was responsible for making sure that everything was in order and ready at the synagogue. He would have been an important man in his community. Jairus possessed power, privilege, prestige, position, and prominence. He was probably a wealthy man, with a fine home and servants. He was a religious man, who faithfully practiced the Jewish faith.

At this moment in his life, none of the things that usually seemed important to Jairus mattered in the least! Sickness and death had visited the home of Jairus and none of the things that mattered in his life could drive them away! His power, his money, his position in the community, even his religion, were all powerless in the face those two enemies. His "little daughter" was dying and he needed help! Jairus needed help that none of his resources could provide!

This broken hearted father knows he needs help. He has heard about Jesus and he runs to Him and he humbles himself at Jesus feet.

This must have been hard for Jairus! After all, he is a ruler of the synagogue. Many of his colleagues, the scribes and Pharisees disapprove of Jesus and of His methods. Yet, this father is desperate and he turns to the man named Jesus for the help he needs. Fear of death; love for his daughter; and a sense of utter helplessness drove this man to Jesus!

Jairus doesn't understand everything there is to know about Jesus. But, he has come to believe that this man can heal.

Let me just remind you that tragedy doesn't care who you are! The trials of life are not going to pass you by, Job 14:1; John 16:33. Tragedy doesn't care that you go to church and pay your tithes. Sickness and death could care less about your achievements and assets.

When the trials of life come, you need a resource outside of yourself. When death, sickness, sorrow, marital trouble, financial trouble, etc, comes, you need more than some religion or the stuff of this world! You need a faith that rests in Jesus and in His power alone. What do you really trust today?

Perhaps Jairus has heard what Jesus can do just by touching someone who is diseased. Surely he has already heard the stories about the amazing power of the Lord's touch. He might have even been in the synagogue, back in chapter 1 when Jesus healed a man with an unclean spirit; or in chapter 3 when Jesus healed the man with the withered hand.

Jairus has heard and seen what Jesus can do. Now he believes that Jesus can do this for his own daughter. He believes the Lord's touch will bring healing to his child. So this powerful man humbles himself at the feet of Jesus and cries out for the help he needs.

This is the kind of faith the Lord is looking for in your life and mine. He wants us to come to the end of our own abilities. He wants us to come to the place where we know that we can't, but where we believe that He can!

Like Jairus, there will be many times when our faith is small and weak. But, like Jairus, our faith must be in the Lord and in His ability. Faith in Jesus is faith that will always be honored by God.

Faith in Jesus may start out very small, but because Jesus, the object of our faith is so great, our faith cannot stay small for long. God has a way of growing and maturing our faith as we walk with Him through the days of our lives.

## **II. Faith Grows Through Hindrances (v. 24-35)**

Someone has said, "A faith that can't be tested is a faith that can't be trusted." Here, we see the fledgling faith of Jairus put to the test. A hopeless situation grew worse with each passing moment and a faith that was weak was brought to the breaking point.

**A. Confused By Hindering Situations (v. 24-35)** – Jesus leaves to go with Jairus to heal his daughter. Like we saw last time, as He goes, Jesus is thronged by the crowd and a very sick woman touches His garments and He heals her. Jesus stops to confront and comfort this woman, and as He does, precious minutes pass by.

I would imagine that Jairus is confused and upset by this delay. After all, his daughter is literally dying! She doesn't have much time and it may seem to him that Jesus is wasting His time on this woman.

It is very possible that Jairus knew this woman and her condition. If so, he knows that she had been sick for twelve years. He may be thinking that waiting another hour for her healing wouldn't have killed her. He may be thinking that this interruption will kill his daughter.

We don't know what was going on the mind of Jairus during this interruption. He was probably waiting impatiently, his stomach in knots. If you have ever had a very sick child, then you know the anxiety that must have gripped his heart.

On the surface, the Lord's delay seems a little insensitive. He knows the seriousness of the situation. He knows the broken heart of this father. He knows the urgency of the need. But, Jesus pauses to take care of the need at hand.

What seems to be hard and harsh on the surface has some important lessons to teach us.

God doesn't run on our schedule. God is not bound by the constraints of time and space. The delays of life are designed to increase our faith. You take a Joseph and throw him in a pit, then into slavery, then in to prison; and out of that delay God will give you a godly man who becomes the Prime Minister of Egypt!

When God doesn't move as quickly as you might like, trust Him anyway. Believe Him anyway.

**B. Confused By Hopeless Situations (v. 36)** – As Jesus is finally finishing up with this woman, some people come from that home of Jairus with devastating news. His daughter is dead! Notice the cold way in which they inform this poor father. There is no compassion, no comfort, and no sympathy; there is nothing but cold, hard fact. The news is blunt and final: **“Your daughter is dead: Why trouble the Teacher any further?”** They are saying, “Don't bother Jesus! Even He can't fix this problem! Your daughter is dead and that is just the way it is!”

Surely this news rocked Jairus to his foundations! Surely this news attacked his faith and brought Jairus to the very edge of despair! Surely he must have thought about the delay. I wonder if he became a little bitter at the Lord.

Have you ever been faced with a similar situation? The facts stare you in the face and every one of them cries, “No hope! No hope! No hope!” That must have been how Mary and Martha felt when Lazarus fell ill and they sent for Jesus to come heal him, John 11:1-3. When Jesus heard that Lazarus was sick, He stayed where He was for two more days, John 11:6. By the time Jesus arrived, Lazarus had been dead four days! They thought all hope was gone. What they did not know was that what seemed to be a delay was merely setting the stage for a greater miracle!

That may have been how the disciples felt out there on the sea in that storm. They thought there was no hope. They Jesus didn't care. Again, what they saw as a hindrance was merely setting the stage for a greater miracle!

We can't see what God is doing behind the scenes. Sometimes it appears that He is taking His time when we want Him to move swiftly.

God has a plan for your situation! Even when you can't see what the Lord is doing, learn to trust Him anyway and your faith will sustain you! Even when you

can't see what He is doing, God is working to accomplish His plan and purposes in your life and mine, III. Job, Job 23:10; III. David, Psa. 37:23.

### **III. Faith Goes With Jesus When It Seems Hopeless (v. 36-43)**

Jairus was full of fear. Fear made him waiver in his faith. But, in the end, the faith won out, because he went with Jesus. Faith triumphed because it was rooted in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**A. Believe The Savior's Words (v. 36-39)** – Jesus hears the words of those who have brought the news of the girl's death. Jesus knows these words have brought fear to the heart of Jairus. Jesus says, **"Do not be afraid, only believe."** Literally Jesus says, "Stop fearing, Keep on Believing." Jesus is saying, "Jairus, you believed Me when you came to me a few moments ago; keep believing in me now!"

Faith is the antidote for fear. As we saw with the disciples in the boat who were fearing for their lives, when Jesus proved He was more powerful than the storm, they forgot their fear of their situation and put their fear in Jesus. When we fear God, we have nothing else to fear. Faith is the cure for fear.

So Jesus and Jairus continued on to Jairus' house. When they arrived, they find that the mourners are already there. The mourners were wailing and crying and playing sad tunes on the flutes.

Jewish law required that even the poorest of people have at least one mourner and two flute players. These mourners showed up as soon as there was a death. They began to wail, cry and scream, calling attention to the fact that death had invaded a home. They came quickly because the dead were buried before sundown. These same practices continue to this day in parts of the Middle East.

Since Jairus was wealthy and well known, the number of hired mourners would have been many. Mark describes their noise as a **"tumult"**. This word describes a "clamorous uproar".

Jesus sees this mourning going on. Jesus is watching this show and He knows that there is no genuine grief involved. The mourners could have cared less about the pain of this family. Jesus approaches this scene and makes a strange statement. He tells the mourners to stop their wailing because the little girl is not dead, but only sleeping. They laugh at Him, but there is much truth in His words.

There are many people who look at death as the end of all things. They see it as a time of absolute hopelessness. Jesus seems to have a different opinion. He calls it "sleep. When Jesus says the girl is sleeping, He reveals a proper perspective of death. Jesus redefined death as a temporary condition. That's why He uses the metaphor or the analogy of sleep. Sleep is a temporary disconnect, isn't it? You're insensitive to the environment around you when you're asleep, you don't hear the conversations, you don't participate socially. You're asleep. But it's a temporary situation. And Jesus is saying for this girl, this is just asleep, it's temporary. This is not permanent.

When Christians die, we bury their bodies in the ground. The body sleeps until the glorious resurrection at the return of Christ. Because death for the Christian is not permanent.

Jesus is letting Jairus and everyone there know that He is in control of this situation too. Healing the sick woman was no problem. Casting out a legion of

demons was no problem. Calming a raging sea was no problem. Dealing with this situation will prove to be no problem as well.

What a lesson for us! There is not a situation we can think of that is beyond His ability! When you are faced with a hopeless situation, remember the words of the Lord and let His words be all the support your faith needs! Let His words secure your faith.

Do you have a need? He said He would meet it, Matt. 6:25-34; Phil. 4:19 – Trust Him!

Do you have fears? He said He would never forsake you, Heb. 13:5 – Trust Him!

Do things look hopeless? He specializes in that, Eph. 3:20 – Trust Him!

Regardless of the situation, you can trust Him with absolute confidence. You can always depend on the Lord to “do right”, Gen. 18:25 – Trust Him!

**B. Believe By The Savior’s Works (v. 40-43)** – Jesus sends the mourners and the spectators away. He takes Jairus, the girl’s mother and Peter, James and John and enters the room where the girl’s body lies. He took her by the hand and said “Talitha Cumi”. This phrase can literally be translated “Arise little lamb”. What a tender expression!

Jesus is moved with compassion by the grief in this home and He calls the little girl’s spirit back into her body. She obeys His command and instantly receives life. She gets up and everyone is amazed.

It amazes me when I read about Jesus walking on water, feeding a multitude with a small amount of food, calming a storm, healing a sickness, etc. But, nothing showcases His divine power like Him raising someone from the dead!

If Jesus can do this, there is nothing impossible with Him! That lost spouse or family member can be saved! That impossible situation in your life can be handled! That incredible need that you think is so great, it can be met! Here are two thoughts that I want you to take home with you today.

Jesus cares about your situation – Heb. 4:15-16; 1 Pet. 5:7.

Jesus is able to handle your situation, no matter what it is – Luke 1:37; Eph. 3:20.

When I place my problem beside the Lord, it suddenly grows very small. No matter how great it looks in my eyes, it is nothing compared to Him! After all, a God Who can create a universe from nothing can do anything! A God Who can part a sea, rain down manna from heaven, heal a sick body, raise a dead body, and save a lost soul can do anything!

It may be that you are looking at such a situation right now. You may be here lost and you know that if you die, you will go to Hell. Your story does not have to end that way! Come to Jesus and trust Him to save you. Believe Jesus, He will not fail!

You might be out of God’s will, with a heart that is cold and far away from God. You can come home today and He will restore you to a place of closeness and usefulness. Believe Jesus, He will not fail!

You might have a problem that you cannot handle. It is bigger than you are and out of control. He can handle it! He can cut it down to size! Bring it to Jesus and trust Him to take care of it for His glory! Believe Jesus, He will not fail!