Don’t Be Afraid: Just Believe

(Your Faith Has Healed You)

Mark 5:21-43

Key Verse: 5:36 “Overhearing what they said, Jesus told him, “Don’t be afraid; just believe.”

Last week we learned that Jesus healed a demon-possessed man by sacrificing 2,000 pigs. Through this story, Jesus taught us that we must value one lost soul as worthy as the whole world. Jesus’ healing ministry continues in today’s passage. Jesus heals a woman who was suffering from bleeding for twelve years and heals Jairus’ daughter. In these series of healings Jesus teaches us the importance of faith.

First, daughter, your faith healed you. (21-34) After healing the demon-possessed man in the region of the Gerasenes, Jesus and his disciples crossed the lake, where a large crowd was waiting for them. **Then one of the synagogue leaders, named Jairus, came, and when he saw Jesus, fell at his feet.** (22) A synagogue is the center of Jewish life. The Jews gather at the synagogue to worship, pray, study, discuss, and have fellowship. They built synagogues in towns where at least 10 Jewish adults gathered. Jairus was the influential ruler of a synagogue. Then why did he fall at Jesus’ feet? Look at verse 23. “***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’ little daughter was dying. It was an emergency. He was desperate. He swallowed his pride as a synagogue leader for the sake of his dying daughter. In this world there is nothing more powerful than a father’s love. Around 15 years ago my daughter Grace was sick. She didn’t eat for a week and her high fever didn’t go down. While I took her to the hospital, I repented all my sins. I earnestly pleaded with God and prayed, “Lord, forgive all my sins and heal my daughter.” Verse 24 says that Jesus went with him. Jesus’ heart must have been moved by Jairus’ prayer and his genuine affection for his daughter.

While Jesus was on the way for Jairus’ house, an unexpected thing happened. Look at verses 24b-29. “***A large crowd followed and pressed around him. And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve 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. When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, because she thought, “If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed.” Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering***.” A woman who was suffering from bleeding touched the edge of Jesus’ cloak and was healed. Men can’t understand how much women suffer from their monthly period. This woman met many doctors, and she spent all her money, but her condition didn’t get better, only worse. This story was also written in Luke’s gospel, but Luke didn’t mention this because he was a doctor. (Lk 8:43) One day, she heard about Jesus, who healed many: he healed a man with leprosy, raised a paralytic, healed a man with a shriveled hand, and so on. She also heard that Jesus came to her town. She didn’t lose this chance. She came to Jesus and touched him by faith. Immediately, her bleeding stopped, and she was healed. Now, she wanted to run away secretly after getting healed. But her plan didn’t work.

Look at verse 30. “***At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, “Who touched my clothes***?” Jesus felt that his power left him when she touched his cloak. So, Jesus asked, “Who touched my clothes?” His disciples answered in verse 31. “***You see the people crowding against you, and yet you can ask, “Who touched me?”*** Jesus’ disciples thought Jesus’ question was nonsense because there were many among the crowd who touched Jesus. But Jesus was looking for the only one who touched him with a special purpose, which is by faith. There are many prayers delivered to Jesus, but only prayers offered by faith touch the heart of Jesus.

Jesus kept looking around to see who had touched him. **Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth.** (32-33) The woman wanted to run away after she got healed. She planned to hide herself in the crowd. But she couldn’t hide herself anymore because Jesus knew all things about her healing. Jesus knew who had touched him. So, she came to Jesus and told him the whole truth.

Why did Jesus intentionally expose her healing? Why didn’t he just let her go home secretly? Here, we see the deep compassion and mercy of the Messiah. If she got healed and ran away in secret, she might have suffered from guilt because it was an act of stealing. It was a hit and run. Even though her illness was healed, she would live with fear and guilt until she dies. Jesus wanted to give her true freedom with both physical and spiritual healing. Jesus wanted her to be forgiven in public and be freed from all her guilt and shame. This is a preview of the Jesus who was hung on the cross by loading all our guilt and sin on his body. As the Prophet Isaiah said, Jesus carried our diseases, and by his wounds we are healed. (Is 53:4-6)

What did Jesus say to her? Look at verse 34. “He said to her, “***Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering***.” In chapter 2, Jesus called the paralyzed man ‘son,’ “*Son, your sins are forgiven*.” (2:5) Today Jesus calls the woman ‘daughter.’ We are precious sons and daughters to the eyes of Jesus. Jesus blessed her faith by saying, “*Your faith has healed you*.” What is her faith? Let’s think about her faith which healed her. First, she had absolute faith in Jesus’ healing power. She had an edge-touching faith. She believed that she would get healed if she touched the edge of his cloak. Second, she had faith which overcome the crowd. Moses’ law forbade such a sick woman to appear in public because the law condemns her as unclean. But she came to Jesus by faith. She broke the barrier of the crowd and touched Jesus. She overcame the law and the crowd. Third, she had faith in Jesus’ mercy. When she was caught by Jesus, she told him the whole truth. She told everything believing that Jesus would forgive her. Jesus blessed her faith and sent her home in peace and joy.

Hebrews 11:6 says, “*Without faith it is impossible to please God. If anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and gives reward to those who earnestly seek him.*” Amen! The act of touching the edge of Jesus’ cloak is the act of seeking God’s mercy. It means that we admit that we don’t deserve God’s favor but seek his mercy for our request. In the book of 1 Samuel, Hannah, the mother of Samuel, prayed for a son not unlike like touching the edge of God’s cloak. She prayed every day in the temple until she was misunderstood as a drunken woman. Her persistent prayer touched the edge of the throne of God. Like her our persistent prayer will touch the edge of the throne of God. Among us there are urgent prayer topics in each person and family. We must come to Jesus and touch like this woman has. We must pray until the power of God may go out down from the throne of God. The Bible says that we don’t receive what we desire because we don’t ask and pray. Like this woman, let us overcome all obstacles and touch the throne of God by faith through our prayer until Jesus says, “Sons and daughters. Your faith has healed you. Your prayer has been heard. Your request has been answered. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering.” Amen!

Second, don’t be afraid; just believe! (35-36) While Jesus was still speaking, some people came from the house of Jairus and said, “**Your daughter is dead. Why bother the teacher anymore**?” (35) While the woman was telling the whole truth, Jairus’ heart sank. As for him, one minute was very important because her daughter was dying. Now what he was afraid of had come. His little daughter died. Fear, sorrow, and anger overwhelmed him. He must have hated the woman who delayed Jesus’ visit. He must feel sorry for Jesus who didn’t hurry up. What did Jesus say to Jairus? Look at verse 36. “***Overhearing what they said, Jesus told him, “Don’t be afraid; just believe***.” Jesus encouraged Jairus not to be afraid, but just to believe. Believe what? What did Jesus want Jairus to believe? First, Jesus wanted Jairus to believe that his daughter would live. Second, Jairus should believe that Jesus could heal his daughter. Third, Jairus should believe that all things might go well with him.

Like Jairus, we also often become fearful and sorrowful when our desperate situation seems to become worse. Unbelieving people around us always discourage us with unbelieving news and words. But there is no despair and failure in Jesus Christ. Jesus always encourages us with faithful words, “*Don’t be afraid; just believe.”* When we calculate all things based on our reason and experience, all things look impossible. But when we believe in Jesus and wait for his mercy, all things become possible. In all things God works for good for those who love him. Therefore, we should not give up but pray. Our prayer is often not denied but delayed.

Third, *Talitha koum*! (37-43) How did Jesus help Jairus? Look at verses 37-39. “***He did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James and John the brother of James. When they came to the home of the synagogue leader, Jesus saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly. He went in and said to them, “Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep***.” To the people of Jairus’ house, the death of the little girl was a great sorrow and tragedy. So, they wept and cried more loudly when they saw Jesus. But to Jesus she was simply sleeping. To the eyes of the Messiah, she was a sleeping beauty. So, Jesus rebuked the wailing and crying people. To our eyes our problem looks as big as a mountain. But to the eyes of God, they are as small as rock. Therefore, we don’t have to be afraid, but just believe in God.

People laughed at Jesus when he said that she was sleeping. After Jesus drove them out, he took the child’s father and mother and the disciples who were with him and went in where the child was. **He took her by the hand and said to her, “*Talitha koum*!” (which means “Little girl, I say to you, get up!**” Immediately the girl stood up and began to walk around (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished. He gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this and told them to give her something to eat. (41-43) Jesus raised the little girl from the dead. She was one of God’s creatures who was created by the word of the Creator God. In the beginning when God said, “Let there be light!” And there was light. In the same way when Jesus said, “***Talitha koum***”, she got up. In chapter 2 we learned that Jesus has authority to forgive sins. Jesus has authority to rebuke fever. Jesus has authority to calm the storm. Jesus has authority to drive out demons. Jesus has authority to raise the dead little girl. These reminds of the words of Jesus, “*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations..*.” (Mt 28:18,19)

We have to remember that Jesus came her as the healer and savior. He wants us to touch him and get healed. Whoever is sick physically, mentally, and spiritually come to Jesus and be healed. Yesterday there was a UBF Online Forum titled, “About marriage by faith.” One 2nd gen missionary shared her marriage life and said, “Jesus became the anchor for my marriage in the middle of storms of life.” She said that she had been tempted to separate from her husband several times but kept her marriage vow when she thought about Jesus. She remembered the grace of Jesus who died for all her sins and brought her life thus far. In conclusion, stop hearing all the discouraging words from Satan, but listen and memorize the words of Jesus today!