



Faith In the Lord Over Death

Key idea:

From the story of Jairus we learn how to sustain faith while we await the final day when Jesus' powerful word raises us from the dead.

Key text:

Mark 5:21-43

When Jesus had again crossed over by boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around him while he was by the lake. ²² Then one of the synagogue rulers, named Jairus, came there. Seeing Jesus, he fell at his feet ²³ and 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." ²⁴ So Jesus went with him. A large crowd followed and pressed around him. ²⁵ And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. ²⁶ 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. ²⁷ 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." ²⁹ Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering. ³⁰ At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?" ³¹ "You see the people crowding against you," his disciples answered, "and yet you can ask, 'Who touched me?'" ³² But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. ³³ Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. ³⁴ He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering." ³⁵ While Jesus was still speaking, some men came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue ruler. "Your daughter is dead," they said. "Why bother the teacher any more?" ³⁶ Ignoring what they said, Jesus told the synagogue ruler, "Don't be afraid; just believe." ³⁷ He did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James and John the brother of James. ³⁸ When they came to the home of the synagogue ruler, Jesus saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly. ³⁹ He went in and said to them, "Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep." ⁴⁰ But they laughed at him. After he put them all out, he took the child's father and mother and the disciples who were with him, and went in where the child was. ⁴¹ He took her by the hand and said to her, "Talitha koum!" (which means, "Little girl, I say to you, get up!"). ⁴² Immediately the girl stood up and walked around (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished. ⁴³ He gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this, and told them to give her something to eat.

Key points:

1. In response to Jairus' faith, Jesus immediately set out to heal his daughter, but delays, the discouraging report of the death of the daughter, and the derisive reaction of the professional mourners conspired to undermine Jairus' faith.
2. Despite all of the obstacles, Jesus spoke a word to the dead girl and she was immediately raised to life.
3. From Jairus, we learn several key ways faith is sustained:
 - a. Faith humbly looks to Jesus
 - b. Faith endures through delays, difficulties, and derision
 - c. Faith rejects fear and looks to Jesus
 - d. Faith is strengthened by hearing the voice of Jesus
4. Just as the little girl was raised from death by the simple word of Jesus, so will every person in their grave one day hear the voice of Jesus and be raised from the dead.

Questions for discussion/application:

1. What part of Sunday's teaching stood out most to you? Why?
2. If I were Jairus, how do I think I would have responded to the delay caused by the healing of the woman with the bleeding?
3. How do I normally respond when my plans and schedule are interrupted? Do I become impatient or consider the possibility that it might be a purposeful Divine interruption?
4. The servants (as well as the friends of Lazarus - see John 11:37) had faith that Jesus could heal a person at death's door, but not raise someone from the dead. What is it about death that makes it so distinct from other seemingly hopeless situations?
5. Why does Jesus contrast fear and faith so strongly? Why is fear the antithesis of faith?
6. What practices help me to reject fear and sustain faith in Jesus in my life?
7. Bret indicated faith must endure through "delays, difficulties, and derision". Which of these is most difficult for me? Why? How can I work to strengthen my faith in the face of this obstacle?

8. If faith is strengthened by hearing the voice of Jesus, what things help me to do this? What practices do I find most helpful to allow me to turn from my circumstances to hear from Jesus and strengthen my faith?
9. Who can I reach out to this week to share the Gospel or strengthen their faith?