

May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

²¹ 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.

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 kum!”** (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.

This is God’s Word for our meditation.

Dear Friends,

Faith is a fairly common word in our world. The dictionary describes faith as, “having a trust or confidence in someone or something.” People have faith in many things. They might have faith in their own abilities and intellect. They might have faith in a specific medication or treatment. They might have faith in a specific sports team.

In the portion of scripture we have before us, Jesus encourages Jairus in his faith by telling him, **“Don’t be Afraid; Just Believe!”** These words are important for us also. **“Don’t be Afraid; Just Believe!”** because, **“Jesus Hears our Cry for Help,”** and as he answers our cry, **“Don’t become Discouraged in the way He Answers,”** because, **“Your Faith will not be Disappointed.”**

I. As this portion of scripture begins we can see that Jesus is becoming quite popular. A large crowd was gathered around him because they had heard of his miracles and how he was able to heal people. They gathered around Jesus to see what he might do next and to hear his message. That’s when this man Jairus came to Jesus.

He came to Jesus as a last resort. Why didn’t he come sooner? Was he put off by the large crowd that always seemed to be about Jesus? Did he think that Jesus might not have time for him? Our text tells us that he was the ruler of the synagogue. No doubt, the rabbi’s were already jealous of Jesus’ popularity and speaking against him and his teaching. Perhaps Jairus was afraid to jeopardize his position as ruler of the synagogue by coming to Jesus. But he had no choice. His daughter was dying. There was no where else to turn. With tears in his eyes, he fell at Jesus’

feet and pleaded, **“My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live.”**

A lot of times we are like Jairus – turning to Jesus as our last resort or when our problems finally overwhelm us. Then the words of one of our hymns is so true, “Oh what peace we often forfeit, oh, what needless pain we bear, all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer!” (CW # 411 v. 1). Jesus always has time to hear our prayers, even the requests for something small and trivial. Jesus can help us in every need – including the big needs as well as the small ones. Jesus not only helps us with spiritual problems, such as forgiving our sins, but he also helps us with physical problems like sickness and job loss and loneliness.

Jesus cares. He cared about Jairus and he cares about us. Remember his response to Jairus’ request? **“Jesus went with him.”** Do you see the comfort for Jairus in these words? Jesus set aside his preaching and teaching to that large crowd that was gathered and literally told Jairus, “Okay, let’s go.” Jairus needed Jesus at this moment and Jesus gave him what he needed.

God also assures us, **“Never will I leave you; Never will I forsake you,”** (Hebrews 13:5). He knows our troubles. He sees our afflictions. He feels for us in times of sorrow. Why wait until we are overwhelmed by our troubles to ask for help? Come to Jesus when you are troubled. And Jesus will go with you, too.

It would be great to say, “Now all of Jairus’ troubles were over,” but we have to recognize that troubles help us grow in our faith – sometimes they are even like a test to help us put our trust in God. That’s the way it was with Jairus. Jesus was coming to help his little girl, but Jesus was going to use this incident to help Jairus grow in His faith.

Just when Jairus thought things were turning around, they got a little worse. That’s when Jesus encouraged Jairus with the words, **“Don’t be afraid. Just believe.”** Another way of saying, “Be Patient and Don’t Become Discouraged.”

You might have noticed that we skipped over a number of verses in our text. Those verses describe how Jesus stopped to heal a woman along the way. This probably took only five or ten minutes, but to Jairus, who was worried about his daughter, it probably seemed a lifetime. Then the messenger came with the news, **“Your daughter is dead. Why bother the teacher any more?”** Jairus hadn’t even been there for his daughter’s last breath. This news must have devastated him. And then the question, “Why bother. Why bother with anything anymore?”

Believing in God didn’t seem to make a difference. Being a ruler in the synagogue hadn’t helped. Even coming to Jesus didn’t save his daughter. Why bother? Have you ever felt that way? Why bother going to church? Why bother believing in God? What difference does it make? Remember the words of Jesus to Jairus, **“Don’t be afraid. Just believe.”** Jesus hadn’t done anything for Jairus yet, but he was telling him not to worry, everything was going to be okay.

So Jairus went with Jesus to his house. Somehow, he believed that if he went with Jesus, it would be alright. Isn’t that what faith is all about? **“Isn’t faith being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see?”** (Hebrews 11:1). There is a famous painting of the healing

of the blind man near Jericho. The blind man is begging Jesus to restore his sight. An interesting detail in the picture shows that the blind man had left his cane lying alongside the road. With that little detail, the artist portrayed the faith of the blind man. While he was still blind, he believed that the Lord would heal him and that he would not need his cane again.

Friends, when you have reached your darkest hour... when you absolutely cannot go on any farther... when it seems as if God has not been listening to your prayers... when your sorrow is so deep that it feels as if you will never smile again... when you think things cannot get any worse but they do... then listen to Jesus' words in our text. **“Don't be afraid. Just believe.”** Go with Jesus just a little while longer. Because if you do, **“Your Faith will not be Disappointed.”**

II. That's what Jairus did. He went with Jesus just a little bit longer and when they got to his house the professional mourners were already there making quite a commotion. When Jesus asked, **“Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep.”** Those professional mourners laughed at him. They had seen death many times and they knew the child was dead. They didn't believe anyone had the power to bring someone back from the dead, including Jesus. That's why Jesus put them out of the house before he answered the prayer of Jairus and his wife. With only three of his disciples and Jairus and his wife as witnesses, Jesus told this little girl, **“Talitha kum!”** Little girl, get up. Luke tells us, **“Her spirit returned,”** (Luke 8:55) and she immediately got up and began walking around. Her parents were ecstatic. Their little girl had been dead but now she was alive! Can you imagine how they felt. They were overwhelmed – overwhelmed with joy!

Jesus has conquered death for us too. He doesn't raise people from the dead here on this earth, but he does raise them to eternal life in heaven. Death for the Christian is just a “sleep.” It is something to look forward to, because death is our doorway into heaven. Those words of Jesus, **“Don't be afraid; Just believe!”** Apply to us also when it comes to death. A lot of times as a person grows older and feels the pain of aging they look forward to going home to be with their Savior in heaven. They look forward to entering that final “sleep” and being awakened to eternal life. The words of Jesus apply at that point of life to, **“Don't be afraid; Just believe!”** As we do that, we will not be disappointed, especially at the point of death.

Faith is an important part of our lives. Faith holds our Savior close to our hearts. Faith assures us that Jesus will hear and answer our prayers. Faith keeps us from being discouraged when the answer doesn't come in the way we expect it. When we trust in our Savior our faith is never disappointed.

May God continue to strengthen us in our faith through His Word each and every day of our lives. Amen.