



Facing the Impossible (Mark 5:21-43)

A Handout

In this passage, Mark records two stories of Jesus' miraculous healing of two individuals seemingly beyond help. Yet, these are more than just stories of healing but of the power of faith rightly placed in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Jesus' power and compassion call us to have resolute and singular faith in who He is, whatever we may face.

A) Summary of the Passage (Mk 5:21-43)

- ABA Structure: Divine Purpose and Orchestration, Interruption as Opportunity, Test of Faith
- Whom did Jesus heal?
 - ✦ The daughter of Jairus, a synagogue ruler (making him one of the religious leaders not hostile to Jesus) (v22)
 - ✦ A woman (v25)
- What physical maladies were these individuals healed of?
 - ✦ Jairus' daughter was "at the point of death" (v23) and later was said to have died (v35)
 - ✦ The woman "had a hemorrhage for twelve years" (v25), making her a social outcast due to ritual uncleanness (Lev 15:25-27)
- How were they healed of these physical conditions?
 - ✦ Jesus commanded Jairus' daughter, "Talitha kum!" meaning "Little girl, I say to you, get up!" (v41)
 - ✦ The woman "after hearing about Jesus, she came up in the crowd behind Him and touched His cloak" (v27)
- What other difficulties surrounded the plights of those involved?
 - ✦ Jairus: 1) distance to travel to his home, 2) the delay as Jesus sought the woman who was healed
 - ✦ The woman: 1) She "had endured much at the hands of many physicians, and had spent all that she had and was not helped at all, but rather had grown worse." (v26), 2) her particular disease made her a social outcast due to ritual uncleanness and unable to worship in the temple (sense of spiritual deadness) (Lev 15:25-27)
- What other factors surrounded the healing of those involved?
 - ✦ Jairus: Faith in Jesus: "lay *Your* hands on her, so that she will get well and live" (v24- emphasis added); "Do not be afraid any longer, only believe." (36)
 - ✦ The woman: Faith in Jesus: "If I just touch *His* garments, I will get well. Immediately the flow of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction." (v28-29- emphasis added); "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace and be healed of your affliction." (v34)

B) Healing of the Woman (Mk 5:25-34)

25 "A woman who had had a hemorrhage for twelve years, 26 and had endured much at the hands of many physicians, and had spent all that she had and was not helped at all, but rather had grown worse- 27 after hearing about Jesus, she came up in the crowd behind Him and touched His cloak. 28 For she thought, 'if I just touch His garments, I will get well.' 29 Immediately the flow of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction. 30 Immediately, Jesus, perceiving in Himself that the power proceeding from Him had gone forth, turned around in the crowd and said, 'Who touched My garments?' 31 And His disciples said to Him, 'You see the crowd pressing on You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?' ' 32 And He looked around to see the woman who had done this. 33 But the woman fearing and trembling, aware of what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth. 34 And He said to her, 'Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace and be healed of your affliction.' "

- Rightly Placed Faith
 - Faith has an object: what do we place it in?
 - Despite being out of resources, 12 years of doctors' visits, worsening condition, ritual uncleanness (Lev 15:25-27), and inability to worship in the temple, the woman comes to say that if she can touch Jesus' cloak, she will be healed (v28)

- God uses doctors, resources, etc. but only sometimes
- Temptation to come to rely on those things rather than God who works through them
- Subsequent temptation to despair when those things fail as God decides to work in a different way or to bring about a different, better outcome
- Woman's story is a beautiful testimony because her 12 years of undeniable extreme suffering brought her into relationship with Jesus and to forgiveness of sin (v34)

C) Healing of Jairus' Daughter (Mk 5:21-24; 35-43)

- Tests of faith:
 - ✦ The woman's healing takes place while Jesus is on His way to Jairus' home where his daughter is dying, a delay which tests Jairus' faith
 - ✦ Jairus' faith is further tested when someone came from his house to tell him that his daughter had died and not to "trouble the Teacher anymore" (v34)
 - ✦ Jesus encourages all present "Do not be afraid any longer, only believe." (v36) i.e. stop fearing in unbelief but to keep on believing (present tense), indicating that at the moment, Jairus indeed had kept his faith in Jesus
- The Healing
 - ✦ Jesus commands the child to get up, and "immediately the girl got up and began to walk" (v42)
 - ✦ Jesus allows only Peter, James, John (v37) (see also Mk 9:2; 14:33) and Jairus and his wife (v40)
 - ✦ Jesus ordered them that "no one should know about this." His ministry is not for the sake of miraculous, seemingly impossible healings but for the even more impossible forgiveness of sin (Mk 2:9-10) foreshadowed by woman's story

Conclusion

If Jesus forgives sin, something which is truly humanly impossible, shall we not believe in Him for other things that we face? Physical challenges and spiritual challenges can all be overcome by faith rightly placed in Jesus' Person- His love, mercy, and authority. Yet we must trust that God alone knows what true blessings are; we must trust His perfect understanding of us and comprehension of situations to answer us in the way that is best for us. His sacrificial love and forgiveness of sin both should encourage us to seek Him in all things and face all challenges in the same way that we need Him and seek Him for the forgiveness of our sins.

Additional Verses About Prayer (from level 1 discipleship course):

Ask and receive: John 16:24; Matt 7:7-8; John 15:7; 1 John 5:14

Wisdom: Jer 33:3

Abundance: Eph 3:20

Warnings: Phil 4:6-7 (Anxiety and Thanksgiving); James 4:3 (Motives); Psalm 66:18 (Cherishing Sin)

Discussion Questions

1. Why is it important that Jesus is the singular object of our faith?
2. How do you react when God does not seem to answer your prayer?
3. Share a testimony about a bold prayer request you or someone you know made and how it turned out, or share about a seemingly impossible challenge you are facing now.