

What difference does Jesus make? - all the difference in the world for those who put their trust in him.

1 THE HELPLESS RULER

(V21-24) And a great crowd followed him and thronged about him. We can only imagine what it was like for Jairus to feel helpless. He was a man of authority and people respected him. It means a great deal of trust and a recognition of religious sincerity. Jairus is also a father. His little daughter was now 12 years old. He was unable to do anything to make her better. In desperation, and against the general feeling in the Jewish religious community, Jairus comes to Jesus to ask for help. Nothing else had worked. It was -

A DESPERATE SITUATION

A HUMILIATING REQUEST

He is willing to go to ask Jesus to come and heal his daughter. V22 he fell at his feet V23 implored him earnestly. There is nothing casual or formal here. This is the cry of faith and it is from the heart. It is a recognition of helplessness in oneself but of hopefulness in Jesus.

At this point let me make the following points of application.

The situation in which Jairus finds himself is a reminder to each one of us that we are all frail. No matter what our achievements and no matter how much we own or even what people think of us, in the face of matters of life and death we are ultimately helpless. We are never able to be the masters of our own destiny. People try all sorts of things to have a guaranteed security- from hard work to religious superstition.

In the best situation or in the worst, we should always recognise that Jesus is Lord of our lives and Lord of life and death. He is the one to whom we should turn in desperate situations. That's true. But it would be so much better

if we turned to him in trust and dependence and love every day. Do you have any friends who only ring you up

when they are in trouble? How do you find that? And you can feel used. We should not just use Jesus like an ambulance -someone to call on when we are in trouble

Christians acknowledge their need for the help and guidance of Jesus every day and in every way.

2 AN UNWELCOME DELAY

(V25-34) You can guess at his frustration as they are hurrying along working their way through narrow busy streets, when Jesus stops, and asks who bumped into him.

AN UNCLEAN WOMAN (V26-28)

Her flow of blood made her ritually unclean. She could not go along to the temple to worship God there or mix with people in public easily. Again, she is a helpless person who puts her hope in Jesus. Unlike Jairus who was up there with the rich and famous she is at the bottom end of the pecking order in that society.

A BRUSH WITH FAME

Like Jairus she is willing to put her faith in Jesus. In hope she reaches out to Jesus. But the important thing is not her faith, but the object of her faith: Jesus. So she creeps up from behind, reaches out and touches his robes. And then we have Mark's most common word: "Immediately." (V29-34)

AN ACT OF FAITH (V30-34)

V30-34: The big picture here is that Jesus shows himself to be the one with the power. Jesus is the King in God's kingdom. He is the Christ, the anointed one, who comes in the name of the Lord to do the work of the Lord.

For this woman in particular it means good health and reintroduction into polite society, Restoration of relationships. The word for healed can also be translated "Saved" For all of us, she is a great example of faith.

Whatever our problems, whoever we are, we too should put our faith in Jesus. We see in this woman, instant healing. Our problems may find an instant solution in Jesus, he has the power. But at other times, it may be much more a matter of working through issues, taking time to grow, of using modern medicines as an act of faith in God. The important thing is that we see Jesus as the Lord, over all our circumstances. He is the one we trust in whether we have instant or slower resolutions of our problems.

The fact that this woman is healed instantly is a description of what Jesus did. It does not lead to a

prescription of what we should also do, or a promise that Jesus will always heal in this way, if only we have enough faith. Another idea that we need to have in mind is that Jesus is fighting with all the effects of Satan's influence throughout his ministry.

3 A WONDERFUL RELIEF

All this time, Jairus and his friends have been waiting. Waiting for news of his daughter. Waiting for Jesus to finish. It looks like bad news came first v35.

TOO LATE

Jesus was too late. (V35-43) We can understand that comment. Your daughter is beyond the power of Jesus.

Everyone has their limits, and this is beyond the range of Jesus' power. After all, he's only human.....

The people's comments are like the question of the scribes earlier in Mark's gospel: Who can forgive sins, but God alone? Jesus shows that he is God and he has the authority of God the Father, by telling that man to take up his mat and walk. (V36-40) All this is perfectly natural.

This was the way you would deal with grief those times - you would make a big show of your grief. There were even professional people you would bring in to do a god job of wailing and playing mournful music. They did it all the time.

You can hardly blame them for turning around to Jesus and laughing at him. They had seen a dead body many a time.

And nobody had ever brought one back to life. So Jesus puts them out - the unbelievers have no right to be witnesses of Jesus' power.(V40) But he put them all outside and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him and went in where the child was.

A COMMANDING VOICE

(V41) We see both the gentleness of Jesus and the authority of Jesus. He has the power to raise the dead. We see it too in the raising of Lazarus and the widow of Nain's son. He has the power over life and death. By his word - as he had created the world so he raises the dead.

AN AMAZING RESULT (V42 -43)

Immediately. There is no hesitation. No sleight of hand.

THE MESSIANIC SECRET (V43)

Jesus tells them to keep it to themselves. Why is it so?

In this situation Jesus is in Jewish territory. That means that people had their minds made up before Jesus came onto the scene that the Messiah would take over and get rid of the Romans. Yes he is the Messiah, but no, he is not going to lead an army to overthrow the Roman Empire. He is a spiritual leader. He fights with sin and death, and he will win. But in his own time and on his own terms. Jesus is also a reluctant healer. He does not want people just to follow him for physical healing. He comes to offer spiritual healing, which is even more important.

What is so sad if the fact that people rejected Jesus

They did it then and they do it today.

We read in Mark 6:1-6 we read about Jesus going to own home town. The people there took offence at him.

And he marvelled at their unbelief.

What will it be for us? Faith in Jesus? Of unbelief?

4 JESUS CLEANSSES FOREVER

Put together, these two stories in Mark 5 help us to understand that Jesus can restore people. He comes to deal with sin and remove all uncleanness. The healing miracles provide a glimpse of the cleansing that we all need. Cleansing from sin. This is what the bible calls forgiveness.

By his death and resurrection Jesus makes this forgiveness available to everyone. And the story of the girl who is brought back to life is a glimpse of the power that Jesus has to grant to all who believe in him, eternal life. Life after death that never ends. If we do have that for ourselves, Praise the Lord. But let us also be concerned for others to know the saving love of God in the person of Jesus Christ.