

Perfecting an Imperfect Faith, Part 1

Luke 8:40-48

We are coming into a section here at the end of Luke 8, if you'd like to turn in your Bibles there. The section that really does wrap up the chapter, verses 40 to 56. So we're going to look at the text here starting in verse 40 of Luke chapter 8, follow along as I read.

"Now when Jesus returned, the crowd welcomed him, for they were all waiting for him." There was a, "there came a man named Jairus, who was a ruler of the synagogue. And falling at Jesus' feet, he implored him to come to his house, for he had an only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she was dying. As Jesus went, the people pressed around him.

"And there was a woman who had," had," had a discharge of blood for twelve years, and though she had spent all her living on physicians, she could not be healed by anyone. She came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment, and immediately her discharge of blood ceased. And Jesus said, 'Who was it that touched me?' When all denied it, Peter said,

'Master, the crowds surround you and are pressing in on you!' But Jesus said, 'Someone touched me, for I perceive that power has gone out from me.' When the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling, and falling down before him declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed. And he said to her, 'Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace.'

"While he was still speaking, someone from the ruler's house came and said, 'Your daughter is dead; do not trouble the Teacher anymore.' But Jesus on hearing this answered him, 'Do not fear; only believe, she will be well.' When he came to the house, he allowed no one to enter with him, except Peter and John and James, and the father and mother of the child. And all were weeping and mourning for her, but he said, 'Do not weep, for she is not dead but sleeping.' They laughed at him, knowing," that he, "that she was dead. But taking her by the hand he called, saying, 'Child, arise.' And her spirit returned, and she got up at once. And he directed that something should be given her to eat. Her parents were amazed, and he charged them to tell no one what had happened."

Two miracles recorded here. And as you can see, the one is embedded into the other. They're really one single narrative as

we read. You may have noticed in verse 42 and then verse 43 the mention for both the woman and the daughter, twelve years. That's intentional. The woman suffered with her condition the entire time that this little girl had been alive. Both situations are desperate situations, and yet they're contrasting one another a bit. The woman's, the older woman's life has been ebbing away slowly for twelve years with a chronic condition. The life of the little girl, she's facing an aggressive illness that is actually killing her very, very quickly. Both conditions are desperate. Both conditions actually contribute to and lead to ritual impurity. The woman, she's afflicted with a ceremonially defiling blood flow. When the little girl dies, this puts her family in the position of being in the presence and the defilement by contact with a corpse. So there's the theme of ritual defilement, uncleanness.

Then according to verse 42, 48, 49, both miracles, you can see the word repeated, daughters. "Daughter, your faith has made you well," and "Jairus' daughter," both involved the healing of daughters. Both petitioners come to Jesus Christ as believers. We're introduced to them as believers and bringing them together, at this moment, at this time, and the Spirit of God has it written down for our instruction.

There's one more vital connection and I want you to see between these two miracles before we get into our outline. Both situations here, both sets of circumstances, notice they're causes for fear, for worry, for anxiety. Which makes these two situations the perfect testing ground for the faith of these believers. God sometimes brings tests into our life that expose the reality of our faith, that purify our faith. That's what's happening here.

In the case of this suffering woman, this is a, a chronic weakness that she has endured for twelve years. She comes into the account it would appear as a single woman. She's isolated by the condition she's in by the Levitical law. She wants to remain anonymous. She wants to remain in that condition because she's been ostracized for a long time. She's feeling her physical energy depleted. Her life is literally draining out from her. Did she struggle with worry? Think she struggled with fear that she would never be healed? Did she wonder about dying alone?

On the other hand, in the case of Jairus and his wife. Imagine what it was like for them as parents to face the loss of their beloved daughter. And that in the prime of her life at twelve years of age. The doctors have no answers. The illness is so aggressive and fast acting that they had to, this had to hit

them like a ton of bricks. They're feeling numb. They're feeling helpless, afraid. The gift to them that God gave of a daughter. She's an only child. It meant the potential for profound and unrelenting pain should she die without remedy. This had to be a terrifying moment for these parents.

All these believers here, all of them experiencing suffering, going through trial, facing a crisis of believing. To them in this text, Jesus conveys hope, by message of salvation by faith. But here, the fears of these believers, going through difficult trial, going through what the world goes through, going through what unbelievers fear and face every day as well. Their fears are overcome by faith in God. Their fears are overcome by faith in God's Christ.

We're going to see in both these instances of need, a very human faith. It's a faith though, that as we're going to see, is an imperfect faith. It's an immature faith, it's untested. But listen, the presence of genuine saving faith, if it's there, no matter how small, even if it's the size of a mustard seed. No matter how frail the faith, no matter how fledging, and new and incipient the faith, and no matter how weak the faith, the presence of genuine faith creates a conduit from God to the suffering believer. A conduit through which the omnipotent,

powerful grace of God rushes through to save to the uttermost, to drive fears away, to give hope in crisis.

In fact, when faith is present, all things are possible for him who believes. Jesus showers mercy, and power, and grace upon his people who trust him. Even when our faith is small, even when it's weak, even when it's imperfect. Jesus, he has mercy for an unsettled faith. He has mercy for an unsettled faith and we can see with Jairus, representing his wife and his household, his family, he is unsettled in his faith. He's rocked, he's rocked by this situation. But we start out with a little context that Luke, Luke gives us here in verse 40, says, "When Jesus returned, the crowds welcomed him, and they were all waiting for him."

And stop there for a second. In contrast to the fearful hardhearted people of the, the Gerasene region, like I said. The crowds of Capernaum, they provide Jesus with a welcome reception. Jesus is a figure who brought quite a bit of attention to Capernaum. With all his miraculous healings, with his controversial teaching, no doubt there that some who were in the crowd there who welcomed him back because his notoriety drew crowds of people. Crowds of people are good for business, so they're probably just entrepreneuring types of people who are

glad to see him back. Certainly, many others though, who are genuinely concerned about their fellow countrymen, they're concerned about their survival, hoping they've survived the night, hoping they got off to shore.

So when they see them coming back, as this boat carrying Jesus and his disciples becomes visible out on the horizon, then nears the shore, the people notice, they know who it is. They gather around, they wait for him to arrive. The verb there actually, that they're waiting for them, involved a bit of tension. There's a bit of eager expectation, hopeful anticipation, kind of woven into that verb. There's one man in the crowd who is particularly keen to see Jesus's return. He's a believer. He is a genuine worshiper and he's got a need and he's the one in this crowd who's got the need that is so significant and acute, he's screaming for Jesus' attention. Look at verse 41, "There came a man named Jairus, who's a ruler of the synagogue. And falling at Jesus' feet, he implored him to come to his house, for he had an only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she was dying."

So Jairus here, he's a respected elder in the community. He's elevated. He's admired. You understand that those people don't escape trials. Doesn't matter how it looks on the outside,

doesn't matter how perfect everything may look on the outside, how much wealth a person has, trials hit us all. The curse affects us all. He's a synagogue ruler. This tells us a lot about his status in the community. He's the lead elder in the synagogue, the, the place of corporate worship for Israel.

This means Jairus, he's a man of influence who's in charge of influence. He makes sure that his community is rightly influenced; hears from the right people, hears the right word, that they're rightly and properly instructed. He wants to make sure that God's word is not ignored in his community, not subverted, not set aside. This tells us something then about Jairus' character, or at least his reputation, the reputation for his character. He's a man who is trusted in this community. He's a man who's widely regarded and he's highly respected. Somewhere along the way Jairus had become a disciple. He'd become a believer in Jesus Christ. He's probably been exposed to Jesus' ministry through his role as the rulers of the synagogue. He had learned through Jesus' teaching. He'd witnessed Jesus' power. He did, it wasn't just hearsay for him, he was there.

Mindful of how Jesus healed the Centurion servant, that had to encourage Jairus, didn't it? To come forward in his time of need. We're not told here in the text exactly what ailed this



girl. Whatever it was, it's an illness that seems to have struck suddenly. Perhaps it started out as something that seemed to have been benign. Not something to raise the parents' attention. Oh, she'll get over it. Couple of aspirins, little cold medicine, Nyquil, should be good. Then it progressed rapidly. Became aggressive. Became life threatening.

And now that death seems imminent, Jairus is understandably anxious, scared for his daughter. Jairus had trusted in Christ, as we said. He'd witnessed Christ's power, heard Christ's teaching. He believed in Jesus. But now that this death is visiting his home, threatening his family, killing his little girl, the cold edge of reality in a fallen world has become personal to him. It's a test of his faith. Jairus and his wife, they're facing a fear that every parent can identify with. The premature loss of a child. Some parents have actually gone through the pain of losing that child. Some parents still live with the pain of losing a child before their time.

And like every father, Jairus' heart is tied to his, his little girl's safety, her well-being. Jairus is her protector. He's the one who's provided for her all of her life. He's always been a man who's been capable, able to take care of her and her needs, able to protect her when she's afraid. The situation now

is beyond his ability to handle. He feels helpless here. He feels weak. It goes beyond him. He doesn't like that one bit. He's powerless though. He's, he's got to feel like he's failing her in some way. And added to the fear and the helplessness here, this little girl, this little girl is their only child.

It's the word here, *monogenes*, just like the one and only son of the widow of Nain, whom Jesus raised from the dead. Listen, accounts like this one help us to think about Jesus, who is the *monogenes* of the Father in heaven. Helps us to reflect upon what our salvation cost. That God would love the world by giving his one and only son to save his people from their sins. Here's their one and only daughter, and they're grieving. They're fearful. They're scared. She's twelve years old, so this is just now a time where she's entering in this time in life where she is maturing. She is turning into, before their eyes,

I've watched this transformation, it taking place. I grieve the loss of the little girl who used to run around and get into things and color on the walls and cut her own hair. And you watch the girl now becoming a young woman. So you grieve the loss of the little tiny girl and, but you rejoice in what this is meaning, you know, as she grows up, becomes her own woman. You also start praying very, very earnestly and fervently about

the young man who might be her husband. It's a joyful time in these parents' life. Full of anticipation, full of joy, thinking about her marriage, thinking about her starting a family. Her parents are thinking about grandparenthood. Thinking about helping their daughter raise her children, watching her family grow up. This is Jairus.

Jairus, he comes to Jesus, and in this poignant moment, his insides are churning from anxiety. He's been hit with something that he cannot handle at all. His mind is preoccupied with his daughter's rapidly deteriorating health. And yet, notice that he in this moment, he still has the good sense, the worshiping heart, to fall down at Jesus' feet. We've been prepared for what that means by Luke, who tells us over and over those who fall down at Jesus feet, they are in the believing category. They are the worshipers.

He's fallen down at Jesus' feet means he's, even though in his high elevated status in the community, he's not proud. He's not considering the people around him and what they might think. He's not think, conscious cognizant of his place in the community. The need to maintain decorum. Have a proper comportment in front of others and how he handles the stress. No, this man is a believer. And in his time of need, he knows

exactly where to go, and he knows exactly what to do. He seeks Jesus. That's what believers do. He implores Jesus in an attitude of humility and in faith and even if it's a troubled faith, an anxious faith, he comes in faith.

His heart is unsettled here with fear. But Jairus implores Jesus in faith, come to my house. Come to my house. I like the way here Luke records this. How Jesus responds to the request. You don't hear him say anything. He just does. He doesn't respond with words. He responds with action. You want to know what people believe? Don't just listen to what they say. Watch what they do. Watch how they live. The need of a believer is all that it takes to engage Jesus' concern, to mobilize Jesus' mercy.

Jesus is here the great physician. When he sees the plight of human sickness, when he sees suffering, human suffering under the effects of the curse, he feels compassion. It's his nature by, because he's God. He, he shows compassion and care and mercy. And I, I love this as I think about Luke as the author here. Luke is a fellow physician, isn't he? He's the beloved physician Paul called him. Luke writing this, he loves this because he understands exactly what's driving Jesus here. How this suffering mobilized his compassion, how it put his mercy

into immediate action. That's how doctors act. Good doctors act. They're not in it for the money. They're in it because they love people. They're concerned for them. This had to have resonated deeply with doctor Luke.

So Jairus here, he's seeking Jesus in the midst of all of his fears, falling before Jesus. Notice how this sets Jairus in stark contrast to the way the Gerasenes treated Jesus. In the face of all evidence to the contrary, the Gerasenes treated Jesus like he's the threat. And they asked him to leave. Their reaction, verse 37, "Please leave," and in contrast, we see Jairus' invitation, "Please come." Listen, believers draw near to God. They draw near to Jesus Christ. Believers draw nearer to God's people. They draw near to the church. That's what Jairus does here.

So Jairus, or I should say, Jesus, rather, he leaves the Gerasenes and he's willing now to go with Jairus. At this point, if Jesus is coming with him, Jairus has got to think, it's all good, right? His fears about his daughter's well-being have to be immediately erased because Jesus, the one with all power and authority to drive all things that, he is willing to come. Good to go. He should have been confident here; Cheerful, joyful, excited to watch this power in action on behalf of his daughter.

His daughter's salvation in a town like Capernaum, well, it's going to be extended time because he's crushed through the streets with the crowd, but minutes away. Maybe tens of minutes away, but close.

The Almighty Christ has the power, and the will, and the authority, and the desire to heal; the healing is assured. Now, whether Jairus actually felt the way I've described, or whether he still struggled with some element of anxiety and fear, we don't know. We're not told here. What we do know is that his faith here is going to be tested further by an interruption along the way to his house, by a slowing down of the procession.

He's got to be wondering as time goes by, as Jesus is looking around for who was it that touched me? He's thinking, you know, we got time for this, Jesus? We got time? I mean my daughter; she's as I told you. Is he going to arrive in time to save his daughter?