

RTS Women's Study: The Gospel of Mark

#11: Mark 5:21-43: The Return of the King: To Rule Over Disease and Death

Intro: Fear Factor

"Do not fear, only believe." –Jesus (Mark 5:36)

I. By Faith, Seek Him Earnestly (v.21-24)

A. Who is Seeking

- "one of the rulers of the synagogue" (v.22)—these were powerful and wealthy men who oversaw the central place of worship for Jewish people outside of Jerusalem
- Why should we be surprised that this individual is seeking out Jesus?

B. How He's Seeking

- Fought through the thick crowds (v.21)
- "Fell at his feet and implored him earnestly" (v.22-23)
- How much energy and passion do you put into seeking out Jesus?

C. Why He's Seeking

- "My little daughter is at the point of death" (v.23)
- No amount of wealth or earthly power can deal with the enemy of death
- Key point: God uses severe trials to draw us to himself
 - "We can ignore even pleasure. But pain insists upon being attended to. God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains: it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world." C.S. Lewis

II. By Faith, Wait for Him Patiently (v.25-34)

A. The Woman had suffered twelve years (v.25-26)

- "discharge of blood"
 - This is likely a reference to some sort of chronic menstrual bleeding
 - This would have made the woman ceremonially "unclean" so she was unable to go to the Temple for worship
- "suffered under many physicians" (v.26)
 - Medical care in the ancient world was very unreliable; physicians often caused more harm to the patient. She was "no better but rather grew worse"
 - On top of this they are very expensive. She "had spent all that she had" (v.26).
- The story of this woman is tragic. You can feel her desperation
 - Lesson: sometimes God makes us wait in very difficult circumstances
 - What are some other examples in the Bible where God's people had to wait?

B. By faith, her waiting eventually ended (v.27-34)

- She was healed by merely touching his garments
 - While many other people “touched” Jesus, she reached out to him in *faith*
 - “Your *faith* has made you well” (v.34)
- Key Lessons:
 - Being “near” or “around” Jesus is not enough. You must believe!
 - You serve a compassionate God who sees your suffering. Ever feel like God is reluctant to care for you? The fact that this woman “came in fear and trembling” suggests that maybe she didn’t think Jesus would be pleased with what happened.
- Side question: Why did Jesus not “know” who touched him?
 - Since Jesus is God in the flesh, sometimes we can be confused when it seems he doesn’t know something. Isn’t he omniscient?
 - We need to remember that as both God and man, Jesus has *two natures*: a divine nature (which is omniscient), and a human nature (which has ordinary human limitations)
 - In the Gospels, sometimes Jesus speaks out of his human nature, and therefore can not “know” certain things.

III. By Faith, Hope in Him Unconditionally (v.35-43)

A. The Synagogue Ruler’s Hope Had Limits

- When his daughter was merely sick, Jairus seemed hopeful
- But, after the daughter had died, people had given up hope (v.35)
- Later, the people in Jairus’ house even “laughed” at Jesus (v.40)
- Do you ever find yourself believing God could do certain things but maybe not other things?

B. Jesus performs one of his greatest miracles

- In the same room together, Jesus and Death met face to face! (40)
- With merely a spoken word, Jesus raised the girl from the dead
- This miracle anticipates what’s to come:
 - It foreshadows Christ’s own resurrection when he would “arise” from the grave
 - It foreshadows our own future resurrection when we will “arise” from the grave

Discussion Groups

1. Is there something you’ve been waiting a long time for God to do in your life? Can you share that with the group, and how this passage may encourage you today?
2. Do you ever find that you’ve placed “limits” on what you think God can do, so that you ask him for some things, but not for others? Again, share this with the group if you are willing, and how this passage can help you trust him more.
3. Why do you think we often don’t seek God with the urgency and zeal of the synagogue ruler? What can we do in our lives to change that?