

Faith(ful) Journey

Matt. 9:18-26. Mark 5:21-43. Luke 8:40-56.

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Introduction –

The whole picture: Jesus' power over > Creation. Demons. Ceremonial Diseases. Death.

Greek: Both words “faith” and “faithful” come from the same root (“pistis”).

The Faith(ful) Journey: We put **our faith in Jesus**; and *above all*, we see how **Jesus is faithful** in protecting/directing our faith in him.

Key Word: Journey

1. Journey: Request/ Acceptance.

A- Faith Requests.

B- The Faithful One accepts.

2. Journey: Adversity/ Assurance.

A- Faith suffers adversity.

B- The Faithful One gives assurance.

3. Faith Journey: Vulnerability/ Protection.

A- Faith faces vulnerability.

B- The Faithful One protects Jairus' faith.

Conclusion –

A- Family.

B- Death defeated.

Introduction:

Before I jump into Jairus' journey, let me show you the whole picture. Matthew, Mark, and Luke describe the 4 events we have seen these past 4 Sundays: Jesus' authority over (i) creation, (ii) demons, (iii) unclean diseases, (iv) death. The whole picture is simple: Jesus is God.

Today's sermon portrays the word faith in two ways: In the New Testament, both "faith" and "faithful" have the same root, *pistis* (Greek).

Thus, my goal is to walk you through this journey of faith, wearing Jairus' shoes – he is a man of great faith. At the same time, I want you to look at Jesus' faithfulness. My goal is that you see that Jesus is the main character of Jairus' story. He calls Jairus to put his faith in him; and Jesus directs and protects his faith.

The Journey: Request/ Acceptance.

Luke 8:40-42. Now when Jesus returned, a crowd welcomed him, for they were all expecting him. Then a man named Jairus, a synagogue leader, came and fell at Jesus' feet, pleading with him to come to his house because his only daughter, a girl of about twelve, was dying. As Jesus was on his way...

The journey starts with Jairus' request: He has a need that no one else can solve; only Jesus is able to. Luke makes clear that the 12-year-old girl is Jairus' *only* daughter and that her sickness is in the final stages. I can only imagine his desperation when he approaches Jesus.

According to Matthew, Jairus knelt before Jesus. In the Jewish culture, glory is due to God alone. Jairus is worshipping Christ the King because he knows Jesus is God. His worship to Jesus becomes more meaningful due to his religious position: He is the Synagogue leader. He knows Theology, he knows Scriptures, he is in a position where his actions model the entire community.

Jesus, merciful as he is, accepts his request. Jesus "leaves" the multitudes for the sake of Jairus' daughter. That reminds me of the famous parable of the lost sheep. "The good Shepherd leaves the 99 for the sake of the one lost sheep, and once he finds the sheep, he rejoices."

Application: As you think of Jairus' journey, I invite you to think about your own journey; because we all approach Jesus in the same way: (i) Sin/death is coming our way. (ii) We bow down before the King of Kings, and we ask for salvation. (iii) The King accepts our request. (iv) And, we walk with him.

Romans 10:13. *“Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.”*

The Journey: Adversity/ Assurance.

Luke 8:49,50. *“While Jesus was still speaking, someone came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader. “Your daughter is dead,” he said. “Don’t bother the teacher anymore.” Hearing this, Jesus said to Jairus, “Don’t be afraid; just believe, and she will be healed.””*

Jairus now is put to the test. You remember what has happened in between Luke 8 verses 42 to 49, 50 because we talked about it last Sunday – the hemorrhagic lady got healed. As she was rejoicing, Jairus’ faith was filled with hope; he was thinking “Jesus healed the lady, he can heal my daughter as well...” On that very moment, his faith was challenged: (i) First, the situation got worse, because his daughter is dead now. (ii) Secondly, the situation has changed, because his daughter does not need healing anymore, she now needs resurrection. Will his faith pivot from “I believe in the healing” to “I believe in the resurrection”? (iii) Thirdly, he received negative directions. *“Don’t bother the teacher,”* they said.

A side note: The messengers were supposed only to give the news of what happened to his daughter. They were not supposed to give Jairus negative directions such as *“don’t bother the teacher.”* The decision of what to do with the bad news rested solely upon Jairus, not on the messengers.

In that very moment, which probably Jairus’ faith would faint, Jesus intervened. The Master knows our weaknesses, he knows we need to hear his voice, he knows the sheep need to hear the Shepherd’s voice. He says, *“don’t be afraid, just believe.”*

You remember that 3 sermons ago I preached about the storm in the Sea of Galilee, how the storm hit the disciples with a lot of information, and they all got scared. They had just one small phrase from Jesus to hold onto, against a load of negative information coming from the storm. It was in that occasion that Jesus said the same thing he said to Jairus right now.

What is trust? Trust means I believe in Jesus, even though I don’t have all the information. All that I need is *his word*. Jairus was hit with tough information, death; Jesus gives him a small piece of information, don’t worry. Now he needs to trust, and he does indeed.

Application: Let us think about our own journey with Jesus. When we first believed in him, we did not know how much our faith would face challenges. We think, very naively, that everything will be easy; but that's not the case. Our faith gets challenged, and we should keep on believing in him still.

As we look to Jesus, we are encouraged to know he fills us with faith on the right time. If we open our eyes, we will see that Jesus is making us grow. Jairus began his journey believing Jesus could heal; now, he is about to know that Jesus can raise his daughter from the dead.

Every challenge we face is an opportunity to know him in a deeper level!

The Journey: Vulnerability/ Protection.

Luke 8:51-53. *"When he arrived at the house of Jairus, he did not let anyone go in with him except Peter, John and James, and the child's father and mother. Meanwhile, all the people were wailing and mourning for her. "Stop wailing," Jesus said. "She is not dead but asleep." They laughed at him, knowing that she was dead."*

Jairus faces now a vulnerable moment: He is in his own house and hit by this painful scene of his daughter's death. The image is dreadful! Moreover, (i) the negative people have journeyed down home with him. (ii) Everyone in the house is mourning. (iii) The climax of Jairus' vulnerability happens when Jesus declares this enigmatic phrase: *"The girl is not dead; she is just asleep;"* which was taken as a joke by the people (perhaps, it was taken even as a disrespectful statement by the ones who didn't know who Jesus was).

Jairus is at the intersection of two opposite worlds: On one side, he is with Jesus and the Believers Crew. On the other side, the people in his house do not know what Jesus can do, and they laugh at Jesus.

When Jairus' faith faces such a great challenge, Jesus protects him. He selected the people who would be inside the house, and he requests the unbelieving people to stay out of the house. Only three of his disciples were coming in (Peter, John and James), and only the immediate family were supposed to be present to see the miracle happening. Jesus creates an intimate/hopeful moment as he excluded all skepticism out of the house. Only the right people remained inside the house.

The striking scene Jairus saw upon arriving at home, is now replaced by hope and assurance. Jesus changed the environment, he protected Jairus.

Application: I see here the local Church. The world does not believe in Jesus, they laugh at him. When we are plugged into the local Church, our faith is protected. I am, personally, thankful for the local Church, for my leaders, for my brothers, and for my sisters in Christ.

Conclusion –

Luke 8:54-56. *“But he took her by the hand and said, “My child, get up!” Her spirit returned, and at once she stood up. Then Jesus told them to give her something to eat. Her parents were astonished, but he ordered them not to tell anyone what had happened.”*

Jesus raised the girl to life! And he told the eyewitnesses not to spread the news. Eventually, the community would know about it. No one can hide the fact that the girl was declared dead and now she is walking on the streets. (Matthew records the fact that the news of her resurrection spread out, for God’s glory)

Jesus’ cares for the family should be noticed here: First, he protected Jairus’ faith by requesting that just the disciples and the family were to be present for the miracle. Secondly, as soon as the girl was resurrected, he provided time for a joyful family meal. If we go back 2 sermons ago, to the story of the Gadarene men, we will see Jesus restoring them to their family/people; last sermon, we saw Jesus restoring the hemorrhagic lady to society and her family. Jesus cares for the family. It is God’s project; it is not society’s project!

The resurrection - Dr. Luke explains with authority that physical death means the separation between spirit and body (*“her spirit returned, and at once she got up”*). Mark says, *“He took her by the hand and said to her, “Talitha kum!” (which means “Little girl, I say to you, get up!”). Immediately the girl stood up and began to walk around.”*

It amazes me that the doctor is the one who mentions the spiritual aspect of death, not Mark. In our day and age, doctors are supposed to be “skeptical.” That which can’t be seen or tested, can’t be proven. However, Dr. Luke, with such an authority, from a doctor’s perspective, is telling everyone that there is more to life than just the physical matter. There is more to life than just here and now.

Death is not the end; death is just the beginning of eternity – and it does matter if you believe in Jesus or not. For those who believe in Jesus, there is the assurance of resurrection with God. For those who do not believe in Jesus, who “laugh” at him, there is an eternity far from God.

Application: Jairus’ journey is not his own alone, it is also our journey. We conclude this sermon thinking about the end of our own as well. Our journey with the Lord began with a request: “Save me, oh

Christ;” and it developed to a beautiful journey where our faith is challenged, but it also grows. Finally, it ends with the assurance that our worst enemy, death itself, won’t defeat us. Jesus will raise us to eternal life!

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Key ideas/interesting facts:

- 1- Read Matthew and you will see he does not emphasize Jairus’ nor the lady’s faith. He emphasizes Jesus’ sovereignty/power only. Mark and Luke emphasize Jairus’ and the lady’s faith.
 - a. Two unhealthy readings of this story: (i) God does everything and they don’t do anything; or (ii) Jairus and the lady did everything because they have great faith.
 - b. Healthy reading of this story: God is faithful, and our faith is a by-product of his grace and mercy.
- 2- The matter and the spiritual walk together. The body without the spirit is dead (James 2:26). Unfortunately, affected by Greek Philosophy, we tend to separate the “spiritual” from the “natural”; the “church things” from the “world things...” We should avoid that.
- 3- Genesis 2:7 *“Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.”* Imagine this: When God breathed (spiritual), blood/heart/brain began to work (physical). Imagine this: When the heart/brain/blood stops (physical), the spirit leaves the body (spiritual).