

A Lesson on Unbelief

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[0:00] This morning we're going to learn about unbelief, which is something Pastor talked a little bit about this morning in his message. If I could have five volunteers this morning to read a passage of scripture. Darren, Psalm 34:15.

Jared, Psalm 27:14. Joe, Psalm 119, 51. James, Hebrews 11, 6. Sorry, I'm out of Psalms. Anybody want to do one more? Matt, Joshua 23, 14. So you have to have your thumb on that one for a long time. It's all the way at the end. What's that? 34:15. Okay? All right. So Mark chapter 5. Look at verse number 22, please.

And behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name. And when he saw him, he fell at his feet. And besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death. I pray thee, come and lay hands on her, that she may be healed, and she shall live. Verse 24, And Jesus went with him, and much people followed him and thronged him. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we're just grateful for our day. Lord, thank you for bringing us all together in this place. Just thank you, Father, for all that are here. Lord, I just pray that this message this morning would speak to us, Lord.

[1:28] That we would have a good time worshiping you, and pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. So our last couple of lessons, we saw Peter, and as he learned about the Lord, was at the Sea of Galilee.

Today, we're in Capernaum. And here, we'll learn, along with a man named Jairus, a lesson in unbelief. So John Wooden once said, Repetition is the key to learning. And we see this in Peter's life, don't we?

I mean, I see it in my life, I guess, too, right? In our last lesson, we watched as Peter learned that trust and obedience are foundational to becoming the disciple of Jesus. But Peter had not mastered the concept from just one experience.

In fact, we see interwoven through every succeeding lesson of this Sunday school lesson, the importance of trusting and obeying. So good teachers understand, just as Jesus did, that continual reinforcement of learning is vital.

I mean, how many times have you told your kids to clean their room, pick up their socks? It's like, right? Because we have to learn, we have to be told over and over. I like to say that maybe we should all be grateful that the Lord is patient with all of us in this area, right?

[2:43] But when it comes to trusting the Lord, we more easily doubt than we trust, don't we? I do. I more easily doubt than trust when it comes to that area. Why do you suppose that is?

I think, what's that? Why is it easier? I think it's because the doubt gives us a false feeling of control. That's what I think.

I'm in charge. And not only that, I want to be in charge, right? I want to be able to take the credit for the way things turn out. So if I'm in charge then, and it turns out good, I get the credit.

Okay, I'll be alone on that one. But that's just the way I am in my life. I want the credit, and so I doubt. And I want to be in charge, and so I doubt. With God's help, however, we can leave doubting behind and walk forward in faith.

Three times in the New Testament, the Bible tells us, the just shall live by faith. So since this is a Bible teaching class, we're now going to have a pop quiz. Who can tell me one of the three times?

[3:47] One of the three times, the New Testament says, the just shall live by faith. Three verses. Oh, look, we have prizes. Pop quiz. Romans what?

Who said that? Oh, look at that. Hey, Romans 1:17. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith, as it is written, the just shall live by faith.

There's two left. David. What's that? Hebrews 10:35. 35? 38.

Best ones for last. Nice job. That's the one I would have picked for sure. Well, I certainly need the steps, that's for sure. Okay, Galatians 3.11. But that no man is justified by the law on the side of God, it is evident for the just shall live by faith.

So as we continue in our discipleship education, we will see Peter learn once again that nothing is too hard for God through the sad situation. Look at verse number 22.

[4:50] Behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name. And when he saw him, he fell at his feet, and besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death. I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed, and she shall live.

So when sin entered the world, Genesis 3, paradise was departed. And out of that, we now have to learn how to deal with death.

And it's one of the hardest struggles that we have in life, learning to deal with the death, especially of a loved one, and especially of a child. In this lesson, we'll meet a man named Jairus who is facing the terminal illness of his child.

And undoubtedly, he would have done what any parent would have done. Spared no expense to try to heal this child. Called every doctor. Done everything he could think of.

However, nothing seemed to have worked for him. And barring a miracle, he knew that his daughter was going to die. I think this father was definitely anguished. Concerned.

[5:51] Fully aware that the only hope that he could possibly have for his daughter was Jesus. And that, he cast himself at the Savior's feet. And we see the father's plea in verse number 23.

Besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death. I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed, and she shall live. You know, Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue.

Okay? Very high in position in society. Interesting, though, his power and his wealth were of no use to him in this situation. At this moment, he only had one thought in mind.

If he could just get to Jesus, his daughter might be healed. And when he saw the man, think about this. This man, great power and authority, threw himself at the feet of Jesus.

As a matter of fact, the Bible says, Besought him greatly. This is a very impassioned plea for help. And he knew that the Lord was the only one who could heal his daughter.

[6:54] You know, I think sometimes that the way we ask for help dictates the kind of help we get. Right? If I were to come up to John and say, Hey, John.

Did you know the basement's on fire? What do you suppose John's reaction would be? Oh, fire.

Yeah, it's a big fire, a little fire. Right? But it's a fire.

John, the basement's on fire. John's going to run up, jump up, and run downstairs and look and see if it's on fire. So the way we ask dictates the response we get, doesn't it? What does the Bible say about that?

When we pray, how do we ask of the Lord? Are we urgent when we ask him? James 5, verse 16.

The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Elias was a man subject to like passion as we, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and guess what? It rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.

[7:55] And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit. In these verses on prayer, James recounts a passage of 1 Kings 17, where Elijah prayed earnestly that it might not rain to show power to an unbelieving king.

When we pray, are we urgent? Are we fervent? Because if we are, God will take notice. Psalm 34, 15. Recorded throughout Scripture are stories of fervent petition.

Hannah, 1 Samuel. One of my favorite passages of a fervent prayer. Earnestly prayed and wept before the Lord for a child to her God granted her request.

David fasted and prayed all night, asking the Lord to spare his child in 2 Samuel 12. That child wasn't spared, was he? But I believe that prayer was still answered.

And in the parable of the widow and the unjust judge, the widow received her request simply because of her persistence in Luke 18. Christ showed us the ultimate example of fervent prayer in the garden, right before his crucifixion.

[9:03] When we fervently pray, the Lord hears us, just as Jesus heard Jairus' desperate request for help. So as Christ traveled to his house, Peter and the rest of the disciples followed along, but an uninspected delay stopped him.

And I wonder how Jairus felt. Jesus, come save my daughter. Okay, let's go. What happened? Nope. Roadblock. How do you suppose Jairus felt?

How would we feel? So the daughter's plight was in jeopardy. And Jairus had hope. That's why he went to the Lord. Jesus was coming. Jairus believed his daughter could be healed.

But Jesus was stopped. Out of the throng accompanying him, we all know that a desperate woman, plagued by this issue of blood that she had, touched the Lord for healing.

Like the dying girl, the doctors could not help her either. Jesus, in his compassion, saw her faith and healed her.

[10:08] But this delay, this stop was fatal, wasn't it? A messenger at that time came from the house and said, hey, it's too late. Why bother the master any longer?

Your daughter's dead. You know, at the beginning of the story, Matthew records the father telling Jesus, telling that his daughter was even dead in Matthew 9. While Mark said she was at the point of death, Luke said she was dying.

However it was, Jairus was expecting her death. And knew that, the father knew that she could die by the time that he had reached Jesus. And where doctors could no longer help, where medication could no longer cure, Jairus knew there was only one who could prevail in this situation.

His name was Jesus. Come, lay thy hand upon her, he says. She shall live. At this moment, Jesus was the last resort.

Jesus was the only resort. And even though Jairus began with great faith, Jesus knew the delay and the report that his daughter had actually died could probably undermine that faith.

[11:15] That seems kind of risky. But Jesus always is an encourager. What does he say in verse number 36? As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe.

That was his encouragement. So what was Jairus afraid of? Why would Jesus say, Be not afraid, only believe? What was the fear?

Yeah, for his daughter was going to die. Anything else? Maybe that Jesus wouldn't heal her. Maybe that Jesus wasn't real. Aren't those fears we have sometimes when we go to God and ask these things?

That Jesus won't act the way we want him to act? What does Jesus say? Be not afraid, only believe. But that can't work for us unless we take our problems to him.

Can it? Unless we go to Jesus with these things. Jesus can't work on them. Jairus took his problem to the Lord and we can too. 1 Peter 5, 7, Casting all your care upon him for he careth for you.

[12:25] Psalm 27, 14. It looked hopeless, didn't it? And the Bible doesn't say, but maybe the disciples thought it was hopeless also. I think there was some doubt in the crowd at this point.

And while everybody knew that Jesus could work miracles, the girl had already died. I think that Jesus, however, wanted this opportunity so he could demonstrate to everyone his power could break even death's grip in spite of the scornful spectators.

Verse number 40. And they laughed him to scorn, but when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel and them that were with him and entereth where the damsel was lying.

By the time Jairus had reached his home, a crowd had already assembled. You know, and maybe some of them were genuinely grieving, friends and family. Obviously, some could have been curious.

Back in Matthew, there was minstrels there, professional mourners even. But one thing's clear. Of all the people that were there, they all doubted Jesus' ability to raise this girl from the dead.

[13:38] The Lord had an assertion, however, in verse number 39. And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado? And weep. The damsel is not dead, but sleepeth.

When Jesus arrived, he told the mourners the young girl was not dead. She's just sleeping. Looking at the harmony of the Gospels, we see three accounts of this statement, all of which use the exact same wording.

They laughed him to scorn. Why would Jesus say this? How could he know? He was just now arriving on the scene. He couldn't possibly have known all of the things that have gone on before.

And he says this crazy thing. She's not dead. She's asleep. Surely, this guy Jesus had no idea what he was talking about. But Jesus says, Be not afraid.

Only believe. While we may not laugh as the mourners did at the statement that Jesus made, I think sometimes we actually question whether or not God understands my situation.

[14:43] We wonder if he truly understands how busy we are, how discouraged we feel, how little money we have, how bad things really are in my life. But when we entertain those thoughts, aren't we guilty of unbelief?

In reality, aren't we saying, Lord, you're wrong, just as those at Jairus' house did on the day that the little girl died? But Jesus says, Be not afraid.

Only believe. Last week in Luke 5, the Lord told Peter to cast his net into the deep despite his questions and doubts. But Peter obeyed even if he didn't believe and was blessed with a great catch of fish.

God's statements may run contrary to what we think and to what human reason is, but that will never invalidate what God says in his word. What God says will always be true.

John 17, 7 says, Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth. Psalm 119, 51. I told you the wrong verse, brother.

[15:45] I'm very sorry about that. It was 119, 151. So I need new glasses. That one makes more sense, doesn't it? That one fits to the best. Okay. Where's he going with that verse?

I can wait to see him mess this up. Okay. Not afraid, only believe. First Kings chapter 17, God had instructed his prophet Elijah to go to a widow woman who would sustain him.

Elijah found the lady and asked her for some bread and some water. And she said, Hey, all I got is a little oil and a little meal and I'm just about to bake it up so my son and I can eat and then die of starvation.

What did Elijah say? That's okay. Make some for me first and then make it for you guys and things will be fine. Not afraid, only believe. And you know what?

Their little cakes a meal, that's all they had for the entire famine. One little cake. But they lived, didn't they? They made it through the famine.

[16:45] Why? Trust and obey. They believed what God said and acted on it. Didn't make any sense yet it was still the miracle happened.

You know, I think we've all heard it said that God said it, I believe it, and that settles it. And that really sounds strong. Sounds like I'm really spiritual. The fact of the matter is it doesn't matter what we think, does it?

What God says is true whether we believe it or not. Yep. God said it, that's all there is. And this truth was about to come to life for Jairus and his family because we see the people in derision, verse number 40.

And they laughed him to scorn, but when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel and them that were with him and entered in where the damsel was lying. It's hard to fathom that people would actually laugh scornfully at a time like this.

Right? The death of a child, but we're going to make fun of this guy. Especially when they were laughing at the son of God himself. What's even more astounding is these people quite possibly knew Jesus personally.

[17:55] Where was he? He was in Capernaum. Matthew 9 tells us that's his own city. They should have known that the Lord wasn't lying or bragging or crazy.

And maybe they should have given him some courtesy and respect and held their peace, especially during this time of mourning. You know, we question sometimes how people could have acted like this at this time, but how many times do we do that?

I mean, before we judge, I think we should look at ourselves and ask the question, would I have made the cake? Elijah came to me. And there's enough for my family before we die.

Am I going to give to the prophet of God first? Am I going to give to God? Am I going to believe what he says? Or am I going to make for myself and die? So oftentimes we resort to mocking when we don't understand.

Because it's easier to doubt, Brother Darren, isn't it? It's easier to doubt. This is one time, this is one reason I think unbelievers sometimes we ridicule.

[18:57] And sometimes we get ridiculed by unbelievers. Right? Religion is a crutch. What you're looking for is what? Pie in the sky and the sweet by and by.

They jeer at us and refuse to believe what they can't prove to their satisfaction. Right? Question the accuracy see the Bible and wonder why such an ancient book has our allegiance.

But until they believe these things, they will never understand. 1 Corinthians 1, verse 18 says, For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us which are saved is the power of God.

You know, it's interesting. Back in Matthew, when he describes the scene, he uses the word noise. Much noise was happening.

Mark uses the word tumult. A lot of noise around unbelief, isn't there? A lot of noise. It's hard to make sense of it all through all the noise.

[19 : 57] But here's what I know in my own life. Can't make sense of it until I believe it. That sounds counterintuitive, but there's a reason that it's that way.

And the reason is, until I believe, the Holy Spirit can't instruct me on it. We need the Holy Spirit to explain these things to us.

And if we don't have the Holy Spirit in us, then we can't have the explanation. We can't understand. And therefore, they become foolishness. Here's 11.6.

What do you suppose was running through Peter's mind when he followed Jesus to this house? Oh, we're going to see another show. Let's go check this out. Jesus, you're going to raise somebody from the dead?

This is crazy. What's going on? I don't know. Bible doesn't say. Not very clear. Obviously, he had thoughts. It's fun to think about it. I try to think about what would I be thinking in this moment.

[20 : 57] Right? I think one of the mistakes that Christians make when they read the Bible is they always put themselves in the place of the hero character. Right? Or they'll take the opposite and say, well, I don't know why Peter did that because I would have never done that.

That's a fallacy I have all the time. I like to think that I'm the most spiritual guy. I mean, why is it my name in the Bible? I'm so spiritual. But the fact of the matter is, things that these people live through and believe far outweigh anything that I'll probably ever do.

and that's why my name will never be in a book. And my place when I read the Bible needs to be not I would have done it better or not how could they not have believed, but how can I take the lesson from this life and become a Christian that's actually worthy of living these stories?

Why can't, why can't my, you know, what's the old thing? I once knew, okay, I grew up in church and he was always sad because his testimony was, I got saved at a young age.

I grew up in church. That's so terrible. I went on one of these testimonies where, you know, I was a drug dealer and I murdered and I got saved and now I'm running a church of 7,000 people and I think to myself, no.

[22 : 10] The best testimony is I grew up in church because that's the way it should be. So I try to put myself not in the hero place but in the lowest place because that's where I am.

So what was running through Peter's mind when he was looking at all this? Had he learned from his experience with the fish hole to trust Jesus even if he didn't understand or did he still allow doubts to shake his faith in what Jesus said?

Because we will face situations where we must choose between doubt and faith and during these times we can ask the Lord to help us overcome our belief in his word.

You know, in a different miracle another father came to the Lord requesting healing for his child.

This child had a dumb spirit the Bible said. Right? And the disciples couldn't cast him out. The father struggled with doubt and needed the Lord to strengthen him, to strengthen his faith.

Mark 9, verse 23, Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out and said with tears, Lord, I believe.

[23 : 19] Help thou my unbelief. You know, we all struggle with unbelief. However, we have a great God that can help us overcome our doubts. At Jairus' home, those who laugh scornfully at Christ did not exercise that faith.

And although we find our own faith lacking at times, we can choose to exercise the faith we do have. How do we do that? We do that. My third favorite verse in the whole Bible, Hebrews 11, 1. Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Great verse. Clears up a lot of bad things we believe in our life. Despite the spectator's derision and unbelief, Jairus continued inside to heal the young girl.

Praise the Lord that he was going to accomplish what he set out to do despite what everybody else said. Christ was coming once again to confirm that he was not only the trustworthy but the all-powerful Lord.

And he is the sufficient Savior. To the crowd, Christ was too late. The child was dead. And it seemed ridiculous that he would say that she was merely sleeping.

[24 : 31] Everybody said she was dead. She was in fact dead. And despite the sensitivity of the situation, they began to mock him openly. In the next few moments, however, their scorn were changed to astonishment.

Spectators, grieving parents, and the disciples were about to find out that Jesus is the all-sufficient, almighty Savior who can do anything. What about Peter?

That's what this lesson is about. Peter. Number 37. And he suffered no man to follow him save Peter and James and John, the brother of James. See, of all the disciples, only three were allowed to go along with him.

Why? Just said he did. Peter, however, did respond to the call of Christ when he was called. There was a decision to leave all and to follow him.

And that set about a certain future. And because of that, they were going to see something that was a reward. It's interesting time after time, Peter showed a great desire to be near Christ.

[25 : 34] I mean, Peter was the first one to come to Christ on the water. Peter was the first one to run to the empty tomb, even if he wasn't the fastest. And this is a good lesson for us today, isn't it?

When we stay close to Christ, we will experience miraculous things. And we'll have the opportunity to impact others. I wonder, did Peter have joy that day?

And did he have joy in retelling the story of Jairus' daughter being resurrected, not resurrected, being brought back to life? I mean, what a cool story.

I mean, talk about a witnessing tool. We all look for stories to try to witness to people, right? This is a... I don't got nothing like that. It must have been a special time to see death defeated and mourning turned into rejoicing.

Look at verse 42. Straightway the damsel arose and walked, for she was of the age of 12 years old, and they were astonished with a great astonishment. So many times, Peter was faced with a situation he did not understand.

[26 : 41] When Christ said the girl was only sleeping, what did Peter think? Did he feel uncomfortable being associated with the man everyone was laughing at? But he didn't abandon the Lord, and as a result, he witnessed the Lord miraculously raising someone to life.

I think God wants to bless us, but only those that remain faithful and obey can Christ bless and will fully experience his wonderful works.

And Peter did see the maid arising in verse 42. Straightway she arose and walked. Jesus took her by the hand. Family was close by, mom and dad were there, the three disciples, and the Lord's voice came out, damsel, I say unto thee, arise.

Taliyata kumi, the Bible says, which is being interpreted, damsel, I say unto thee, arise. But not only did she arise, she walked and she ate.

She had not just been brought back to life, but she was restored to full health. because God doesn't do anything halfway. After all, Jesus had told the father, what?

[27 : 58] Fear not, only believe, and she shall be made whole. Joshua 23, 14. Thank you.

Twelve-year-old girl had been raised from death to life by the giver of life himself.

The one who created her, raised her from the dead. Likewise, when we're saved, Christ breathes life into us in a way. And the great thing about that, it's instant.

There's no earning it, there's no buying it, there's no hoping for it, there's no levels of ascendancy. When you're saved, you're saved instantly.

Just like this girl was raised instantly. Because of this, we are commanded to be ambassadors to bring life to a dying world.

Second Corinthians 5, 20. Now, then we are ambassadors for Christ. As though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be you reconciled to God. I mean, you can imagine the parents' astonishment in verse number 42.

[29 : 04] They were astonished with a great astonishment. That's a lot of astonishment. And how could you not be? Their dying child was raised from, was brought back to life.

A great miracle was performed that day. We can see miracles in our life. Every time somebody gets saved, that's a miracle. Yep.

We're dead in our sins, the Bible says. But we can be raised in newness of life just by believing and not being afraid.

I think that hampers sometimes people from getting saved. they're afraid. They're afraid that they won't get to hang out with their buddies anymore.

They're afraid people won't like them anymore because let's face it, Christians are weird. I talked to a man one time, he didn't want to get saved because he had a particular sin that he liked a lot.

[30:06] He didn't want to give it up. And he knew that if he got saved, God was going to deal with him about it. He didn't want to give it up. Sometimes I think people are afraid of the unknown.

You grow up worldly, you know worldly, but spiritual things can be an unknown and can be frightening. Be not afraid, only believe. Luke and Mark both state that Jairus and his wife were astonished.

In some ways, this could be described as partial faith. Jairus believed that Christ had the power to heal but didn't believe that Jesus could likewise raise from the dead. When the news came that his daughter died, Jesus said, believe only and she shall be made whole.

Jairus heard that, yet he and his wife were surprised when it happened. Astonishment does involve surprise, doesn't it? When we pray and ask God to do mighty things and when he does them, are we surprised or do we expect it?

As believers, we know we have a big God. Therefore, we ought to be possessors of a big faith.

Remember, God can do anything except fail. Noah believed God was going to send a flood.

[31:22] David believed God would give him victory over Goliath. Elijah believed God could send down fire on Mount Carmel. If there's one TV show I want to see, action movie, that's the one I want to see.

I mean, seriously. I want to see the look on all those guys' faces. When they're trying to wake up, they're sleeping God. Oh, hey, maybe if you're a little bit louder, he'll wake up.

And then Elijah's like, no, no, more water, more water. And the fire consumes the dust. I want to see that show. Daniel believed God could shut the mouth of the lions.

D.L. Moody believed that God would save multitudes through the faithful preaching of his word. And we too can experience the blessings of those Christians if we would believe God can do the impossible.

You know, believing the Lord's word is a choice. We can intellectualize it all day long. At the end of the day, it's still a choice because nobody can prove it to your satisfaction if you'll never be satisfied.

[32:36] The spectators mocked in unbelief. Jairus chose to have faith that the Lord could heal his daughter. You know, the Bible doesn't really say where Peter stood. Did he doubt?

Did he go with the crowd? Or did he believe that day? Even though he didn't understand. Either way, the Lord demonstrated he was worthy of belief. And he is.

Jesus is worthy of our belief. And that Jesus demonstrated that day he knew exactly what he was doing, that he is all-powerful and even over death.

Like Jairus, we all face struggles. And despite our problems, God's greater than all of them. He not only knows where we are, but he feels our pain, doesn't he?

The Bible says so. It is he whom Isaiah called the man of sorrows. Surely, he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. It may appear God doesn't care.

[33:40] Sometimes we think God doesn't understand because, you know, he's not working out to the way I think it should work out. Remember? Remember? That false sense of being in charge?

But when we're tempted to doubt, I encourage you to remember Jairus. Christ sees exactly what's going on. And maybe there's a woman of blood that also needs help.

Right? What a great lesson. Jesus was coming to save this daughter, but somebody else needs help too. And Jesus has time for all of us. He knows exactly what He's doing.

It's our responsibility to simply trust and obey, asking God for the strength to go forward no matter what. 1 John 4.4 Greater is He that is in you than He that is in the world.

Yeah? All right, let's pray. Heavenly Father,