

Lord, Help My Desperate Faith

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[0 : 00] I'm going to talk to you this morning a little bit about faith. Faith is a popular term. It's also a widely misunderstood term.

For many, people understand faith as what you believe about something is more important, whether it's true or not. It's the reality of what you believe to be true rather than itself being what it is.

Some people take their faith as a point of pride, like it was something that they generated inside themselves and held to a certain faith.

We are told in modern day evangelicalism that the reason some people are healed and some people are not of various illnesses is because they either had faith or not enough faith.

Some are told that in order to have faith, you either have to obey, give money, or find out some biblical secret to apply to your life.

[1 : 24] Some are told that faith is trusting what you do not know or do not understand, and it will be credited to you as faith.

Today, I want to look at a story that doesn't teach any of these aspects of faith at all. In fact, it's a type of faith we're going to see that is counterintuitive to what we often understand as faith.

So this morning, I want to look at four facts of faith that we can learn from those who come to the Lord Jesus Christ. If you're unfamiliar with the Gospels, the whole purpose of the Gospels is to introduce you to the person, the God Jesus Christ, and that you would come to believe in him as the Son of God who walked on this earth for three and a half years and died in your stead.

Mark, for his part, is a Gospel that does not include much teaching of Jesus Christ. There's actually only four major teaching events in all of the 16 chapters.

But Mark, preaching to a Roman audience, wants the people to know that our God is a God of action. Amen? He's a God who does godly things.

[2 : 53] Rome, surrounded by a lot of empty idols made out of wood and metal, which do nothing. Jesus, right from the very beginning of Mark, had power over demon possessions.

He was able to cure leprosy, heal those who are paralyzed. He was able to restore physical withered body parts. He had power over sickness, weather.

And he proved himself many, many times, so that if you walked into Galilee during the time of Jesus, you would have noticed that all sickness and disease had vanished.

But he did this teaching this incredible message. And the message is simply found, summed up in Mark 1.15. It says, The time is fulfilled.

The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe the Gospel. One of the things that Jesus taught is that he is the answer.

[4 : 06] Jesus did not teach that his philosophy was the answer. Jesus did not teach, If you act like me, you will be free.

Jesus did not teach, If you come with me, I will teach you secret knowledge. He did not teach that if you live a moral and clean life, you will have the kingdom of God.

He did not present his message as being mysticism or psychology. He simply taught that he, and he alone, is the answer.

How did people respond? Well, when Jesus showed up, crowds gathered. Why? They wanted to see his power. They wanted to see him heal, lift people from the dead.

They wanted to see him have power over demons. The disciples followed him. People came to be healed by him. Others didn't want to spend a single day without him in their life.

[5 : 10] And we see that some people truly started to believe. So I want to explain a little bit of the context that we find ourselves in Mark chapter 5.

There's a great event that happens earlier in the chapter, and we will get to that at some point in my teaching here at SBC. But this is a time where Jesus is leaving the land of Gerasenes.

Gerasenes would have been a Gentile land, and he's returning to the west coast of Galilee. When Jesus left, there was a great crowd of people waiting for him, kind of waving goodbyes.

He set off in the boats, and they were waiting for him when he returned. The crowd was there, and Luke simply says, they waited expectantly for him.

So let's read together what happens next. Verse 21. And when Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered about him, and he was beside the sea.

[6 : 16] Then came one of the rulers of the synagogue. Now that word rulers, he's not a formal teaching. It's not like he was a pastor. But he would have been most likely a deacon who made decisions.

They believe that he probably was in charge of the scrolls. They had the Old Testament and scrolls, as well as a lot of other Jewish writings. So he would have had a prime position.

This is a well-respected man in the Jewish community. So then came one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name. And seeing Jesus, he fell at his feet and implored him earnestly, saying, My little daughter's at the point of death.

Come and lay your hands on her so that she might be made well and live. And he, being Jesus, went with him. And a great crowd followed him and thronged about him.

And there was a woman who had had a discharge of blood for 12 years, who had suffered much under many physicians and had spent all that she had and was no better, but rather grew worse.

[7 : 34] She had heard the reports about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment. For she said, If I touch even his garments, I will be made well.

And immediately the flow of blood dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. And Jesus, perceiving in himself that power had gone out from him, immediately turned about in the crowd and said, Who touched my garments?

Now remember, there's a great throng of people around him. We're estimating thousands upon thousands. And his disciples said to him, You see the crowd pressing around you?

And yet you say, Who touched me? And he looked around to see who had done it. But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling and fell down before him and told him the whole truth.

And he said to her, Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace and be healed of your disease. While he was still speaking, there came from the ruler's house some who said, Your daughter is dead.

[9 : 00] Why trouble the teacher any further? But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the ruler of the synagogue, Do not fear, only believe. And he allowed no one to follow him except Peter and James and John, the brother of James.

They came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue. And Jesus saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. And when he had entered, he said to them, Why are you making commotion and weeping?

The child is not dead but sleeping. And they laughed at him. 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.

Taking her by the hand, he said to her, Talathakuma, which means little girl, I say to you, arise. And immediately the girl got up and began walking, for she was 12 years of age.

And they were immediately overcome with amazement. And he strictly charged them that no one should know this and told them to give her something to eat.

[10 : 10] Pray with me. Dear Heavenly Father, we just thank you for this word that you give us. Father, I pray that you would give me the voice to unpack it, to see the incredible power and message that is being delivered here by Mark.

Some of the subtleties speak greatly of your love. Father, just through this, I pray that we would come to not only know you more but love you more and understand you and worship you as king.

In your name we pray. Amen. What we see here are truly two tragic tales. of demonstrations of real...

I'm going to repeat that. What we see here within these two tragic tales are two demonstrations of real faith. Now I want to point out some of the contrasts that we have.

The most obvious one, one is a man, one is a woman who approaches Jesus. One person is named, the other is not. One person we are told is prominent.

[11 : 26] The other one we are told is unclean. One comes for themselves. Another comes for a loved one. One is a very public request.

One is a secret request. One falls at the feet of Jesus before and one falls at the feet of Jesus after.

Many contrasts in this story. But there is one great similarity. They are both desperate.

This man, with a 12-year-old daughter, has undoubtedly tried everything he can to bring his daughter from the brink of death, finally goes to Jesus.

This woman, which is indeed a sad, horrible tale, has been wiped out financially. She's gone to every quack for medical help, which did not heal her, but it says it made her worse.

[12 : 45] In fact, the word used here to describe her condition states that she was under both great physical and emotional pain when this type of pain, shame is attached.

Here's our first faith fact. The greatest faith is often compelled by desperation.

Faith is often compelled by desperation. And it's that desperation that Jesus is sufficient to meet the need that one has.

It doesn't matter if Jesus is the first one you went to or Jesus is the last one you went to. What drives us there is desperation.

Jairus and this woman do not take their plight stoically, but desperately seek Jesus for healing. And God sometimes uses pain to drive us to him.

[13 : 51] Does he not? Sometimes he takes our broken, wretched selves, this marriage that might not be communicating or broken and drives us to seek help.

This has been going on for eternity. Desperate people look for Jesus. And here we see this in 21, it says Jesus is back in Jewish territory.

Jairus, a ruler in the synagogue, comes to him. Now, what's really interesting about this is as I've stated, he is a prominent man. He's got a strong position in the synagogue.

He's a man who's well respected. He is trusted. And people, like I said, he respects them. Now, when he does this, by this point in the ministry of Jesus Christ, the Pharisees from the synagogues had already rejected Jesus.

They had already said Jesus is of Satan. He's demon possessed. Don't have nothing to do with him. This man is so desperate at this point he couldn't care less.

[15 : 05] So, there is some serious risk of social ostracization, of losing his position in the synagogue.

He may lose his role in the community and be shunned by friends. But there's something here that makes him not care.

there is a faith that is there is anybody who can do something about this problem he has is Jesus. It states that she is about to die.

So, he gets down on his feet. Jesus, save my daughter. What does Jesus say? Yeah, let's go. Mission accomplished, right? So, this guy pushing through the crowd is probably moving people out physically Jesus' way.

I'm taking to my home where my daughter is. He's probably moving pretty quickly. But then something distracts Jesus on the way.

[16 : 16] Verse 25 begins to tell the story of another desperate person. This woman's story is indeed tragic. Suffered from a disease. She did many cures that hurt her more.

The disease had rendered her into poverty. And the word we see translated as suffered here is actually a graphic expression that carries with it deep, painful, physical suffering and shame.

It's usually attached to the word when someone is whipped. A public whipping. Not only could it kill you, the physical pain is immense, but there's shame, great shame on you.

This is a woman because of her bleeding would be declared unclean. That means if you were following the Jewish religion, you would not go over to her home to visit her.

you would not visit her and sit on her bed or sit on her chair in the dining room. In fact, the first thing she's supposed to yell when she comes near people is, unclean, unclean, I am unclean.

[17 : 42] Level of loneliness, unable to have her friends and if her family are Jewish, would not be able to drop off a meal train for her.

She would simply be declared unclean and unforgotten about. But her plight is so desperate that she does something as unbelievable as Jairus does, such as bowing before Jesus in the crowd.

She no longer declares herself unclean and actually enters the crowd, touching people, every person she's touching, she's making them unclean.

There's three things that are motivating her. She hears, she comes, and she touches, and she reaches out.

She finally gets close to Jesus. And the text literally says, and immediately the flow of blood was dried up. And she knew in her body that she had been healed from her curse.

[18 : 53] Verse 30, Jesus felt the power leave him. Who touched my garments? And we know the disciples' response, are you nuts, Jesus?

There's a thousand people. Everyone is touching you. Notice what it says that Jesus, look, it says he kept looking to see who had done.

What it means is he was persistent in his search for this woman. woman. So here he stopped on his way to see Jairus, and then apparently starts looking around, trying to find the woman who was healed.

Because Jesus Christ knows there's even a deeper healing that needs to happen, which we're going to get to. Now imagine Jairus, right? He's walking, he's got Jesus in tow, my daughter's on her last breath, I've got to get him there as soon as possible, yet, turns around, and he's gone.

He's gone back into the crowd that he worked so hard to get him out of. I don't get it, Jesus. He said you were coming with me, and now you wonder who touched you?

[20 : 16] I'm going to guess that he's feeling pretty anxious right now. verse 33, but the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling and fell down before him and told him the whole truth.

So somehow as that news spread across the crowd, Jesus is looking for her. She finally gives up her ruse to hide and get away quietly, comes before him.

now think about that word, fear and trembling. There's a couple of reasons why she could be fearful.

One, maybe Jesus will take it back. That would be a pretty genuine fear. She took something which she might not think was rightfully hers. he might take that power back.

Maybe he's mad because I forced my way through this crowd and now there's like a hundred unclean people. Right? Temple's going to be pretty empty this Sunday.

[21 : 27] I'll tell you why I believe she was fearful. I believe she came to an understanding that Jesus is indeed God and that made her very fearful.

It's the same encounter the disciples had on the storm. Remember on the lake when Jesus finally calms all the water and all the wind and the fear isn't celebration but it's actually great fear.

that Jesus Christ is who he says he is. He's really the son of God. She's scared.

Why? It's a fearful thing to be in the presence of God. It's kind of interesting in a very minor way of looking at this. Remember my friend Ray who was here a couple of weeks ago in case you didn't know.

He was actually a major in the U.S. Air Force. I'm down in California a couple of my buddies come down and one is a lieutenant in the army. He's a bit of a clown. He's kind of clowning around and we're going over to Ray's house getting some barbecue stuff or whatever.

[22 : 40] And my friend Ray is kind of being really casual and he sees in the back and he just says do you serve? And Ray goes yeah major U.S. Air Force immediately boom friend's disposition totally changed.

He's no longer the cloud he's the dutiful soldier even though different army he knows he's the senior officer and my friend's disposition acted completely differently from there on in when we hung out with Ray.

Now notice what Jesus says here. He uses this incredible term of affection to a woman who's lived her life unclean.

parents probably didn't visit her sisters probably didn't visit her brothers didn't visit she had no friend she would have lived on the fringe side of town Jesus simply says daughter your faith has made you well go in peace and be healed of your disease that's the response we get from Jesus Christ when we realize who he is amen he's not a big ogre they're there to scare us he recognizes us as his son and his daughters we think about this story she was so desperate so alone without family and friends and what Jesus is telling her is you are now one of my children never to be called unclean again faith fact number two faith opens the door to the power of

God faith opens the door to the power of God faith transfers divine power to those who are without power reality is faith can be imperfect it can be bold it can be halting it can be brave it can be laced with fear we can have fear and trepidation but what counts is the object of the faith and faith directed to Jesus is the one that saves amen guess who just demonstrated saving faith it wasn't touching Jesus garments that saved her it wasn't faith in Jesus teachings wasn't faith in Jesus philosophy it was Jesus Christ himself that saved her that day now I want you to understand what is really going on in this scenario this is an ER it's an emergency room and

[25 : 32] Jairus is running in with his daughter okay he's running in automatically all the doctors understand what's going on so they've got her on the gurney I don't know what do they call stat we got emergency someone I don't know my wife can tell you I don't know the medical terms but multiple doctors nurses are coming over they're sticking the thingamajigs on her fingers and on her chest and her brain and you know they can tell she's close to dying and then some lady comes in and says hey I'm bleeding it's not a big bleed it's a little bleed and everybody kind of rushes over to her if you've been in the OR right the one who's mostly got the most tragic pain situation going on they pay attention to them that's why when I was fooling around with my friends

I had a piece of pencil broke off in my ear I had to wait five hours because it was stupid enough to let that happen right it's not first come first serve don't let them tell you that that's what goes on in there we did a lot of stupid things in residence but I'm not going to talk about that but just think you're the father holding your baby's hand and they're just going over for some girl who's got a little bit of a boo-boo on her knee right tell me he's not thinking is this world upside down what is going on here so that is the scene that's happening here right the fact is this lady can even walk into the emergency room whereas they had an ambulance and a full police escort that happened today you'd hear the call of lawyers malpractice suit would be happening nobody in their right minds would have quit working on this girl but

God Jesus Christ did just that and the words that Jairus probably feared most in his life just think he's holding his little baby girl's hands everyone's over there and that sound eee comes through that's what happens in this story someone runs up to him that his daughter is dead so sad are these words Mark adds these words to this man's pain why trouble the teacher anymore but Jesus does something so incredible he says but overhearing what they said

Jesus said to the ruler of the synagogue do not fear only believe and I got like this picture in my mind of him loving this woman restoring her and he makes this direct line and he makes perfect eye contact with him what he's telling him is ignore everything else that's going around you ignore the machines that are making the noise ignore the nurses panicking over your daughter's body but I want you to focus in on one thing here keep believing in me that's what he's saying with only believe keep believing in me Jairus you came to me with the right reason keep believing me despite the circumstances keep believing me despite what people say keep believing me despite everything in this world that's telling you not to

I am with you faith fact number three faith shows persistence in overcoming any obstacles the woman made her way through the crowd she was desperate this man here could give up but as we know he does not Jairus has to disregard the news of his daughter's death he has to disregard the sound of the electric equipment in the hospital the doctor saying she's dead all that news and everything he has to do is trust in Jesus he has to ignore the laughter of the mourners those who mock Jesus as one writer writes faith goes forward in the face of mocking laughter and refuses to give in to fear and scorn verse 37 and he being

[31 : 19] Jesus allowed no one to follow him except Peter and James and John the brother of Jesus they came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue and Jesus saw a commotion people weeping and wailing loudly okay something we need to understand about a Jewish funeral if you're going to have a funeral you're expected to hire professional wailers those who would so called add to the misery and the pain of the situation no matter how poor you were you were expected to have at least two flute players in one professional crier so there would have been a lot of money there a lot of people hired now noticed there's some time that has passed here doesn't say he's in the next village at the end part of that time the people had already organized these this funeral procession it said and when

Jesus had answered he said to them why are you making a commotion and wailing the child is not dead but sleeping notice what the response and they laughed at him a couple things I want you to see here skeptics throughout the year who have attempted to do away with Jesus miracles stated this is evidence that she was in fact asleep but what we see here is enough time had passed that these professional mourners and wailers were there and let's be honest these people know death right their whole job is to go see dead people they show up oh she's not dead she's just mostly dead we'll come back when she's dead no no no they believe she's fully dead verse 40 says they laughed at Jesus how did

Jesus respond the text says and he put them outside that's a very interesting word put it's actually the same word which was used when Jesus put out the money changers from his temple this wasn't hey excuse me mr.

flute player um could you just hush leave no no no this guy was probably beaten with his flute right not a chance this word is a violent term this is to cast out throw out drive them from their house our God is a God of action and he doesn't take kindly to people who mock him 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 taking her by the hand he said to her teletha come I which means little girl I say to you arise and immediately the girl got up and began walking notice it's not like the fever broke and she had to get her on meds for the next two or three days right she's right at there playing outside and doing the things that little 12 year olds do faith fact number four the fact of the matter is faith is seen in action faith is something that can be seen it's not some esoteric thing or thought that may or may not be out there it's done remember the men who dug the hole in the roof to get the paralytic man of

Jesus that's what faith does doesn't will he won't I he gets it done it kneels it begs it touches it reaches out the fact is belief about Jesus doesn't bring about healing but faith in Jesus that takes action does now what's really interesting to note here neither Jesus or the woman identify Jesus as the Messiah they don't even recognize him as a prophet they don't even really know who he is but they believe he has the power to heal and are willing to put their faith to the test and here we see complete healing like I said it's not as if the fever broke and she stayed in bed for the next couple of weeks she was right at it my friends I think there's four lessons we can learn about faith from this text and I think we need to make choices in our lives to help us grow our faith choices that we have to make the first choice that we need to make is we need to choose to believe that

[36 : 43] Jesus is available you and I need to choose to believe that Jesus is available and what I mean by that is Jesus Christ just doesn't hear my words because I'm a pastor he hears your words because you're a son and daughter of the king amen there's nothing too big nothing too small even sinners caught in sin he hears you he's not asking for you to go clean up your life come back to him and then I'll hear you that's not how God works so the first choice to grow your faith is you need to believe that Jesus is available to you number two it's we choose to believe that Jesus is accessible what I mean by that is there's no special code there's no special prayer sometimes he's heard more in the biggest tier than he is in the longest set of words uttered with our mouths right

God God is accessible there's no special code to get in no secret knowledge there's no special way to kneel or to plea the fact of the matter is scripture always tells us that Jesus is moved by compassion Matthew 14 14 when he went ashore he saw a great crowd and he had compassion on them and healed their sick Matthew 9 36 when he saw the crowds he had compassion for them because they were harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd these are people that aren't even his children like we are we have full rights to entrance into his presence yet sadly and I would argue Carl Chris and Dave might argue with me but I found the most powerful sermon at the conference was the one on prayer the third thing we need to choose to believe is that

Jesus is not too busy I see this a lot it's the idea that Jesus helps those who help themselves right I'm not going to bother with Jesus he's got bigger things to do even in the midst of going to heal Jairus' daughter Jesus Christ seeks out this woman who needed not only healing but to know that her faith made her well saved her and that she was loved what does that tell us about Jesus he really knew this woman's deepest longing the fact of the matter is he is there for us there is nothing we cannot go to him with some people think the way we live our life is we try to do all the things on our own until we cannot thinking that God is the final plea my friends we need to choose to believe that God is to be for us and our first plea

Jesus is steadfast Jesus is unyielding Jesus cannot be beat Jesus is tranquil Jesus is calm you dishonor God he will throw you out even when our lives seem like they are falling apart in so many ways he is there and he is for us we can have chaos all around us even in the middle of receiving horrible news even when we are anxious even when we feel like there's a crushing crowd all around us God is not just for us but he is with us amen we need to be reminded of Jesus words to Jairus do not fear only believe pray with me father we need a desperate faith but