

Small Stature, Big Faith

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 09 August 2023

Preacher: Mr Scott Macleod

[0 : 00] and the camp and holiday club, I spoke about King Josiah and that young king, eight-year-old king, the one that reformed Israel, and he who had found the workers in the temple had found the book of the law, and they brought it to him, and then he brought it before the people.

And I remember saying that, well, we hope and pray that the young ones that would find and have been shown the Bible, and that they too would embrace it and understand it and look at it and say, why are these things not being taught?

And that they would hold it high and regard it as high in their lives and show forth to others how to live their lives. And like I was thinking of the influence that children can have in our lives, the providence that God gives us.

It was amazing to have all these children with us last week, and how God brought them to that place, some from church backgrounds, others from unchurched backgrounds.

It was wonderful to have them, and you can't help but wonder afterwards what influence these children will have when they leave. And it is important for us to remember to keep praying for these children and the families that they go back to.

[1 : 35] And in our two passages tonight, we meet with two young girls, two little girls. We're not entirely sure of their ages. In Exodus, we have Moses's sister.

And in second Kings, we have the slave girl who worked in the house of Naaman. And each, we'll take each in turn.

We'll start with Moses's sister. But before we do this, there's things that are common between the two of them, and apply in the same. Both their situations are far from ideal.

They're far from comfortable. They're far from good. One, Moses's sister, had her brother cast out into the water, for fear of him being murdered.

And the other was captured as a slave to the Syrians from the land of Israel. But both of them, notably, are Hebrews or Israelites.

[2 : 40] Both within the promises of God, both God's people. Whether they realized it or not in their young lives, they were marked by God and set aside for his purposes.

But in the childish ways and the innocence of the child, they can bring before us things that are hugely profound.

They reason in ways that we don't seem to reason, and they can leave us stumped by the questions they bring to us. And we can say, well, I didn't quite think of it like that.

But it is worth thinking about. We can be refined how they think and how they reason. And the child has an approachability that some others won't.

Even we as adults, we don't have the same approachability to, could be our own families, or those we come into contact with as a child.

[3 : 43] We have a voice that can be heard in a way that others can't. Their innocence can have a huge influence on the lives of many.

And there are many who can probably voice that sentiment, that it was their own child that brought them to Christ, or made such an influence on them to bring them to hear more about the Word of God.

And we see the placement of these children. Children who are of God's, within the promises, placed into hard situations.

And we don't know the situations that our children go home to. And we must remember they may not be as comfortable as ours. But we continue to pray for them.

And that they too are loved by God. And that they are too may be within the providence and found, providence and promises of God.

[4 : 57] When we think of all the children who have attended camps this summer, who attended various holiday clubs, those who come to Twini Sunday School, Creche, and they're all being taught about the good news and the gospel, what Jesus Christ has done for them.

However, or however, they came, it is God's purpose and God's providence that they all are there to hear the gospel and the good news of Christ.

and we pray that they may voice in their innocence faithfully the life and the good news of Jesus Christ to others, maybe in places that we can't even get to.

So first, we'll consider Moses' sister. Read there in verse Mark 7, Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call you a nurse from the Hebrew woman to nurse the child for you?

That's a remarkable statement when we actually consider it, which we will do in a second. Moses' big sister, and we know when we look at 1 Chronicles 6, verse 3, it gives us the family line.

[6 : 21] Their father was Amram of a Levite, their mother was a Levite as well, we heard here. And they had three children, Miriam, Moses, and Aaron.

So we know that this girl is Miriam. And we understand that she is old enough to grasp what is going on.

knowing that there is a risk to her baby brother, that he must be hidden, the family must hide her and keep him safe.

And now the childlike innocence, of maybe not understanding everything, leaves her watching this basket, or leaves even her watching her parents making the basket, and winding the rushes together, and putting bitumen and pitch on the inside of it to protect it.

And then watching her parents lay in this basket in the river amongst the reeds with her baby brother in it. And after that, the parents left, it would seem.

[7 : 37] Possibly it was that there would be no attention drawn to the site where they had left the baby Moses. Maybe they couldn't bear to stay there and see what happened. But the sister stayed on and watched.

She maintained from afar an eye upon the basket where her brother was. And you can picture the scene as she watches Pharaoh's daughter and her, I don't name for them, the ladies that were with her, come walking along the riverside.

And you can imagine Miriam there seeing them coming with fear. Because this would have been the last person she would have wanted to come.

Hearing maybe her brother crying, if you picture the scene. This is the worst of situations. in her mind. Surely he will be taken and killed.

But she makes a bold approach into this situation. Situation that could have so easily turned on its head for her. She walks into it. She says there that the Pharaoh's daughter had pity when she saw the child.

[9 : 03] When she opened it, she saw the child and behold, the baby was crying and she took pity on him there in verse 6. And the baby is identified clearly as one of the Hebrew children.

Whether or not Miriam realised the pity she had, she surely sensed it. And children, we don't give them credit at times how they sense things.

But they can pick up on things like maybe we don't. And they can trust, they know who to trust and know who not to trust. And she knew this woman had pity on her brother.

And she placed ignorance to knowing the baby. pity. And in the situation walks in seeing that she had pity and says, shall I go and call you a nurse from the Hebrew woman to nurse the child for you?

to say this to Pharaoh's daughter is quite remarkable. But she went straight into that tender situation where the life of her brother hanged on the edge of a cord and said these things.

[10 : 24] That she would go and get a Hebrew woman from the Hebrews whom they hated, the Hebrews whom they wanted to reduce a number. That she would go and get one of them.

And likewise that she would go and risk others Hebrew child given to her that you should be killing.

But how to come into this situation and say these things? It's unfathomable. We wouldn't say it. It's just too far beyond our understanding that no one would respond to it in such a way.

We would maybe get a hostile retaliation to suggest to get a Hebrew mother to look after the Hebrew child that should have been killed. In a sense no one else could have said it but a child.

And the words that she heard from the Pharaoh's daughter was go. So she went and she had the wisdom to discern that she could get her mother as the best of woman to look after her brother.

[11 : 34] And you can imagine the joy she had in running to get her mother to come and nurse her brother and her son. He was within moments of death.

We have here the most wonderful restoration of the greatest love, of one of the greatest loves that we can know in our existence. A mother's love for a child who she had to painfully abandon, who she had to lift, she had to leave there because she had done all she could for the child and she couldn't do any more for it.

Her heart would have been broken putting the child into the river. But we have this restoration made through this child of one of the greatest loves that we can know.

This child in the providence of God faithfully kept an eye upon the child and responded with these childlike impulses to restore that love.

And the situation which was so bleak and so hopeless before is turned on its head to give an unspeakable joy, because it was really an unspeakable joy.

[12 : 57] They couldn't say of whom their love was for each other. It had to be a secret. And his sister, Miriam, whatever she had been taught, this young girl had witnessed, well, strange things.

She witnessed the faith enacted by her parents for making the basket, placing her brother in it, and leaving him there in the river.

She was the one that waited on their faith. She waited to see what would be the outcome of the parents' faith. She could stay, and so she remained there.

waited to see what would come of it. And she saw the favour of God acted in faith.

And she spoke herself out of faith, and knowing a joy to have a love restored, she saw faith being acted out, and she herself acted out faithfully, and drawing near into that tender situation.

[14:18] And by trusting in God, was able to restore the greatest love. And it is, in a sense, what we have in the gospel.

It may be a weak image, in a sense, but we have here in the girl, like the gospel message. that Christ is like the child.

And we are the ones, as the parents, that have been pushed away because of sin. The sin, the Pharaoh had sinfully said that the children should die.

And we have been pushed away from that love. We have been separated from the greatest love because of the sins of men and the sins of our own.

sin. But the believer who knows Christ, who has that blood connection with Christ, holds on throughout the situation, though it would be fearful, though it would be difficult.

[15:27] And they can see that the son, whom they have been faithfully watching on, has been uplifted from death and rescued.

and we can run and say to each other, he is alive, he is alive.

How beautiful were these feet that brought the good news to that mother. As if the spirit at work asking, that gospel message asking, shall I go?

And God saying, go, go and tell the people that their love can be restored. and that men and women can have the greatest love restored in knowing Christ Jesus.

Maybe it's a love that we don't know in full. But through the gospel, and through the ones who brings it, and through the ones who faithfully keep their eye on Christ, we can say to one another, to come.

[16:46] but he calls us to himself. No greater joy is there to know the love of God in our lives.

A love that was known in past ages. God dwelt with man in the Garden of Eden. And through that son, it is restored to us a great love.

For Moses became the ruler, defender, deliverer, intercessor for the people. And so Christ is to us the source of all hope, as Moses came to be for the people of Israel.

And in Christ he is the source of our hope. And great joy we find when we know that we are called and we know that the love of Christ is restored to us.

through that young girl who held on in faith, saw an enacted faith, and went boldly into situations that were terrifying for her, but received great joy in restoring love.

[18:03] Wouldn't it be a great joy for us if we saw people coming to know of that love? boys and girls, men and women, to know the restoration of the great love of Jesus Christ for when.

We'll turn now to the book of 2 Kings. And there's a passage there about the girl who was captured by the Syrians. And let's read there in verse 3 what she says.

Would that my lord were with the prophet who is in Samaria, he would cure him of his leprosy. This young girl, as we said, is not in the preferred conditions that she would have liked, far from ideal, captured from Israel, likely to have been separated from her parents, but again this mouthpiece, and little mouthpiece as it is, placed by God, by his providence again, among the esteemed of the world, to give them direction.

We couldn't have been there. It could only have been a child. She has identified the plight of Naaman by being in that household, by being in that esteemed household, working alongside his wife, and confidently declared a message of hope there.

in verse 3. And there's a message of hope that draws them closer to the enemy, of whom they had been stealing from, and plundering many a times, and she herself had been plundered from them.

[19 : 56] And there she brings this message of hope to be found amongst that land. And you wonder why, or how did she know these things? How did she know that the prophet would save and cure Naaman's leprosy?

We don't know for sure, but we know that she knew about the prophet, and she knew that he could do miraculous works and signs.

she had been taught things of God. She had been taught about the power of God, and she had no doubt about it.

She did not waver in it, but she had confidence in this time to say that Naaman can be healed of his leprosy if he would meet the man of God.

And God's providence, she is there. To bring hope to this man. She had been prepared and taught likely by her parents she would have seen these things beside her.

[21 : 05] Whether she valued it at the time when she was younger or not, we do not know. But she remembered it, and she remembered the effects of the man of God, and the power of God, and what God could do.

she remembered it in her own affliction, no doubt, and she had confidence to say that in the afflictions of Naaman, and the saving of him from his own leprosy, the confidence of a child who knows the truth, who has been taught the truth, and has that childlike faith not to doubt it.

It's a situation where you think a man or woman, had they said such a word, would have doubted that well, if he went, will he come back healed? They would have to face the retribution of a returning commander if he came back unhealed, and what would that mean for them?

But the child, just out of faith and confidence, plainly stated, that Naaman can be healed if he goes to the prophet who is Samaria, he would cure him of his leprosy.

She had confidence in the man of God, and she sets forth a hope to Naaman that otherwise he did not have, a hope that he could not find in anywhere else, and the influence again of the innocent child's voice.

[22 : 49] It's remarkable. And of course she returned cleansed, so we know the story. And I wonder what joy it brought to the family of Naaman, the household of Naaman, I wonder what joy it brought to the girl, in knowing that God did not fail her, in knowing that she was assured of God's power, that she would have been confident again to speak and trust in that God of whom she had been taught.

The children who are set aside as the Lord's children, these two voiced hope, and they brought joy.

And we pray that the children whom we teach, whom we meet, whom we know in our families, would do likewise, that they would bring hope into this world, that they would bring hope to the souls of men and women who are suffering, and they would, in their childlike faith and confidence, speak of the healing of sin that we can each know, and the peace of heart, and the freedom from the world's oppressions, and the eternal security that we can have, trusting in God.

There is a man, there is Christ, he died for your sins, he is one that will restore your life, and restore and give you the greatest love that you will ever know.

In the providence of God, these children are set in their midst, maybe they're in an experience in situations that are not favourable, we don't know, yet we pray that they will be ones who will trust in God, and to understand what we teach them, and understand what Christ has done for them, and that they will be prepared in their young lives, we don't know where God will lead them, but the providence of God will take them to the people that they would meet, but we pray that they will not forget what they were taught, and they would remember in their afflictions, and in other afflictions, that they too would have confidence to turn and direct others to the man of God, with great trust and faith, that they would likewise know the joy of one's returning, who knew the cleansing of their sin, who knew a restored joy, that they would set their hearts on God's word, and trust in it, we would be witnesses of the goodness of

[26 : 01] God in all things, and we likewise would know joy in seeing them grow, the importance of teaching our children, the influence that they can have in our lives, and in the lives of others, they can go into places where we cannot go, and they can speak to people that we cannot speak to, so we must be mindful to be praying for them, that they would bring the gospel to others, and that they would likewise share in the joys of knowing God and trusting in him.

May these thoughts be blessed to us. we'll conclude our wash.