



Luke 8:49–56

49 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.’ 50 Hearing this, Jesus said to Jairus, ‘Don’t be afraid; just believe, and she will be healed.’ 51 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. 52 Meanwhile, all

the people were wailing and mourning for her. 'Stop wailing,' Jesus said. 'She is not dead but asleep.' 53 They laughed at him, knowing that she was dead. 54 But he took her by the hand and said, 'My child, get up!' 55 Her spirit returned, and at once she stood up. Then Jesus told them to give her something to eat. 56 Her parents were astonished, but he ordered them not to tell anyone what had happened.

Reflection

(Today's reflection is given by Justin Mof-fatt)

My passage today is set in the middle of a story involving two people in pain. We

pick it up in Luke 8:49–56:

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up!’ 55 Her spirit returned, and at once she stood up. Then Jesus told them to give her something to eat. 56 Her parents were astonished, but he ordered them not to tell anyone what had happened.

My primary verse today is verse 50:

“Hearing this, Jesus said to Jairus, ‘Don’t be afraid; just believe...”

He is asking Jairus (whom we met yesterday) to have an internal revolution. Inside you, he says, ‘don’t be afraid’. In your soul, ‘fear not’. Inside you, ‘just believe’. In your inner being, trust me. Jesus says to the man: something has to happen in your heart.

For many of us, this appears impossible. It feels like wishful thinking. It remains the triumph of the imagination over reality. You wouldn't know how to have such faith, even if you tried. In fact, both parts of Jesus' words seem impossible: the 'don't be afraid' part; and the 'just believe' part. 'I wouldn't even know how to give up fear, let alone replace fear with faith', you might say. But this story is written that you may learn to 'not be afraid', and to 'believe'.

OK. Recapping. Jairus tracks down Jesus because his daughter is dying. We know that from verse 40. Jairus needs Jesus. He's been brave all along. He's probably had the support of lots of doctors. But death tracks us all down. So Jairus tracks Jesus down. He falls at his feet in verse 41 and he pleads. Why? Because his only

girl is dying verse 42. 'Come and save her before she dies. Because if she dies, it will be too late'. He is desperate.

But Jesus stops to help a woman who is bleeding, verses 43-48. There is no suggestion here that he didn't get to the girl because he stopped to serve this woman. But, still, he stops where he sees suffering. And while he is stopping, news comes from Jairus' home. Devastating news.

49 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.'

And that's when we get our call:

50 Hearing this, Jesus said to Jairus, ‘Don’t be afraid; just believe, and she will be healed.’

Jesus knows that the ‘last enemy to be destroyed is death’ (1 Corinthians 15:26). So he goes to Jairus’ home. He pushes past the mourners. He shrugs off the laughter, caused by Jesus’ bold comment: ‘she is not dead but asleep’. And he goes into this intimate setting – into where the child was – with the only people who matter. Taking her by the hand and he tenderly says:

54 ‘My child, get up!’

In Mark’s Gospel, he says ‘Talitha koum!’ In the original language: Talitha is a sort of nickname. Kiddo. The kind of name a

dad gives his daughter, sort of like saying 'honey'. And 'get up' – wake up – time to get up. Like a dad waking the daughter up on a sunny day. 'Honey – its time to get up.' And,

55 Her spirit returned, and at once she stood up. Then Jesus told them to give her something to eat. 56 Her parents were astonished, but he ordered them not to tell anyone what had happened.

Such tenderness. But note the outcome: Jairus' daughter is raised from the dead!

Think

Paul wrote in Ephesians 3:20:

“Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.”

Jesus has power. ‘Dynamis’ in the original language. Dynamite. More power than we dare ask or imagine. He has power over sickness. He has power over death. And we know this Jesus, raised from the dead, Lord of all. We know him. The Church knows him.

Author and Pastor Eugene Peterson:

‘Church is an appointed gathering of named people in particular places

who practice a life of resurrection in a world in which death gets the biggest headlines. The practice of resurrection is an intentional, deliberate decision to believe and participate in resurrection life, life out of death, life that trumps death, life that is the last word, Jesus life.”

He asks you and me to have an internal revolution. We need, inside us – ‘don’t be afraid’. In your soul, ‘fear not’. Inside us – ‘just believe’. In your inner being, trust me.

Pray

To those who are suffering, go to him. Find him. Track him down, and, like Jairus and the woman, seek him. How far will you go? Pray. Make that your first thing. The wom-

an in verses 43-48 went to the doctors (in Mark's Gospel). The passage does not critique doctors. But they have limits. They certainly did then, and they do today!

To those who are waiting, you can't hurry Jesus. Jairus comes to Jesus, with a 'hurry, my daughter is dying.' But he stops to speak to this woman. Imagine the nausea of Jairus as he waits. 'What is Jesus doing?? My daughter has an acute problem. She's critical. And this woman has a chronic problem. Can't it wait?'

It feels irrational. But it's not just irrational. It's malpractice. At least it feels like that. You see, what doctor puts aside the person about to die, to attend to something that can wait? One who can raise the dead! One who has defeated death!

God's grace can never be hurried. God's grace and love are compatible with delay. And so in waiting, Jairus gained more! He came for a fever cure. He got a resurrection. We do learn more in waiting than in receiving. Patience teaches us to trust at the deepest level.

That's my experience. Maybe it's yours too.