

Waiting for the Lord

6th Sun. after Pent. – 06/30/24 – Mt. Calvary Luth.

Text: Mark 5:21-43 Pastor Keith Besel

v. 34, [Jesus says to the women who had been bleeding for 12 years,] **“Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed...”**.

v. 36, [And to the Jairus after he was told that his daughter had died Jesus said,] **“Do not fear, only believe.”**

Introduction

✘ If there's one thing we Americans don't like, it's waiting. I mean, what is it that's even worse than seeing the doctor, or the dentist? Waiting in that little room or in the chair for the doctor to come, right? And why do we despise trips to the DMV? It's that inevitable wait. We loathe waiting in traffic or in line at the store. We'll even do the store's job and check ourselves out, just to save a few minutes. Why is fast food so popular even when the food is only so-so? Because our time is precious.

→ And one more item on the list of things we don't like to wait for...is God? How many of you have ever waited anxiously for a prayer to be answered or a need to be addressed by God? Be honest! See, you know what I'm talking about. Waiting for the Lord can at times not only be frustrating; it can actually be discouraging. To us time-oriented and clock-obsessed people, it may seem like God is taking far too long to answer us, or even that an answer is not coming at all.

→ Yet God's own Word speaks to us often about this. By my quick word search, I found at least 34 times that the Bible talks about or speaks to the benefits of those who “wait for the LORD.” You see, waiting on the Lord is not only a test of our faith, it is what it means to have faith; to believe He is our God and Savior working in His time for our benefit and salvation.

✘ So, for those of us who don't like to wait, our Old Testament Reading from Lamentations, chapter three says alot. There, in verse 24 Jeremiah gives us a wise example, “The LORD is my portion ... therefore I will hope in Him.” And then we have this shocker in verse 26, “It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD.”

→ What? You mean God is saying that I shouldn't be in such a hurry; that it's actually good to wait? Yes. He tells us why in verse 25, “the LORD is good to those who wait for Him, to the soul who seeks Him.” And later in verse 32 as well, “Though He cause grief, He will have compassion according to the abundance of His steadfast love.”

✘ Dear believers, I'm asking you to keep those Old Testament truths in mind as we now turn to the story of Jairus in our Gospel Reading this morning. As we walk with Jairus and Jesus, we will see those truths from Lamentations come to life not only for him and the hemorrhaging woman along the way, but for you and me in our own faith-walk with Jesus.

→ Yes, the Holy Spirit teaches us here today that it is good for us to wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD.

I. Hard to Wait – We Need Jesus Now.

✘ When we meet Jairus today, he is not in a good place. His daughter is sick – gravely ill. As a synagogue ruler – a man of stature and influence, Jairus certainly had the resources to get a high level of care for his daughter. But apparently, none of that was working. So Jairus came to a guy named Jesus, who, according to recent reports, had healed numerous people in the area.

- When Jairus meets Jesus, the true depth of his need is revealed. This prominent; this powerful man was willing to publically put his pride aside and do the unthinkable. He “fell at [Jesus’] feet” and pleaded with Him, “My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well and live” (v. 23).
- That’s not the picture of a mighty man, is it? No, we see a daddy there who loves his little girl; a dad faced with the sickening fact that he can do nothing for the one he would do anything to help or save. When Jairus speaks to Jesus, I’m pretty sure he’s not saying, “Whenever you’re not busy; whenever you can fit it into your schedule, come along with me for a house call.” No, I’m sure he meant “come now!”
- ✘ And we know for sure that Jairus, in faith, came to the right place for help – Jesus. Again, Lamentations 3:25 affirms this truth, “The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, to the soul who seeks Him.” Jairus seeks Jesus out and Jesus agrees to go with him to his house.
- Most Christians, I believe, have no problem “seeking the LORD” in faith when trouble comes their way. The problem though comes in the next step of believing and seeking the LORD: waiting – that is trusting and believing that the LORD has heard and is responding appropriately.
- If we place ourselves in Jairus’ story, it’s as if the moment that he urges Jesus to come to his daughter, the waiting begins. Mark shows us that it was not just a brisk, unobstructed walk to Jairus’ house. There was a large crowd pressing in on Jesus, likely vying for His attention as well. And then we’re told of a woman who had been waiting and suffering from a bleeding disorder for twelve years! She spent all she had going from doctor to doctor – hoping; praying that “this treatment will be the one”, but her problem only got worse. She too looked at Jesus in faith and thought; “If I touch even His garments, I will be made well” (v. 28). So she worked through the crowd, and finally she was able to touch His garment, where her faith in Jesus was proven right. She was healed! Being God, Jesus knew His “power had gone out from Him,” so He stopped.
- What do you think Jairus must have been thinking? But Jesus knew the wait would do him good, so He focused His love on this patient, faith-filled woman (v. 30). I’m sure Jairus thought this was only a waste of valuable time. She was already healed. She got what she needed from Jesus, so “Come on Jesus, let’s go!” But friends, this is the beauty of Jesus’ incomprehensible love. Each and every individual person in his/her own moment of need is important to Jesus!
- ✘ He didn’t just want to heal her physically; he needed to talk with her face to face to bring healing to her heart; to take her further and deeper in her faith. Jesus’ love, compassion, power and grace pours out over this patient believer when He says, “Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease” (v. 34). She “waited quietly” in faith and Jesus saved her that day and for all eternity.
- It’s easy for you and me to be touched by this interaction between Jesus and this woman, but what if you were Jairus? What if your daughter could be dying at that very moment? Even as you are trying to feel happy for the woman, your stress-filled impatience would likely be saying, “Jesus, we don’t have time for this.” And then, what would you think of this “delay” when messengers come from your house and blurt out with all the compassion of a sledgehammer, “Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?” (v. 35)?
- That had to knock Jairus to his knees in profound grief. “I’m too late. I waited too long.” He might have been tempted to think, “The Lord is too late; He waited too long!” But Jesus overheard the announcement, ignored death itself and now addresses Jairus face to face in love, compassion and grace, with these words that every one of us should remember whenever extreme difficulty tries to knock us down, “Do not fear, only believe” (v. 36).

II. "...the LORD is Good to Those Who Wait for Him"

✘ This is a profound insight into the relationship between Jesus and His believing children. Rather than accepting the notion that the messengers conveyed, that Jesus was no longer of any use to Jairus since his daughter had died; that all of this had only been a nuisance to Jesus, Jesus instead quickly gets Jairus back on his feet and shows him that He is always with His children who are in need for the long haul.

→ You see, faith not only comes from God to us, but its true substance and power is seen when the Holy Spirit works to sustain and keep that faith alive every day in every circumstance that we face; assuring us that no matter what happens, we are today and always in God's gracious and saving hand. Yes, Jairus' daughter was dead, but Jairus held on to Jesus in faith.

→ And when they arrived at Jairus' house the challenges to his faith went into full swing. The weeping and the wailing of those in grief was nothing but a bunch of unnecessary "commotion" to Jesus (v.38). So Jesus, paused again and calmly announced, "The child is not dead but sleeping" (v. 39). Here we see the contrast between Jairus' obedient response of faith and the way the mourners viewed Jesus' declaration over death. In unbelief they rejected Jesus and responded with laughter, much like unbelievers laugh at Jesus and us today when we share our belief in His victory over sin and death through the cross and empty tomb.

✘ Yet Jesus remains calm and in control as He takes Jairus and his wife, as well as Peter, James, and John, into the room where a little girl lay dead. With little fanfare, the Author of Life simply reached down, took her by the hand, and said to her, "Talitha cumi," which is Aramaic for "Little girl, I say to you, arise" (v. 41). Now there is no waiting; no hesitation. Verse 42 says, "Immediately the girl got up and began walking." The waiting was over. The Lord had answered. He came in His perfect timing; on His terms, and He brought life, joy, and peace with Him into a situation where death, impatience and conflict were trying their best to take control.

→ So, you tell me: what was Jairus thinking now? Verse 42 says, "they were immediately overcome with amazement." Certainly he and the others were praising God. But I wonder if, after some reflection, Jairus, the synagogue leader who undoubtedly knew his Scriptures well, may have had a couple of verses from our Old Testament Reading going through his heart. "The LORD is my portion ... therefore I will hope in Him" and "It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD" (Lam. 3:24, 26). For his waiting in faith, had now not only brought him the joy of his daughter's new life, but it undoubtedly increased his faith in Jesus as well.

III. Do Not Fear – Only Believe and Wait.

✘ Jairus' story, as well as that of the woman along the road may have happened almost 2000 years ago, but they are our story here today, aren't they, because every one of us one day faces great pain, grief and anxiety deep in our hearts and souls.

→ Maybe it really is a daughter or a son who is ill or who dies and is not raised back to life by Jesus just yet. Maybe it's an ailment we face like the woman in our text; maybe a chronic condition we've struggled with for years or a new one that catches us off guard. Or perhaps it's a broken relationship that hurts just as deeply, or a situation in which we feel trapped with no reasonable way out – be it emotional, financial or spiritual in nature.

✘ Whatever it is, remember Jesus and Jairus. Specifically think of Jesus on the cross, where He closed His eyes and died your death and my death so that He can now take your hand and mine and lift us up upon His arrival and say, "Little child, arise!" Yes, His resurrection is the guarantee we have in faith that death has been defeated – today and forever!

- That does not and cannot ever change. So whatever your need; whatever your concern; whatever your request may be when You approach Jesus your Lord in faith, remember “It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD” (Lam. 3:26).
- And while you wait, walk closely; walk patiently in faith with Your Savior; live daily in his Word of comfort; be with Him here so He can feed you His love and forgiveness; so He can strengthen you with His body and blood at His Table to heal you in your time of need.
- Remember that the LORD is good to those who seek Him (Lam. 3:25) and “though He cause grief, He will have compassion according to the abundance of His steadfast love” (Lam. 3:32).
- ⊗ Or you can simply remember what Jesus said, “Do not fear, only believe” (v.36). Believe in Jesus, the Lord of your life and the Savior of your soul. No matter the wait, that will never change. Amen.