

Grace & Peace from God our Father & our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen

*They couldn't be more different. **One was rich** – rich enough to have servants – **the other was penniless** – having spent all that she had on doctors and medicine to no avail. **One acted in moment of crisis** – his daughter sick with a fever and near death – **the other had learned to live with her illness** having suffered day after day with the hemorrhaging for 12 long years. **One definitely is not accustomed to asking for help**, the other – penniless and without status – has **no option except to ask others** for everything depending on their generosity.*

***Jairus was important and powerful** – a leader of the synagogue – **the woman neither important nor powerful** – merely suffering through her days in the shadow of society. **One commanded respect and deference** from other people, **the other was avoided** for fear of contagion of illness, bad luck, evil spirits. **Jairus publicly seeks help for another** – his 12 year old daughter – the woman secretly hopes only to touch Jesus and find healing in His power **for herself**. You see, **they could not possibly be more different** – **the two people at the center of this morning's gospel**.*

Yet, despite their vastly different circumstances, they come to this teacher, healer, religious rebel – Jesus – as their last and only hope.

How about you? Me?

Have we realized that despite our circumstances, our intelligence, our comfortable homes, cabinets full of medicine, our connection to the world wide web, our extensive or not so extensive network of friends,

our perfect or broken family – have we realized **that this teacher, healer, religious rebel – Jesus – is our last and only hope.**

Do we come to Him secretly and publicly?

All of us publicly profess in the Creed each Sunday that we believe in this Jesus and his cohorts the Father and Holy Spirit, **but do we seek Him out – like Obi-Wan Kenobi – as our only hope?**

I remember *the naïve 18 year old who graduated from high school* believing he *would save the world.* He *quickly discovered how complex, troubled and broken the world and the human species really were.*

The preacher path I pursued, I followed not because I believed that I really had any unique calling or ability, but because I believed that this teacher, healer, religious rebel – Jesus – was the last, best and only hope left to humanity. Thirty-five years later **I believe it more than ever.** Seeing the mess we've made of our world – the planet, society, our relationships and families – ***I can draw no other conclusion.***

Having witnessed first-hand the sordid mess people who have called me pastor have we've made of their lives – their resources, their relationships, their families – ***I can draw no other concluded long ago that I cannot address their brokenness.*** *Having seen the mess I continue to make of my world – my community, this planet, my less than complete dedication to my family, vocation, and society – more than ever, I have come to realize that the teacher, healer, religious rebel –*

Jesus – really is my last, best and only hope.

So, do I seek Jesus out publicly and privately?

Do we come to Him for help despite our wealth and in my poverty?

Do we seek Jesus out in crisis and long suffering matters?

Do we call on Him despite not being accustomed to asking for help or in our dependence on everyone else around us?

Do we come to Jesus when we feel important and powerful or obscurely sitting in the shadows of life?

Do we call on Him for help in even though we command the respect and deference of other people or if other people avoid us?

Is Jesus our go to guy when we seek aid, healing or comfort for other or when we hope that secretly connecting with Him can make us whole again?

I'm here this morning to tell you that none of those circumstances matter or are relevant. Jesus doesn't care about the details we find so important; He just wants us to come to Him, call on Him, be our "go to" guy.

Look at the gospel. Jesus is busy teaching when this Jairus comes to Him asking for help. Does Jesus say, "Wait your turn, or I'll get to it later", or "Can't you see I'm busy. It's important, and Jairus has asked for His help, and Jesus just goes with Him.

Now Jesus is on a new mission – on His way to heal a very important, rich, powerful person's daughter, but when the woman touches Jesus' cloak and power goes out of Him, ***Jesus stops for her.***

Jairus' daughter is still dying; that situation is as critical as ever. In fact, she will die during this unexpected delay, but Jesus stops all the same. He doesn't need to; the healing is already done. She's finally whole again after 12 long years, but that isn't the point. She – the woman who seeks Jesus out – is the point.

Jesus wants the woman to know that what she has done – reaching out to touch Him – was the right thing to do; it was an act of faith and hope that brought healing. ***Jesus is pleased that she's come to Him.***

Unfortunately, a servant comes with the news that the girl is dead. Jesus says to Jairus, ***“Do not fear, only believe.”*** That is to say, ***“Jairus, you've done the right thing seeking me out. I'm in this with you. Whatever happens, I'm in it with you now.”***

His daughter is in fact, dead, but Jesus even has the last word there. As miraculous as raising the girl from the dead with a few simple words is, that's not really the enduring thing here. Let's face it. She will die again, and even if Jairus doesn't live to see that, he'll face the deaths of many other people in the future. ***What remains after the miraculous healing isn't just a live 12 year old daughter, but that no matter what we face, Jesus will handle the situation. Perhaps not miraculously, but now Jairus knows he doesn't need to be afraid because this teacher, healer, religious rebel – Jesus – has demonstrated even what we fear most can't come between us and God.***

Jesus is never to busy to be called on, and when we ask Him to join

us in our circumstances – no matter what they may be – we can trust He won't abandon us, and He can manage whatever happens.

Above all, Jesus wants us to know *“Don't fear, only believe.”*

Who knows? If we seek Him out in our lives, *we like Jairus and his wife – and I cannot help but think the woman – may find ourselves overcome with amazement.*

AMEN !!!