

Facing Tragedy and Death How do I Handle Stress, Anxiety, Disappointment, and Devastation in Life?

Mark 5:21-43

Crossroads, May 16, 2010

- **5 weeks: Fear and Faith**
 - o *Facing our deepest fears and most troubling anxieties*
 - o *See Jesus as he deals with people's fears in Mark 4-5*
 - o *Pray that we see God and our strengthened in faith*
- **Last Week and This Week**
 - o Sandwich – 2 stories told as one – today “the bread”
- **Pray**
- **Skit** – Each week begin with a skit on the passage

READ Mark 5:21-43 {5 min. for skit prep while everyone else read passage}

1) A Matter of Life and Death

- **A Desperate Man**
 - o Jarius – ruler of synagogue (lay leader)
 - o Desperate – fall at Jesus feet, plead
 - o Faith – hand on will heal her
 - o Life and death – she is dying, deteriorating
 - o **APPLY:**
 - Do we come to Jesus with all issues in life?
 - Do we come in times of desperation?
- **A Desperate Woman**
 - o (see Last Week's notes for more)
 - o **Similar:** desperate, verge of death, as good as dead
 - Bleed, spent all, no help, unclean ... 12 years
 - o **Different:** woman, unnamed, broke, unclean
 - o **Similar:** no hope except Jesus, come in faith
 - o **Similar:** Jesus responds to each, as a person
 - o **Woman:** healing physical, emotional, spiritual
 - Calls her out ... to offer real peace!
- **Beyond Desperation**
 - o Return to Jarius, after tragic delay
 - o News – daughter is dead
 - o Why bother teacher – no point to Jesus come

- o **APPLY:**
 - Where is the point of no return?
 - What do you do when you cross that line?
 - Jesus tells Jarius not to give up, even with the news of death

- **Jesus is the Resurrection and Life**

- o **Change of focus** needed – see circumstance or God (same in storm, demon, bleeding)
- o **Crowd not believe** – professional mourners know she is dead, and that Jesus can do nothing
- o So Jesus only brings those with faith in to see it
- o **With a word she is brought back to life** (again, not magic rituals, or even prayer, just pronouncement, as God)
- o She immediately gets up, eats
- o Response – **astonished**
- o Tell no one – why? – how?

- o Shows Jesus is the **resurrection and life** – Raise Lazerus

- o *“As Jesus moves about, He leaves behind him a trail of transformed scenes and changed situations: fishermen no longer at their nets, sick people restored to health, critics confounded, a storm stilled, hunger assuaged, a dead girl raised to life. Jesus' presence is an active and instantly transforming presence. He is never the mere observer of a scene, or the one who waits upon events, but is always the transformer of the scene and the initiator of events.”*
–W.H. Vanstone {quote NIV app commentary page 226}

2) Facing Death

- Raises some issues for us, the first dealing with Death
- **Notes on Resurrection**
 - o Can Jesus still raise dead – yes – but even that temporary
 - o Jarius & Lazarus – point to cross, defeat death for ever

 - o **John 11:25-26** (passage on Lazarus)
 - o *Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"*
 - o Note primary resurrect and life – after die!

- **Facing Your Own Death**

- Lots of passages we could look at
- **I Corinthians 15** – where o death is sting?

- **Hebrews 2:14-15**
- **14**Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil— **15**and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

- **Revelation** – righteous that are killed receive crown of life, resurrection, second death ...
- **Revelation 21:1-4**
- **1**Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. **2**I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. **3**And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. **4**He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

- **Apply:**
 - Classic Question: If die, what tell God for why He should let you into heaven?
 - If not Jesus alone if unsure, address tonight
 - If sure, can face death – it is only beginning!

- **Facing the Death of Loved Ones and Friends**

- Mourn – that is appropriate for them and you
- **Romans 12:15**
- **15**Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.

- Encourage their faith – not mourning with no hope
- **I Thessalonians 4:13-18**
- **13**Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. **14**We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. **15**According to the

*Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. **16**For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. **17**After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. **18**Therefore encourage each other with these words.*

- **Example: children at Ethan's funeral**

3) Facing Disappointment and Tragedy

- In Mark we saw 4 events, the culmination being death, but all having elements of death, tragedy, discouragement...
- So here are some broader lessons for us for any challenge

- **Notes on Tragedy and Pain**
 - **Come to Jesus** – he is the only answer
 - Jesus has the **power** to step in – even in death
 - Jesus **timing** not ours – sleep in boat, immediate come to Jarius, but then **delays** looking for woman
 - Jesus may let things **get worse** – even worst possible
 - Remember, Even resurrection in this life is **temporary**
 - **Not all in this life will be resolved** in this life

- **Facing Tragedy in Your Life**
 - We are at **different places** in life and maturity – something devastating for me may look trivial to others – but it is still devastating to me – a place where I need to meet God

 - **Example: Me when Pastor Solt left CCBFC**

- **Psalm 23:**
 - 1 The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.*
 - 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters,*
 - 3 he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.*
 - 4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.*
 - 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.*
 - 6 Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.*

- **Facing Tragedy in the lives of Loved Ones and Friends**

- Be with them, don't need to speak
 - **Example: Story of Frank sit with N.**
- Don't assume / claim you know what God is doing
 - **Example: Job's Counsellors**
- Don assume God is doing something, and it is good
 - **Example: Job's intro and conclusion, Rom 8**
- Encourage, Challenge them
 - **Example: story of John turn on light for N.**
- Give God space to Work
 - **Example: story of Dave at staff meet with N.**
- Summary: Be Christ to them

4) Christ gives strength to Believe

-One last observation from **Mark 5:36**

- **Where does Faith come in?**

- After news of daughters death Jesus says to Jarius:
 - *"Don't be afraid, just believe"*
- Jesus knows the temptation at that moment is to loose faith, and so he speaks faith to Jarius

- **Faith for Others**

- Do you have faith Jesus can work in people around you?
- If not, ask for faith (help my unbelief)
- If so, pray in faith, and encourage the other person in faith
- **Example: Prayer meeting, pastor "I will have faith for you"**

- **Faith from Christ**

- Jesus is not just solution to problems that we fear, he is the source of faith itself
- If you lack faith, ask Christ for that as well
- Mark 9:24 – father with spirit-possessed child
- "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!"

- **NEXT WEEK:** More on Anxiety, Fear, Faith and the work of Christ

Conclusion:

- How are you facing the disappointments, discouragements, and tragedies in your life? Do you see the hopelessness of the circumstances or the God who can calm the seas and raise the dead!
- Are you ready to face death when it comes to others, and to you?
- Where your faith is weak or wavering, will you go to others who can walk with you, and go to Jesus, the source of faith, and the one who truly is the resurrection and the life.