



STORIES OF LIFE!

The Gospel of Luke

Stories of Desperate Faith!

Luke 8:40-56

Message #28 of 50 – S807

Sermon given on September 2, 2018



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

Stories of Desperate Faith!

Luke 8:40-56

Opening Comments

- Turn to **Luke 8**
- We continue a study through the Gospel of Luke – **The Stories of Life**
- It was hard to read this week's text and not think about the Negrete family and little Kassandra
- Also, my little granddaughter Aurora – not sure what is going on with her yet
- Life is filled with times when we need to exercise faith
- It is God's desire that we would walk by faith **Habakkuk 2:4**
Behold the proud, his soul is not upright in him; but the just shall live by his faith.
- That means that everything we do, think, or say is done trusting God completely
- That is not always that easy to do
- In fact, it can be exceedingly hard to do
- And the simple fact is that the stronger your faith is, the bigger the storms are that you can face
- It doesn't matter how strong your faith is, sometimes what comes your way is overwhelming
- And one of the things we are going to see today, you don't need perfect faith for God to act on your behalf
- In this message we will see two desperate people bring what faith they have to Jesus and miracles happen
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **Stories of Desperate Faith!**
- Luke 8 began with the parable of the soils
- Faith grows in a heart that allows the Word of God to take root
- And last week we looked at two accounts, both of them desperate
- Jesus and the disciples were caught in a storm – threatened to sink their boat – Jesus proved His power over the natural world by rebuking the wind and waves

- Once they got to the other side, met by a man who had thousands of demons in Him – Jesus commanded them to come out – proving He has power over the spiritual world
- In today's text we will see that Jesus has power over life and death
- And does it through encounters with two desperate people
- **Luke 8:40-42**
- You must know that Jairus has to be desperate to come to Jesus
- 'ruler of the synagogue' = person of influence and importance
- He would have exhausted every other means to save his daughter before he came to Jesus
- Mark's gospel says 'she lies at the point of death'
- As a pastor I have seen this same kind of scene play out many times
- Someone or a couple will come to me and tell me their marriage is 'lies at the point of death'
- They have waited until only a miraculous divine intervention can save their marriage
- They wait until they are desperate
- Thankfully, God does work miracles, but sadly, sometimes only one person wants it
- This man comes to Jesus in his desperation
- We can't be certain what he believed about Jesus
- He came with whatever kind of faith he had, and begged Jesus to help
- Without hesitation, or rebuke, or comment Jesus goes with Jairus
- Unfortunately, for Jairus, there is a problem – 'the multitudes thronged Him' – crowding very closely around Him
- Imagine Jairus pushing through the crowd to make a way for Jesus to get to his daughter before it is too late
- At the same time someone is pushing through the crowd to get to Jesus – our next desperate person
- **Luke 8:43**
- This woman has been living with a flow of blood for 12 years
- As a man, hard to imagine what that would be like – ladies have some idea
- Turn to **Leviticus 15**
- This was more than just inconvenient

- It affected her life in ways that most modern readers can't understand
- The book of Leviticus is filled with instructions about how the Jews were to live in the community of God
- Included regularly occurring things like a woman's menstrual cycle
- **Leviticus 15:19**
- 'unclean' = ceremonially separated from God – had to perform ritual/sacrifice to restore right standing with God
- This woman's situation is also described
- **Leviticus 15:25**
- For 12 years she had been unclean
- Turn back to **Luke 8**
- Not only does that mean she was prohibited from public worship, everything or anyone she touched would become unclean too
- It was grounds for divorce – she couldn't visit another person's home – people wouldn't visit her home
- She spent everything she had – she had nothing left – she was desperate
- And so, she does something desperate
- **Luke 8:44**
- Matthew's gospel says she believed that by doing this she would be healed
- Mark's gospel says that she felt the healing happen 'immediately'
- Jesus felt it happen too
- **Luke 8:45-46**
- Dozens, maybe even hundreds of people had touched Jesus, but there was something different about her touch
- Hers was the touch of faith
- Jesus tolerated the multitudes thronging Him, but He noticed the one who 'touched' Him in faith
- That should challenge us all to examine how we are approaching Jesus
- Are we like the multitude, there to be close to Jesus, close to the action, or are we like the woman, reaching out to touch Jesus in faith?
- A question I asked myself as I was studying, 'Why did Jesus call her out?'
- I believe there is a reason why He did this - To ease her conscience

- **Luke 8:47**
- ‘was not hidden, she came trembling’ – she felt guilty about what she had done
- She has been healed and she can rejoice in that, but part of her wonders if she has done something to offend God
- Jesus is going to put her mind at ease
- **Luke 8:48**
- ‘Daughter’ – only place in the Bible where Jesus addresses a woman like this
- ‘your faith has made you well’
- Her faith was imperfect, maybe even superstitious, but it was real, and the Holy Spirit responded to it by healing her, and Jesus honored it
- ‘Go in peace’ = God’s not mad at you
- I believe Jesus also did this to make her story public
- We can only imagine what poor Jairus is feeling right now
- Then he gets crushing news
- **Luke 8:49**
- The girl is dead – ‘do not trouble...’ = nothing can be done
- **Luke 8:50**
- Jairus believed the report of the messengers and believed it was hopeless
- Jesus called him to believe Him instead
- **Luke 8:51-53**
- Chill, Jesus says, she is not dead, she is sleeping
- Was she dead, or not? She was physically dead **R. Kent Hughes** Jesus was interpreting death from God’s viewpoint. True death – eternal death – is separation of the soul from God, not the soul from the body. Her body was asleep, but Jesus would bring it back to life.
- Several places in the Bible, especially in Paul’s writings, the physical death of a Christian is referred to as sleep
- Jesus knows that God wants to raise her from the dead – He is going to wake her up
- **Luke 8:54-55**
- When she died, her spirit or soul departed her body – Jesus brought it back
- ‘rose immediately’ – sense is she jumped to her feet

- From the absence of all life, to full of life
- Then Jesus does something that is a little hard to understand
- **Luke 8:56**
- The Bible doesn't explain it
- One commentator I read suggested that this was something too precious to share with people who had no knowledge of God
- Jesus made the woman share her story, and then told the parents of the girl not to share theirs
- Both the woman with the flow of blood and Jairus were desperate
- The woman believed that if she touched Jesus, she would be healed
- It was not the touch that made her well – it was her faith in Jesus
- Jairus waited until the last moment, before humbling himself and coming to Jesus
- Jesus told him when it was hopeless, if you believe, have faith, she will be made well – it was his faith that witnessed this great miracle
- Two desperate situations, and a little bit of imperfect faith in Jesus released the power of God
- Where do you need the power of God to be released in or around your life
- How desperate will you have to become before you believe?
- Will you be like the woman and 'spend all your livelihood' before you reach out in faith to Jesus
- Or will you be like Jairus and wait until the last possible moment before you will humble yourself before Jesus?
- Wouldn't it be better to reach out and touch Jesus in faith right now?
- Don't wait until you are desperate for Jesus to act on your behalf
- If you are anything like me, when something goes wrong in my life, I want to do something to fix it
- Jesus was once asked a question that reveals to me that I usually approach most problems from the wrong perspective
- This was the question **John 6:28**
Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?"
- What is the most important thing for us to be doing? **John 6:29**
Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."
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- It is not about what you are doing, but about what you are believing
- Your faith is the most precious thing you possess
- What you believe about God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and the Bible sets the course of your life
- It is how you navigate the stormy waters of life, it is how we face the spiritual battles that will come, it is how we handle physical problems and even how we face death
- Your faith doesn't have to be perfect, but it has to be real
- Even a mustard-seed sized faith can move mountains
- Jesus told Jairus – 'Do not be afraid, only believe...'
- Where do you need to see Jesus work in your life?
- Would Jesus say the same thing to you – only believe?
- Reach out and touch Jesus in faith today, whether your faith is great or small, perfect, or flawed – take what faith you have and reach out to Him today – He will notice, He will respond, and who knows if maybe His power might be released in some radical way – believe!
- **Pray!**