

Discussion Guide

Week of December 9, 2012

Mark 5:21–43

Passage Overview:

In Mark 4:35–5:43, Mark brings together four stories from around the Sea of Galilee. Together they demonstrate the complete authority of Jesus over the natural world (4:35–41), the spirit world (5:1–20), sickness (5:25–34), and death (5:21–24, 35–43). Specifically, Mark 5:21–43 interweaves two accounts from Jesus' life. The second story, that of a woman with a hemorrhage (vv25–34), is sandwiched between the two parts of the first story, that of the raising of Jairus' daughter (vv21–25, 35–43). Whenever two stories are juxtaposed in this way, it is safe to assume that the author wants us to make comparisons and draw contrasts as a way to learn from the two incidents.

Understanding God's Word—Read Mark 5:21–43.

- How are Jairus and the sick woman different? How are they similar?
- Read verses 24 and 30–32. If a large crowd “pressed” around him, why didn't anyone else but the woman receive Jesus' power?
- How do we see Jesus' complete authority over sickness and death?

Living and Applying God's Word

- In vv25–26, the woman had essentially given up hope for any human help (not even doctors). What does this teach us about coming to Christ by faith?
- Read verses 27–34.
 - What are the weaknesses or flaws in the woman's faith?
 - How is this story a great encouragement for people with weak or flawed faith? How does it remind us that it's not the strength of our faith but the object of our faith that saves us?
- Read vv21–25 and 35–43. How does Jairus show faith in Jesus? What does the delay in ministering to Jairus teach us? Consider the following: Jesus does not prefer those with more money or influence or stronger faith. He comforts and heals an unclean woman with a chronic problem and seemingly weak faith, causing a religious leader with “higher quality” faith to wait.

Turning to God in Faith and Repentance

- Do Jesus' miracles mean that Christians today can expect a life free of troubles such as sickness? Why not? Why is this kind of thinking dangerous?
- To have faith in Christ, you cannot look to him as a means to a happy life, good career or status—but as an *alternative* to them. (Though you can be a Christian and have a strong family or career!) Rather, a Christian has come to see all the world's resources and promises as ultimately inadequate. How have you made an idol out of family, career, or the quest for happiness? How have these things proven to be counterfeit “gods”?
- How might the disciples' lives have been changed after witnessing these events? How can our lives change as a result of believing the truth found in this passage?

Prayer:

Thank God that he sent his Son to make the unclean clean, to restore the outcast, and even to conquer death. Pray also for Highland Church and its service to those in Bibb City.

Announcements

- Ladies' Lunch (noon, Dec. 11) *RSVP to sigourney@insidecrosspointe.com.*
- Clement Arts Christmas Concert/Benefit for Maguire Family Adoption (7 p.m., Dec. 14)
- Christmas Eve Service (6 p.m., Dec. 24)
- Ski Retreat (Jan. 3–6) *RSVP to will@insidecrosspointe.com.*