



- Have you ever lost your confidence?
  - Free throws to win the game?
  - Time to give the big speech?
  - 7<sup>th</sup> Grade – Asking Sydra to the dance
- Confidence really matters, doesn't it?
  - It matters in sports. It matters at work. It matters in life.
  - What gives you confidence in life?
  - How confident are you?
- **Big Idea: When we call on Christ, we can come with confidence.**
- Read Luke 8:40-56
- Pray

These verses from Luke 8 have a lot to say about the confidence we have in Christ. And from them, we learn that the first reason why those who call on Christ we can come with confidence is because...

### **1.) Our confidence is in Christ's identity, not our own.**

To begin, we are blessed to notice that this passage contains a story within a story. That is, our passage for today begins and ends with the account of Jairus. However, right in the middle of this narrative about Jairus, we encounter the miraculous story of a bleeding woman, whose name is unknown, but whose problem is dire. And, in the juxtaposition of these two different, yet concurrent,

encounters with Jesus, we discover a marvelous truth about our confidence in Christ, which is this: True confidence in life does not depend on people. It does not depend on you, or on me, or on any other person or group of people that has ever existed... except for One person, the Lord, Jesus Christ.

To see this truth in the text, we need only take a look at the vast difference between the two individuals who come to Christ for healing. We meet the first one in verse 41—a man named Jairus—and we learn that he was a ruler of the synagogue, which means that he was most likely the religious official in charge of making arrangements for synagogue and its services. In contemporary church terms, he would probably be most equivalent to someone like the Chairman of the Deacons. This man was respected. This man was influential. This man was an important representative of the Jewish faith.

Not only was he respected, influential, and important, but from what we learn about him in this passage, Jairus seems to have been a good person as well. For example, we see in him what seems to be humility in verse 41, where he bows low at Jesus' feet. We observe his great care and compassion in verse 42 in the fact that he is making every possible effort to save his precious little daughter. And, throughout this passage, we also witness his great faith in Christ. In fact, this same story is related in both Matthew's Gospel and in Mark's, and in Matthew 9:18, Jairus' great faith rings forth abundantly when he says to Jesus, "*My daughter has just died. But come and put your hand on her, and she will live.*"

Thus, in Jairus we see a respected religious leader who is not only very influential but who appears to be a generally good guy as well. Consequently, if there was anyone to whom Jesus would listen, surely it was Jairus. If anyone could have earned Christ's favor, surely it was him. If anyone could have confidence in his own righteousness, surely Jairus was that man. Surely that is why Jesus would heal his daughter.

But, wait... Jairus is not the only individual in our text who calls on Christ for healing. No, there is someone else, and her story interrupts his. In stark contrast to his situation, in verse we encounter a woman who was anything but important, or influential, or respected. We next meet a bleeding woman in verse 43. Whereas Jairus was important, she was considered insignificant. While the people are

crowding and clamoring to see Jesus attend to the request of Jairus, they all but trample on her, taking no notice that she is even there. Whereas Jairus is influential, we see in verse 47 that this woman was doing all she could to go unnoticed.

And whereas Jairus was respected, she was an outcast from society. According to Jewish law, a man who so much as touched a menstruating woman became ceremonially unclean, and this was true whether her bleeding was normal or, in this woman's case, the result of illness. Therefore, to protect themselves from religious defilement, Jewish men would very intentionally and very carefully have avoided touching, speaking to, or even looking in the direction of someone like this bleeding woman.

Consequently, whereas Jairus comes to Christ and boldly voices his need, the best that this seriously ill woman can do is to sneak up behind Him and touch the edge of His cloak. And when Jesus summons her to public attention, we find her very reluctantly coming forward in verse 47, where Scripture tells us that she *"came trembling and fell at His feet."*

Why was she so afraid? I mean, she had just been instantly and miraculously cured, merely because she touched the cloak of Christ. But, you see, she wasn't supposed to do that. She wasn't supposed to touch anyone at all, let alone an influential Jewish man like Jesus. She had to know what would happen if the crowd found out what she had done. Surely they would ridicule her. Surely they would revile her. They might even rage against her, reminding her that her protracted illness was a sure sign that God had rejected her. Yet... mercifully... magnificently... miraculously... upon her public profession of her faith in verse 47, Jesus says, *"Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace."*

Although the crowd wanted nothing to do with this outcast woman, Jesus calls her "Daughter." Although the crowd was certain that God reviled her, Jesus assures her of redemption. Although the crowd cursed her, Jesus cured her.

Indeed, in this text, we see that Jesus attends to the needs of both Jairus, who was highly respected, and this bleeding woman, who was reviled. Here, we

witness our Lord healing both the important and the insignificant, both the influential and the ignored.

And in this great disparity between the outstanding and the outcast, we see the glory of the truth at hand. Could it be clearer that salvation has nothing to do with us, but everything to do with Christ? Jesus didn't help Jairus because he was a good and important person. He helped him because he had faith. And Jesus didn't heal the bleeding woman because she was lowly and afflicted. He healed her because she had faith. He met their needs for redemption because they knew He was the only one who could. // They were saved not because of who they were, but because of who Christ is.

Two thousand years later, nothing has changed. Although the crowd says, "Be a good enough person and you will be saved," we know better. Although the crowd says "Blessed are the rich and the popular," we know the truth. Although the crowd says "You can make it on your own," we cannot be fooled. For we worship a God who declares, "*All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*" (Romans 3:23). We love a Lord who says, "*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven*" (Matthew 5:3). And we bow to the one about whom the Apostle Peter declares, "*Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.*" (Acts 4:12).

We bear the name of the Son of Man. We call on the grace of the Son of God. We rely on the righteousness of the incarnate Son of God. We call upon the name of Jesus Christ, and because we call on His name, we can come with complete confidence today! We can come with confidence because our redemption is in His identity, not our own. Because He is holy, we are made holy. Because He died, we too can die to sin. Because He rose again, we too can have victory over death. Because He lives, we too will live with Him in His kingdom forever.

With that said, let me ask you: How confident are you today? Is your confidence in your identity, or in His? If you truly call upon the identity of Christ, then you live with a confidence that this world can simply never afford.

The second reason why those who call on Christ we can come with confidence is this...

## 2.) Our confidence is in Christ's love, not our own.

It strikes me as I read this passage that, had Jesus not stopped and intentionally pointed her out, the people all around Him that day would have completely overlooked this woman in need. Notice that, when Jesus asks the crowd who touched Him in verse 45, nobody knows. They hadn't seen her. They hadn't perceived her problem. They hadn't noticed as she navigated through the dense crowd, stretched out her desperate hand, and touched the edge of His cloak. They hadn't watched as she silently celebrated in the wonderful wake of her instant healing. In the moment of her need, their love was left lacking.

But not Jesus. Even amidst the crushing crowds and pushy people... even amidst all the blitz of activity that surrounds our Lord in this text... even amidst the frenzy to save Jairus' daughter..... Jesus still notices the nobody... He still sees the insignificant... He still loves the lowly. His mercy is alert. His care is prepared. His love is found faithful. And in this moment of compassion in action, we see that, although the love of people often falters, the love of our Lord never will.

You see, people will often love things that they ought to leave alone and leave people they ought to love. But Jesus never will. In selfishly seeking to serve themselves, sinners will often lose sight of the sick. But Jesus never will. In their wants for this world, people will walk all over the wounded. But Jesus never will. Jesus never will. Jesus never will because His love for us is unfailing. As Psalm 32:10 triumphantly declares, *“Many are the woes of the wicked, but the LORD's unfailing love surrounds the man who trusts in him.”*

Therefore, as followers of Jesus Christ, we are called to be Christlike and commanded to love one another. In John 13:35, Jesus challenges us with this statement: *“By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”* You see, as a congregation of people who profess allegiance to Jesus Christ, you and I are expected to love each other deeply. And in light of His unfailing love, how could we respond otherwise? In light of these truths, let us obey the command and really love one another!

Indeed, I tell you this morning that the love of this congregation ought to be loud! Let it call out into the streets and beckon people to come and experience the radical transformation of heart that comes only in Jesus Christ. Let our love be loud! Let it pour forth in sincere compassion and concern and in Christlike care for the lost... for the lowly... and for the lied to. Let our love be loud! Let us be doing our all to aid the ailing, heal the hurting, and save the sinful. Oh, brothers and sisters, let our love be loud! Let it ring among us a mellifluous melody of faith, a beautiful harmony of hope, a sweet song of forgiveness, and a jubilant jamboree of joy! Let our love be loud, and, oh, how loud our love can be by the Spirit of God at work within us! Let us, then, seek His grace and live out His love.

However, please hear this: As great a love as we have received from Christ... and as powerfully as that love can move among us and bless others... and as much as authentic love for one another can resplendently reflect the great kindness of our King... in spite of all of this, our ultimate confidence is not a confidence in the love of people.

No, our greatest confidence is, rather, in the love of *one* Person. This Person dared to eat with outcasts. This Person reached out and touched lepers. Most of all, this Person demonstrates His own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, He gave His life for us. While we were still vile, and wretched, and unclean, He took the punishment for our sins. While we were lost, and naked, and blind, He paid the price for our shame. This Man is Jesus Christ, and there is no greater love than His. As John 15:13 declares, “*Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.*”

Where is your hope? Where have you placed your confidence? Is it in imperfect love, or is it in the only love that never fails? Please know this today: When we call upon the love of Christ, we claim a confidence that cannot be shaken.

Finally, those who call on Christ can come with confidence because...

### **3.) Our confidence is in Christ's power, not our own.**

-- This is certainly not the perspective of the world, is it?

- *The Secret* by Rhonda Byrne and “word of faith” theology.
- Self-help and self-actualization therapeutic culture.
- The “it’s all for me, all by me, and all up to me” mentality of modern living.

However, as we consider the source of real power, it is very helpful to note what Luke reveals about the bleeding woman in verse 43, where he writes, “*A woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years, but no one could heal her.*” Notice: “*No one could heal her.*” On this point, Mark’s parallel account provides a bit more detail. In 5:25-26, He writes, “*And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse.*”

We see here that this bleeding woman had searched her world over for a cure. She had gone to the doctors. She had consulted the so-called “experts.” She had given worldly solutions every penny she had, but to no avail; all of them were waterless clouds. Not only was she not healed, but with every suggestion of the world, her condition only worsened. Every cure was a curse, every treatment a torment. The powers of the world were completely powerless against her disease.

Similarly, consider the case of Jairus. As he comes to Christ in verses 41-42, his daughter is dying, and neither he nor the hosts of mourners gathered at his house could do anything to save her themselves. Then, in verse 49, he receives news that his daughter has died, and for him the matter seems settled. In his mind, and in the minds of the many mourners at his home, there is nothing more that could be done. Dead was dead, and she was gone. No power in all the world could save her now. And they were right. For just as it was with the bleeding woman, so it was also with the daughter of Jairus: Human power need not apply.

But praise be to God that there is an infinitely greater, divine power revealed in Lord Jesus Christ! Where we are weak, He is strong... Where we are frail, He is forceful... And where our strength fails, His power is perfect. In verse 48, Jesus looks at this desperate, bleeding woman—who had been longing for a cure and searching for it for twelve excruciating years—He looks at her and says the blessed phrase that she had long desired to hear, stating, “*Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace.*”

Furthermore, in verse 54, the matchless power of Jesus Christ is once again on display as He takes the daughter of Jairus by the hand and speaks the words that He alone can empower, saying, “*My child, get up!*” Immediately, as verse 55 declares, “*Her spirit returned, and at once she stood up.*” In Luke 8:22-25, we celebrated our Lord’s complete command over everything natural. And in the next passage, verses 26-39, we rejoiced in His absolute authority over everything supernatural. And this morning, let us delight in the fact that His supreme power over all things extends all the way to death and beyond.

Finally, to close this morning, please hear this: You and I are a lot like the bleeding woman in the text. She was plagued with sickness; we were plagued with sin... Like her, our sickness is a disease for which the world offers no cure... Like her, every remedy of the world will only make our problem worse. However, just as it was with her, so it remains for us: We can come to Christ with confidence because genuine faith in Him still comes with divine power to heal us forever. Because He is righteous, we can be made righteous. Because He died, we can die to sin. Because He lives, we have power to truly live.

Please hear this as well: You and I are a lot like Jairus. Our loved ones are dying from this sickness of sin, and there is no remedy to be found in this world. However, like Jairus, we can call on Christ with confidence because His grace is sufficient for all who will believe. Where there is sin without human cure, Jesus alone has power to heal. Where death has gripped our loved ones through sin, Jesus alone has power to revive. Where we are help Romans 5:6 declares, “*At just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.*”

Where is your confidence today? Is it in the power of the world or in the matchless power of Christ? Are you relying on yourself or are you relying on your Savior? When we call on Christ we come to a power that heals the sick and raises the dead.

What joy we have in Jesus Christ! In this world of chaos caused by sin, we need not lose confidence in Him. Rather, when we call on Christ we can come with confidence because our confidence is not in ourselves or in this sinful world.

Rather, when we call on Christ, we can come with confidence in His identity. We come with confidence in His love. And we come with confidence in His power.

In conclusion, then, knowing who Jesus is, how confident are you this morning? Let us place all of our confidence in Him and live in the light of His identity, love, and power for the glory of God.