**Only Believe**

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First of all, let me thank God and the Pastors, Elders of our church for giving me this opportunity to share this morning. Today I would like you to turn your attention to a passage from the Gospel of Mark 5: 22-42.

If you look into this passage, the author has narrated two key incidents/stories in one flow (passage). The First incident is about Jairus and his daughter. And the author brings in another story in between, which is the story of the woman who had the flow of blood for 12 years. However, due to the time limitations, we would go through the life of Jairus and his daughter and leave the story of the Woman for some other time.

Here bible says in verse 22, "And behold, one of the rulers of the synagogue came, Jairus by name. And when he saw Him, he fell at His feet." So the Scripture is clear that Jairus was a religious leader. And almost all biblical scholars assume that he was a very well-known, respected leader and esteemed in the city just for the fact that he was a religious leader. Religious leaders had immense power and influence in a highly orthodox religious society. So, like all other religious leaders, Jairus had definitely heard about Jesus, that Jesus heals the sick, feeds the hungry and so on. But he was never a follower of Christ.

Here is a man with money, power, respect, and status in the society. But all of his wealth and status amounted to nothing the day he knew his daughter was dying. And he got only one daughter. Have we ever encountered in life where all our wealth, power and positions add to nothing? Sometimes we might feel such deep sorrow or pain even our parents, spouse, or best friend can't help us. I remember one such incident. I'm very close to my younger sister and try to be there for her whenever she needs me. Once, my sister was going through a tough time in her personal life. And being a good brother, I offered her my sincere help (emotionally and spiritually). I told her, "I'm there for you, we shall face it together, and everything will be fine." But she replied, "Nobody can help me at this time except God." That's the reality of life. Jairus is in one such situation where all his power and position add to nothing. And he is in a very desperate situation, and he came to Jesus. Here we can see an epistemological shift (as theologians say) in the life of Jairus, which means all the theoretical knowledge Jairus had about Jesus became experiential/personal to him. His pain brought him to Jesus. Sometimes we have to thank God for some of the painful situations we have been through. It has brought us closer to Jesus. The bitter financial struggles we have been through have taught us to trust in Jesus. I didn't mean that everyone meets God only in their pain. No, not at all! But God can turn all your pain for good to his glory. Remember, God, can use all our past and present pain for his glory. Tozer says, "God does his deepest work in our darkest hour." And here, Jairus came to Jesus at his darkest hour. (Let all our struggles bring us closer to Jesus, every challenge is an opportunity to know God more intimately)

In general, the religious leaders (except very few, e.g., Nicodemus) didn't have good relations with Jesus. They were looking for an opportunity to get rid of Him. We do not know whether Jairus was a silent admirer of Jesus or was he among those who were against Jesus. Nevertheless, when he came to Jesus and prayed for his daughter's healing, Scripture says Jesus went with him without any further questions. V 24**"**So Jesus went with him, and a great multitude followed Him and thronged Him." That's the compassion of our master. Psalms 51:17 says,

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit,

 A broken and a contrite heart—

 These, O God, You will not despise."

Jesus accepts anyone who comes to him with the heart of humility. It doesn't matter who you were, what you have done in your past. He will never say you are too sinful to be in His presence. Bible says, once we all were the enemies of God but reconciled to Him through the death of Jesus Christ (Rom 5:10). Therefore, come to him as you are, with all your burden.

As soon as Jairus asked Jesus to heal her daughter, Jesus went with him. That's good news. It seems that his prayers are answered immediately. That's a fantastic news. However, soon after they began their journey, they were interrupted by a woman who had been suffering from the flow of blood for 12 years. Haven't we felt the same thing in our lives too? An unexpected challenge surfaces when other struggles are seemingly getting better. That's exactly what happened in the life of Jairus too. Everything is fine; they both are walking to the house of Jairus until this lady appears. Now it seems that the priority of Jesus is shifted from Jairus to the woman. Jesus began to talk to her, comfort her. On one side, it's a good news that someone is getting healed, but on the other hand, it's a very stressful moment for Jairus. Jairus was probably thinking in his mind, "Jesus, she has been sick for the last 12 years, and definitely, she can manage one more day or few more hours, we can even come back and talk to her, but my daughter is almost dying. My situation deserves more attention, Lord; why don't you come with me fast?

I only have a little time to touch on this part because it is a subject for a sermon by itself. However, I want to share one thing: "God also uses our journey to bless others, we might be going through a tough time, yet God uses our journey to comfort and bless others." It's not because we are no longer his priority, but He wants to use us for his glory. Yes, even in our pain.

Verse 35 says, "While He was still speaking, some came from the ruler of the synagogue's house who said, "**Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further**?" Now the **difficult has become impossible**(from the human perspective)**.**Jairus's problem was difficult when he came to Jesus, but now it seems impossible. His daughter is dead. In fact, his people (the people from Jairus's house) had lost hope. That's why they asked Jairus not to trouble Jesus anymore (V 35 (b) Why trouble the Teacher any further?). That's such a difficult time for Jairus.

V 36, As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, He said to the ruler of the synagogue, "Do not be afraid; only believe."As soon as Jesus heard those things, He told the ruler, "**Do not fear, only believe**." What a beautiful passage that is. Jairus had hope that his daughter would be healed. But now his hope is shattered. There are voices of negativity all around him. There is no point in praying anymore. It won't ever happen. There is no hope for your non-Christian spouse, teenage son/daughter. It's over, Jairus, it is over. That was the echo of the words that were spoken by his people.

Always know in this faith journey, things are not over until your Lord says it's over. Your atheist friend might tell you it's over. Your friends might say to you there is no future. Oh, there can be a lot of noises around, the noises of doubt, questions, past, hurt and unbelief. In this faith journey, there will be times when your faith will be shaken. Christian journey may not be easy at times. However, remember "being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;" (Phil 1:6). When you are alone, overwhelmed with anxieties and worry, when your eyes are flooded with tears thinking about the past and the future, just trust his voice "only believe". My daughter, my son, only believe in me. And the bible says He went to Jairus's house and brought his daughter back to life. V 41&42 "Then He took the child by the hand, and said to her, "Talitha, cumi," which is translated, "Little girl, I say to you, arise."Immediately the girl arose and walked, for she was twelve years of age. And they were **overcome with great amazement**. **Sometimes delayed answers are much more glorious. We are reminded that we need to trust God in matters of timing and matters of apparent delay. Remember, God is never in a hurry – God's timing is perfect. And Acknowledge God knows exactly what he is doing.**

**Conclusion**

Sometimes Faith journey may seem like a journey through the paths of uncertainties. Things may not make any sense. Why did this happen? You may even ask, Lord, what's going on? Where are you? I can't see nor feel you. Where are you, Lord? So many prophets in the bible have asked those questions. A cry of feeling alone, lost and broken. May I take you to the cross of Calvary for a second? My king, my master, is lying on the cross. He was rejected, broken and beaten for you and for me.

Mathew 27;46 says, "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" That was the greatest cry of rejection, loss and pain. Through the cross, you are always accepted by the Father in Christ Jesus. Amidst all these negative noises, can you hear the voice of your master, my son, my daughter, "Do not fear, only believe." I'm still your God, and I'm in control of your life.

**Questions for the connect group discussion.**

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1, Is there anything that you are patiently waiting/praying for a breakthrough? If so, what are the other passages from the bible that comes to your mind which encourage you to consistently pray and trust in God (E.g., Hannah)? Share your thoughts with your group.

2, what are the common negative voices that drain your faith (e.g., media)? And how can we overcome that (e.g., regular fellowship, speaking words of faith into each other's life)

3, Do you have testimonies where you have experienced supernatural miracles? (it can be very small/ insignificant to others, but it's okay) Can you share those briefly?

Finally, pray for each other.