

*“Living with Confidence in God’s Providing”*

Text: Mark 5:22-34, 39-42

It was during the time of the construction of the Golden Gate Bridge over San Francisco Bay. In the beginning, construction was far behind schedule because several workers had accidentally fallen from the bridge to their deaths. Finally, someone suggested that a gigantic net to catch those who fell be hung under the bridge.

It was a costly venture, but the engineers decided to go ahead with the suggested plan. Once it was installed, work was hardly interrupted. A worker or two fell into the net but were saved. Ultimately, all the time lost to fear was regained by replaced by faith in the net.

As we have paid nothing for God’s eternal which we know through his Son and our Savior Jesus Christ, nothing for our faith, we then understand the greatness of His grace to us in Christ. There is a great difference between what we deserve, which we hear of so often today, and what we receive freely. Let the “deserved” be written on the floor of hell and the “receiving” be inscribed forever in the rooms of heaven as Jesus promised. (John 14:2)

Our text for today contains as it were a story within a story. The main focus is the synagogue ruler Jairus who seeks Jesus regarding his daughter for help and the ailing woman who simply acts. Both are examples of faith that trust in what Jesus can do. Knowing what we know about Jesus we too are called and enabled to respond following their example of-

## **LIVING WITH CONFIDENCE IN GOD'S PROVIDING**

### **I. Regardless of what we are**

### **II. Faith grasps what Jesus can do**

#### **I.**

**A.** After his meeting with the gentile Cornelius, St. Peter said, "Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him." (Acts 10:34-35) In our text, we have two people who are fellow Israelites but their position in the community of faith differs considerably. Both approached Jesus in faith confident of what he could do and their needs were provided for by him.

There is one standard of salvation for all people regardless of national origin or position. Sometimes position is used as a lever by people, believing that they have the inside track because of who they are or what they have done. That really has little to do with faith, and we see none of that in the case of Jairus. In a similar case regarding the Centurion, the people appealed to Jesus: "He is worthy to have you do this for him, for he loves our nation, and he is the one who built our synagogue." (Luke 7:4-5) In neither case did either Jairus or the Centurion demand this favor of Jesus, but trusted in his providing.

God's timing is not our timing, and it would appear that Jesus response was too late, but as our story develops he was not as his brought the daughter of Jairus back to life. As one who supervised the synagogue life, he now saw the outcome of what God could do in the life of his people.

**B.** The woman and her health concern is an entirely different issue. She was one who had this hemorrhaging for twelve years. She had tried any number of medical solutions for her problem, but to no avail. On top of that

she had exhausted her financial resources in seeking healing from her disease.

In addition to her financial and physical plight, she had a worship problem because she was considered unclean and she had been that way for many years. This made it impossible to be involved in public worship according to Levitical laws of worship life in Israel.

Her response is interesting in that she doesn't ask Jesus for healing, but rather goes directly to him. She knows that if she can only touch him, that her problem will be gone. Jesus tells her: "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace and be healed of your disease."

## II.

A. Both of these people were in extreme need. The Centurion was grief stricken over his daughter and the woman was at the end of her means of dealing with a severe health problem. Both of these people knew where to go for relief. They are wonderful examples to us as well.

We can be self-assured when things go well for us. I have heard people over the years say that they really didn't need God for things were going well for them without an ongoing relationship with him. Over confidence, coupled with negligence, can lead to sad consequences. When a person is sure of themselves to the point of being careless about little things that pose a threat.

As example of that, a stuntman named Bobby Leach in 1911 went over Niagara Falls in a specially designed steel drum and lived to tell about it. Although he suffered minor injuries, he survived because he recognized the tremendous dangers involved in the feat, and because he had done everything that eh could to protect himself from harm.

Several years after that incident, while skipping down the street in New Zealand, Bobby Leach slipped on an orange peeling, fell and badly fractured his leg. He was

taken to a hospital where he later died of complications from that fall. He received a greater injury walking down the street than he sustained in going over Niagara. He was not prepared for danger in what he assumed to be a safe situation.

**B.** Neither of these people thought in those terms. We like to be in control, as long as things are going well, we feel we can survive. What happens our lives begin to crumble? These people certainly knew. Theirs was not a foxhole faith however. It was an every day reality. Why else would the woman be so bold as to touch the hem of Jesus robe? She knew that just a touch could bring her healing. Her faith is mindful of the Canaanite woman who would take only the leftovers of what Jesus could do. Jesus responded to her, “O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire.” (Matthew 15:28)

On the other hand, Jairus had a severe test of his faith that now his daughter was dead. He should not trouble Jesus any longer with his request. As he always does, Jesus has the last word. He told them that she was only sleeping and said to her: “Little girl, I say to you arise.” Faith caused Jairus and the woman to respond in faith to Jesus.

Our readings talk about that as well. Jeremiah says: “(The mercies of the LORD) are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.” (Lamentations 3:23) The Macedonian Christians had nothing but begged to take part in the offering. St. Paul comments that they gave beyond their means because “they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us.” (II Corinthians 8:5)

Like those in our text we are called as God’s own children. By his grace in Christ we are seen as his very own. He provides for our greatest needs and our every day needs as well. Amen.