

How does St. Mark's gospel translate or inspire us as Christians to do the will of God or more importantly how does this story glorify God?

Well to do that, we need to dig a little deeper.

first thing we can observe after reading today's Gospel, is that this is a story within another story. It starts with the one of Jairus and his daughter only to be interrupted by the story of an unnamed woman reaching out to touch Jesus. And we find similarities between the two, such as;

- The woman who has a worsening hemorrhage that's gone on for 12 years and Jairus' daughter is 12 years old.

The number 12 is prominent in the Bible. The Book of Genesis states that there were 12 sons of Jacob and those 12 sons formed the 12 tribes of Israel. The New Testament tells us that Jesus had 12 apostles. The number 12 in the bible is a symbol of faith, the church and divine rule.

- Then there is the issue of fear and faith. The fear of a father knowing that his daughter is dying and the fear of a woman, who will do whatever is necessary to find her cure and the fear of recognizing her fault. And both, Jairus as well as the woman believed without a doubt in the healing power of Christ.
- The role of the crowd.
- Both the little girl and the woman are called "daughter".

The word daughter in the bible, besides its natural and proper sense, is used to designate, women as natives of a place, or as professing the religion of a place; as, "the daughters of Zion". It also alludes that small towns and villages lying around a city are its "daughters," as related to the metropolis or mother city. So we can say that daughter may refer to us the congregation or the people of God.

We can also distinguish differences between the two stories. Such as;

- Jairus a socially and religious prominent leader in contrast to the unnamed woman who is unclean due to her condition and probably an outcast in her community.
- One makes a formal request and the other sneaks a touch.

So, let's think about how these two stories go together.

Jairus a prominent religious leader, who at a time where most religious leaders rejected Christ, came to Him as a father of a dying daughter faithful that if Jesus only laid his hand on her she would be healed. Jesus along with his disciples Peter, James and John start to travel to Jairus' home trying to push their way through what scripture says was a large crowd that followed him and pressed in on him. I imagine something like fans at the end of a rock concert trying to get close to their favorite rock star as they walk away. And even though Jesus is being mobbed by the crowd, he feels that power has been drawn from him or left him. And stops to find out who drew this power from him without him offering it or bestowing it upon them. Now we can only imagine what Jairus is thinking as this is happening. He probably thought something like, Man what are you doing, you're wasting time, we gotta get to my dying daughter so you can heal her. But Jesus stops, and asks the crowd who touched me? His disciples answering, and I paraphrase, are you kidding, you got a mob of people grabbing at you, and you're asking who touched you? But, there's always a reason behind Jesus' actions. This woman who thought to herself if I could only reach out and touch his clothes I know I'll be cured. Now that's faith! You see this woman tried everything at her reach to find a cure to her illness, to the point of losing all that she possessed, and still no doctor was able to cure her. And because of her condition, she was deemed unclean and an outcast by her community, which was a very common practice at that time for that society under the circumstances. Knowing that Jesus felt that she was the one who had drawn the power from Him, she, fearful and trembling fell to His feet and confessed what the Gospel says "the whole truth to him." What are the consequences of this woman falling at His feet speaking the truth? Well, it can only affirm the power of Jesus' mercy and love by telling her "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease."

How does this translate for us in today's day and age? How can we apply this to our spiritual lives? Perhaps the lesson here for the Christian is a lesson in divine delays. Perhaps we can call them unanswered prayers. There are times in our lives when we think everything around us is collapsing, or even worse illnesses can sometimes take over our life and turn our world upside down and yet God seems to be just doing his own thing in heaven, totally unconcerned about our trials and tragedies in life. But, you see, God does things in His own time. I believe, that delays are by divine design. Think about it, Jesus deliberately tarried here, just as He did when He found out that Lazarus was ill and dying, so that when He did act, there would be no doubt of who should receive the credit and the glory. Surely these miracles tell us that delays are not because of the lack of our Lords concern for us, we can see by St. Mark's gospel that He's sensitive to the most insignificant needs (such as a meal). It's the purpose of God that these delays will result in greater glory for Himself, and a greater faith for us. How beautifully this interrupted miracle illustrates the truth of God's timing, Paul's letter to the Romans says, "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." Maybe, and why not? we're like those in the crowd that pressed against Jesus only to brush against him, never reaching out to Him with true faith. What made the difference for this woman was that she recognized her complete and total inability to help herself. She looked to Jesus as her only hope for healing. When all else fails we, like this woman, need to look to Jesus to provide what we or the world can't. When Jesus came to this earth, He lived a perfect and sinless life. This qualified Him to die on the cross, not for His sins, but for ours. In place of our sinful ways, He offers His righteousness. Relying fully on Him alone is what will save us, just as this woman's faith saved her.

We can choose to come to Jesus, with faith as Jairus did and request for forgiveness, guidance, help, blessings or whatever it may be. Jairus went to Jesus with blind faith and confident that if he just laid His hand on his daughter she would be healed. The woman had complete faith that if she could only touch his cloak she would be healed. The fact of the matter is that FAITH is in the knowledge that Christ knows all things and can do all things in His time. He is our Savior in all our encounters in life and forgiveness of sins. The bible says to us, ask and you shall receive.

In this world we live in, people around us can and will be like those found at Jairus' house, unbelievers, when Jesus told them that the girl is only sleeping, they laughed and ridiculed him. We as Christians, lovers of Christ must demonstrate what true faith is to our falling world outside of these walls.

You say, But Joe, how do you show true faith to a world that doesn't want to know it? When Jesus brought the little girl back to life, He said to them, give her something to eat. Or in other words "give us your daily bread", we must feed on God's word. Show His word in the way we lead our life, in emulating how Christ lived His. Love your neighbor as yourself. But most importantly love your God with all your might, knowing that He is all powerful, all knowing and truly loves us. I pray that we leave this, our house of worship, filled with blind faith, that of the faith of a child, and that unwavering faith which was attributed by Jairus and the unnamed woman. Don't let the interruptions of life get in the way of your faith in God, rely on the faith that all things are for His Glory.

Knowing that if we do confess and reach out to touch him with the faith that moves mountains, putting our lives and decisions in His hands, His mercy and love are abundant.

And will come in His time, not ours.

Amen