

The God of Faith Luke 8:40-56

Introduction: Verse 40 – *“Now when Jesus returned...”*

When we go to Israel and we are still planning to go to Israel next June, we always make a stop on the other side of the Sea of Galilee, in Gadara, or Kursi (it's modern name). All the Synoptic gospels write about the man who was possessed by six thousand demons and whom Jesus freed before returning to the Israeli side of the Sea of Galilee.

If you want to know Jesus's heart, follow his feet.

The demoniac's healing, along with several others, fulfils the OT promises that Gentiles will be included in God's redemption.

The Gadarene healing is different from the two healings Jesus is about to accomplish for several reasons:

- 1 – A Gentile man – Two Hebrew women
- 2 – Jesus looking for him – People looking for Jesus
- 3 – Very private – Very public
- 4 – Supernatural (demons) – natural (sickness & death)
(Add the calming of the storm in 23-25 and Luke is presenting a picture of Jesus as sovereign over nature and super-nature)
- 5 – People asked Jesus to leave – People wanted Jesus to stay
- 6 – Jesus told the demoniac to spread the news – He told Jairus to keep the news private

There is a lot going on in Jesus's life. Sometimes we fail to take note of what he was doing and what people required of him. We fail to see his humanness and have pity on him for his exhaustion.

In this section, we are going to see Jesus heal two people: a sick woman and a dead child. In each circumstance we are going to see people exercise faith, but our focus should not be on their faith but on the God in whom they have faith.

I cannot stress this enough. The Gospel is the good news of what Jesus has done. It is originally a Greek word used to celebrate secular victories. It is not a celebration of our faith in it. When we focus our attention on us, rather than Jesus, it does not increase our faith but lessens it, weakens it, instead of strengthening it. It's paradoxical, I know. You would think that if we focus on our faith, we could make it stronger. But it doesn't. Faith is made strong by looking at God.

- a) Faith comes from God

Ephesians 2:8 - For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it [faith] is the gift of God...

- b) Seeing God in Scripture strengthens our faith

Psalms 46:1-3 - God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. ² Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, ³ though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling. Selah

- c) Recalling God to mind, strengthens our faith

Lamentations 3:21-23 - The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; ²³ they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. ²⁴ "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him."

John 15:5-6 - Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers...

Faith connected to or centered on you will not bear fruit and will wither.

Faith connected to or centered on Jesus will bear fruit and flourish.

Faith without Jesus is not faith but self-confidence (this is the definition of atheism).

Please bear that in mind as we walk with Jesus through this text –

First: A Desperate Father. 41-42a

- a) The cause of his desperation – his only child, his 12-year-old daughter is dying
- b) The extent of his desperation – He, a synagogue ruler, publicly approaches Jesus for help (Imagine the conversation between him and his wife)

Second: A Desperate Interruption. 42b-45

- a) The cause of her desperation – An unhealable 12-year menstrual flow
- b) The extent of her desperation – She tried to approach Jesus anonymously

Third: A Divine Pause. 45-48

- a) Imagine Jairus's impatience
- b) Imagine the woman's fear

If God is good, and he is, then he means this pause to be good for Jairus, the woman, the disciples, and the crowd. We don't know the 'why' of it all, but we know the 'Who' of everything.

- Jairus put her out of the synagogue
- He wants the rulers to know she is clean 47 - "*all the people*"
- Jairus's faith will be built 50 – "*Do not fear; only believe...*"

Jesus is not going to tele-port to Jairus's house. In all likelihood, his daughter would have died even if this woman had not interrupted his journey.

Fourth: A Divine Healing. 48-54

- a) The daughter is dead – 49b & 53
- b) Jesus redefines death – 52b
- c) "Child arise" = *egeiro* = *to arouse from sleep* (it has the idea of collecting your faculties)

Fifth: Faith Defined

We've been talking about faith but have yet to define it. We can get some clues from this text –

- a) Jairus surrendered his pride and prestige
- b) The woman gave up on a natural cure

Forsaking All I Trust Him

In both instances, the theme is not their faith but their faith in Jesus. That is what makes the difference.

**It is not the amount of my faith that saves me.
It is the Object of my faith Who saves me.**

This definition works for unbelievers and believers.

- Unbelievers must forsake their own righteousness and works
- Believers must forsake their own knowledge and abilities

Don't let anyone kid you. Faith is hard work. It is hard to cease from our own efforts and trust God alone. But only as we look to him, do we really have faith and does our faith increase.

Community Groups:

- 1 – Read the text
- 2 – Reflecting on Eph 2:8, what is the source of faith?
- 3 – How does seeing God strengthen our faith?
- 4 – How does thinking on us weaken our faith?
- 5 – Thinking on John 15:5-6, what does faith connected to Jesus look like?
- 6 – What motivated Jairus to approach Jesus?
- 7 – What might his fears have been?
- 8 – What are the woman's circumstances?
- 9 – What might her fears have been?
- 10 – Why didn't Jesus allow the woman to remain anonymous?
- 11 – Why did Jesus stop his journey to Jairus's house?
- 12 – How does Jesus redefine death in resurrecting Jairus's daughter?
- 13 – Talk about the phrase: *"It is not the amount of my faith but the object of my faith."*
- 14 – Why is faith so hard?
- 15 – Where are you exercising faith today?