

Waiting Hope

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[0 : 00] Mark chapter 5, we live in a world of instant.! We can text someone and we can expect an instant response.

! We love instant. I remember just a couple of weeks ago when half of America was under snow and ice, Amazon no longer could deliver in two days.

They estimated my delivery to be in a week. In a week, I needed it before the storm. I didn't need it after it. I was blown away. Something has to be done about something like that.

We live in a microwave society. We put things in the microwave and we've learned that if you stand in front of it and stare at it, it'll be quicker. We love things instantly.

Things aren't always instant. And the reality is that God seldom works instantly. Very often, there's delay.

[1 : 31] Prayers feel unanswered. Delay feels like denial. Waiting feels like failure.

I mean, surely if it's going to happen, it would have happened by now. However, the reality is that God's not bound by our clocks. And I want you to know He's not intimidated by our persistence.

He works on His time. He works deliberately. And He uses waiting and delay and even interruption to accomplish great things in line with His purposes.

In Mark chapter 5, Jairus is in a heavenly holding pattern. And it's tough when you're in the waiting room of faith.

But that's where He is. And God seems late. Prayers seem unanswered. However, I want us to learn from Him and His experience that silence from heaven is not the same as the absence of God.

[2 : 56] And that God often does His greatest work after tough delays. Let's look at it this morning. It's in Mark chapter 5, beginning in verse 21.

And remember the preceding passage that we dealt with last week. When Jesus traveled the six miles over the Sea of Galilee to the land of the Gentiles, He was met by a demoniac.

A man that was filled with thousands of demons. And He healed that man and moved those demons into swine.

And those pigs ran off a cliff into the water and died. And the people that owned the pigs and the people who watched it and got scared by it wanted to believe.

The man who He healed wanted to go with Him. But He left Him there as what I called last week the first missionary to the Gentiles. And said, go tell people.

[4 : 05] And He did. He went and told it throughout the Decapolis, Scripture says. Which are ten Roman cities there. So now He gets back in the boat.

And when Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered about Him. And He was beside the sea. Then came one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name. And seeing Him, He fell at His feet and implored Him, earnestly saying, My little girl is at the point of death.

Come and lay your hands on her so that she may be made well and live. And He went with Him.

And a great crowd followed Him and thronged about Him.

Now, verses 25 through 34 give us a divine interruption. When a woman came to Him with a health issue and stops Jesus.

[5 : 17] And she was in such great need. Christ healed her miraculously. And the Lord willing, we'll look at that next week. But I want you to notice what happens as He ministers with her.

It says in verse 35, While He was still speaking, There came from the ruler's house some who said, Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher any further?

But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the ruler of the synagogue, Do not fear, only believe. And He allowed no one to follow Him except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James. They came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and Jesus saw a commotion. People weeping and wailing loudly. And when He entered, He said to them, Why are you making a commotion and weeping?

The child is not dead, but sleeping. And they laughed at Him. But He put them all outside, And He took the child's father and mother and those who were with Him and went in with the child, where the child was.

[6 : 34] Taking her by the hand, He said to her, Talitha com, which means, Little girl, I say to you, Arise.

And immediately, the girl got up and began walking, for she was 12 years of age. And they were immediately overcome with amazement, and He strictly told them that no one should know this and told them to give her something to eat.

Now, I just want to admit this morning that I have a hard time waiting. Waiting is difficult in everyday things, but it is much harder when it's not about inconvenience, but about crisis.

I mean, it's really tough when your loved ones are hurting, when your loved ones are struggling, when your loved ones are dying.

Hope while waiting can be the hardest kind of hope. However, I want you to see what Jesus does in the midst of those moments.

[7 : 52] The first thing I notice is that Jesus calms. Now, He's crossed over six miles across these waters, and He's welcomed by a bunch of hurting, wanting people.

The needs, I am sure, are varied. There are some there who just want attention. Jesus is getting a lot of attention, and they want attention from Jesus.

And then there are others who are just wanting to lay eyes on a miracle man because they've heard of what He can do. Whether they've got word or not about this particular miracle, they've got wind of what He's been able to do, even among them.

And then some are there because they desperately are needing help. And one of them that desperately needs help approaches Jesus. His name is Jairus, and Jairus is described as a ruler of the synagogue.

Now, let me explain what that means. They had the temple in Jerusalem. And Jewish males were to go to the temple, if possible, three times a year.

[9 : 03] They were to go at Passover. Passover was a celebration of commemoration of the deliverance of the people from the Egyptians.

It's recorded in Exodus chapter 12, and they had a celebration every year to celebrate what God did for them when He released them from the Egyptians.

That is in, that's called Passover. And everybody was expected to be there for that. And then there was Pentecost. Pentecost is 50, it actually means 50, and it's 50 days after Passover, and Pentecost was a day to celebrate the harvest.

It was when the wheat harvest came in. It was also a celebration of the giving of the law, and you were expected to be at the temple for Pentecost. And then there was the Feast of Tabernacles, or what's also called the Feast of Booths.

We would call it the Feast of Tents, because that's what a booth was, a canvas and stick held together hut that they lived in as they lived in the desert for 40 years.

[10 : 17] They'd move that booth around and live in it. So the Festival of Tabernacles, which is a temporary shelter, or the Festival of Booths were a time when they would come back to Jerusalem and live in a booth or live in a tent for seven days.

At the end of those seven days, they would have a great sacred celebration on the eighth day. Then they'd go back home. And if you go to Jerusalem today and you see the Temple Mount, where the Dome of the Rock is now, you're standing beside the Jezreel Valley.

And between, and the Jezreel Valley goes deep down, comes back up, and the Mount of Olives is on the other side. And both sides of that valley are filled with, it's a cemetery, just a huge cemetery where Jews have strived to be buried as close as they can to the Temple Mount.

And, but in the first century, all those graves weren't there. There were a few commemorative graves, Absalom's pillars there. And so there were a few of those, but those, that area would have been covered with booths during that week.

Every rooftop would have a booth on it. Every courtyard would have a booth on it. They would find any place they could. It was almost like a big tailgate party, but for sacred reasons.

[11:43] And there's a lot that's not sacred about tailgate parties sometimes. But anyway, that's basically what it was like. And so they were expected, males were expected, if they could, to be at the temple three times a year for that.

By the way, there are Southern Baptists that follow somewhat like that pattern. And they come at Christmas and Easter whether they need to every year.

Preachers call them Christers. And they always wonder why the preacher only preaches on the birth of Christ and the death and resurrection of Christ. He can't move on to anything else.

They wonder that. Man, you're here in February. Congratulations. Congratulations. But when they did not go to the temple those three times, they went to the synagogue every Sabbath.

And as I've told you before, every town that had more than 12 Jewish males had a synagogue. And they would meet in that synagogue and that was the place where they were fed spiritually. The temple was the place for major feasts, priestly matters, atoning sacrifices.

[12:59] The synagogue was the place of worship on a regular basis. And those synagogues had rulers. The rulers were a board of men that made sure the synagogue was managed well.

They were men that took care of the scrolls. They were men that cared for the facility. They were those that made sure that everything went on schedule.

They supervised the readers and the teachers. Typically, the rulers of the synagogue did not do the teaching or the reading of the word. But they would supervise those areas.

And I tried to find a contemporary example of what that position is. But quite honestly, as I look at our church, it is so varied and we have so many people in so many different spots doing so many different things that's hard to say.

When I got here this morning, the welcome board that normally is on the sidewalk out here was laying down. And as I walked in, one of the security guys was with me and he picked it up and put it up.

[14:10] And the minute we walked inside, it blew back down. And another security guy came on the scene and picked it up and put it up. And the minute he did, it blew back down. Another guy came up about that time and set it up.

It was just fun standing inside watching it, you know. just one right after another trying their best thinking that they have the magic touch. I think they finally just removed it. I walked in here and there was somebody opening these shutters.

If I had walked to the coffee bar, there's people down there working. There were people making sure that people were welcomed when they would come here. We had tech guys working with the musical staff to make sure that everything was, there were so many working pieces.

Your children are invested to our ministry as we speak right now. There are so many different people that make sure things are taken care of. And I am very appreciative and I don't like naming names because I'll leave somebody out.

So just do it for the Lord and thank you for what you do. And if you're not doing anything, get busy doing something. There's places to serve. That's a whole other sermon. But anyway, but the guys that watched over all of that were the rulers of the synagogue.

[15:26] And not from that position, but they were often very wealthy people, highly regarded and very important. I said all that to say that when Jairus walked up, people would have got out of his way because he's the one that makes sure everything's taken care of for us.

And he approached Jesus and it must have took him a lot to approach Jesus because Jesus was not highly esteemed by Jewish leaders.

And now, Jairus, I feel sure being ruler of a local synagogue, was not part of the Sanhedrin, but because the Sanhedrin oversaw the synagogues, he would have had a lot of interaction with the heads of Jewish religion who were pursuing Christ.

And so for Jairus to come and approach Christ with his great need had to take a lot. But when your kid's sick, you'll do whatever you have to do to try to fix the problem.

It says that not only did he approach Christ, but it said he fell at his feet, that term there speaks of a worshipful fall, as if he was kissing the feet of Jesus.

[16:54] He laid before him. And by the time that Jesus had healed the woman, they were getting word back that Jairus' dying daughter was dead.

And upon Jairus hearing the word that his daughter had died, he also heard Jesus say, do not fear, only believe.

So even in the midst of the crisis, Jesus speaks words of comfort that had to be effective. And I love how even when the problem is not yet solved, even when the problem may not even be solved, Jesus has a way to calm us.

He says the right things through the powerful presence of the Holy Spirit and through his word into our lives. And it just teaches us that we can trust him even when we don't understand.

Jesus calms. Not only does he calm, but he also corrects. I want you to notice this. Christ proceeds to take the inner three, that's Peter, James, and John with him into the house of Jairus.

[18:19] Peter, James, and John will also be the ones that he takes up on the Mount of Transfiguration. Peter, James, and John will also be the one that he takes deeper into the Garden of Gethsemane on the night of his arrest.

They were the obvious leaders of the apostles. And as they get to the house, there is quite a commotion. Now notice that this is obvious because a young lady has died, people are going to be very upset.

Of course they are. But there's a lot more going on here than just the loss of a life. For one, professional mourners would come and they would loudly weep on behalf of the dead.

Flutists would come and they would show up and they would begin to play while people sang dirges that were deadly and sorrowful. The thought was that it would help the family better express themselves without feeling embarrassed with their mourning.

It was actually expected that even the poor, rabbinical law, not biblical law, but that that's added to it, rabbinical law stated that even the poor should have at least two flutes and one wailing woman.

[19:29] That's what it says. You know, you've got to mourn the dead. You've got to let people know. Therefore, when word got out, those mourners would come lurking.

Now, I don't mean to be gross here, but when somebody dies in that atmosphere, if you're going to mourn the body, you better hurry because there's a change that's going to take place in that body. And so, when they got word that Jerish's daughter was dying, typically, those mourners would be waiting outside like a bunch of vultures waiting for the dead so they could toot their flute and call out their whale.

There's a lot of commotion. Mourners were expected to beat their breasts. Mourners were expected to tear at their hair.

They were expected to tear their tunic. If you were close relatives, you were to tear it in the chest.

And you could sew it up loosely as long as it still looks like it's been torn, but you have to wear it for 30 days to show that you're mourning.

[20:42] I mean, it was an elaborate process. And it was that kind of atmosphere that Christ walked into. And verse 39 says, and when he entered, he said to them, why are you making a commotion and weeping?

The child's not dead, but sleeping. And they laughed at him. Now, once you understand, when Jesus says the child is sleeping, he's not talking about a soul sleep here.

What he's saying is, it's going to be easier for me to rouse this child than it is your child on a school day when you try to get them up to go to school. It's going to be nothing for him.

This state is only temporary. They had misunderstood and Jesus corrects them. What they think is permanent is only temporary.

What they think can't be changed will be changed. What they thought was dead and gone would be alive and well. And it's the kind of correction that Jesus makes in people's lives.

[21:42] He's much greater than our anticipations. And he'll correct us when he needs to. Not only does he correct, but he also answers.

Jesus answers. He sent them out and took the parents and went in and took the girl by the hand and spoke in a language that he normally spoke which was Aramaic.

And Mark in one of those few times in the Gospel of Mark, I believe four times, he uses the original language of Aramaic to state what Jesus said to that little girl.

and he told her to rise and immediately she did. There was no CPR. He didn't yell at her. He didn't slap her. He just took her by the hand and she arose.

And there was no need for recovery. She didn't start PT and OT. She walked across the room rehabilitated. Now, why does Mark use the original language here?

[22 : 49] Well, I want you to remember that Mark was very young when this happened. He was probably about the age of this 12-year-old. And I'll say girl, but at 12 years old in that culture, she was on the verge of womanhood and their thoughts.

Mark was about that age. He wasn't there. But he got his information about this and he got his information about what we have in the Gospel of Mark from Peter. He penned it based on Peter's testimony and Peter was there and Peter told him what Jesus said.

And in this event, the words, the touch, the power, the opening of the eyes, the answered prayer, all of it was so burned upon the mind of Peter.

It was so stamped upon his conscience that he quoted it just like he saw it. He could hear the words again. Talitha kum. Talitha kum. When that young lady walked across that room, they were absolutely amazed.

And Jesus told them not to talk about it. Now, that tickles me because the marvel of this miracle is not going to be held long. It's not going to be secret long.

[24 : 02] I mean, the minute she walks out the door and is on the street, somebody's going to say, wait a minute, I thought she died. It's not going to be long. But he told them to get her something to eat.

Now, we have no idea how long her terminal illness had kept her from eating. But they're in shock looking at their little girl who had died walking around and Jesus sees them and says, would you get her something to eat?

Would you get her something to eat? so what does all that mean for us why is it here recorded in scripture does it just show the miracle of the touch of Jesus well it does no doubt about that but I will tell you that all the sick will not be made well they wasn't in the first century and all the dying will not be risen up in this life it's not going to happen even if we do see miraculous escape from death it's not going to be in this manner it's not so what does this mean for us what it means for us is his delay does not mean that he's failed that his delay does not mean that he's not true his delay does mean that he has greater things in store

Jairus suffered a horrible delay and those that saw Jesus as he approached the girl that had died ridiculed him they laughed at him they did not believe him one of the reasons why it's recorded in the gospel of Mark the way it is is because it is a foreshadowing of another time when they would not believe him and another time when they would not ridicule him there was a worse delay that was coming in the future there was a Friday when the Lord died and to some it appeared that he had failed it seemed as if what he said was not true but in reality he had greater things in store and when Saturday came heaven was silent and the tomb was sealed shut and there were people waiting wondering what in the world have we put our faith in nothing happened that day and it was a horrible delay surely he's failed did anything he say was it even true and sometimes in our lives when the tomb's been sealed and the delay's been long we wonder where's God in all this is he who he proclaims to be can I really put my faith in him and then Sunday morning comes and without anyone's help

Christ rises from the grave and those that had ridiculed him were silent and those who had hoped in him was now fulfilled fulfilled and I will tell you that those who put their hope in Christ will always be fulfilled it may not feel like it today and it may not feel like it tomorrow and I can't tell you when your answer is going to come but I can tell you what the answer is the answer is Jesus and you can put your faith and hope in him and trust him even when there's no way in the world you understand what is happening waiting hope hope is the toughest hope but if that waiting hope is in Christ it'll be fulfilled it's not gonna be on my schedule it's probably not gonna be the way I designed it to be but it really ain't about me and I hate to be the one to break it to you it really ain't about you it's about him we can put our hope and our faith in him so I wanna ask you this morning have you ever done that have you ever put the hope of your life in Christ scripture tells us what that means is that we acknowledge that we've sinned against him that we've done wrong and that we need a savior and that we ask him to not only forgive us but I want you to hear me we surrender our lives to follow his will and his way that from this day forward

[30 : 11] I'm no longer in charge he's in charge I didn't say that we raise our hand during a vacation Bible school when nobody's looking and repeat a prayer after somebody it's not what I said I think there's been a lot of confusion along the way in life from easy believism along the way and a lot of people have done a lot of things they never meant and they think they're okay that's not putting your hope in Christ have you ever surrendered your life to Christ and put your hope in him if you never

have I wanna tell you today's the day of salvation he'll take you where you are in your circumstances and he'll change you and begin to mold you and make you to be what he'd have you to be you just have to put your hope in him and if you've done that privately but you've never effectively done that publicly and never told anybody else what you've done

I'm gonna tell you private faith is no faith at all quite honestly based on scripture Jesus tells us not to be ashamed of him before others and by his example and by his commission he shows us the first step to follow after our salvation is baptism and if you've never been baptized as a believer I'm gonna tell you it can cause a great hindrance in your life and your faith and trusting in him if you've disobeyed him in that step and so if that's never happened to you I encourage you to come maybe you're here and God's leading you to First Baptist Church you feel like God's leading you to be a part of this worship and if he is I encourage you to come I'd love to guide you in that process what that means but I know there's a lot more people here this morning that have weighty matters in their life and struggle with putting their hope in Christ in the midst of the weight

I'm just gonna tell you you can he's worthy of it you lay it down before him I'm not telling you you'll understand all the way I'm not telling you you'll understand at all this side of eternity I will not tell you that but I will tell you that you can put your hope in Christ and trust him and so whatever that burden is you can do that where you stand in just a moment you can do it at this altar you can do it with me praying for you and with you but whatever it is trust him even in the delays even in the wait put your hope in Christ heavenly father help us today to simply obey you as you speak to our hearts and lives oh God I pray in Jesus name amen