



“Do Not Fear, Only Trust”

Mark 5:21-43

²¹After Jesus had again crossed over to the other side, a great crowd gathered around him and he was beside the sea. ²²One of the synagogue rulers, named Jairus, arrived and, after seeing Jesus, fell at his feet ²³and was intensely pleading with him, “My little girl is dying! Come place your hands on her so that she might be rescued and live!” ²⁴He departed with him and a large crowd was following him and pressing in around him.

²⁵A woman was there who had suffered a menstrual flow for twelve years. ²⁶After greatly suffering under many doctors and after spending everything she had, she was no better but only grew worse. ²⁷After hearing about Jesus she came up behind him in the crowd to touch his garment, ²⁸For she was saying, “If I can just touch his garments, I will be rescued!” ²⁹Immediately her flow of blood dried up and she knew in her body that she had been rescued from her affliction. ³⁰After realizing that power had gone out from him, Jesus immediately turned around in the crowd saying, “Who touched my garments?” ³¹His followers began saying to him, “You are aware of the crowd pressing around you and yet you say, ‘Who touched me?’” ³²Yet he was still looking around to see who had done it. ³³Now the woman, knowing what happened to her, came in fear and trembling, fell down before him, and told him the whole truth. ³⁴He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be whole, freed from your affliction!”

³⁵While he was still speaking, some came from the synagogue ruler saying, “Your daughter has died. Why bother the teacher any longer?” ³⁶But Jesus, ignoring the report being spoken, said to the synagogue ruler, “Do not fear. Only trust.” ³⁷He did not permit anyone to follow with him except Peter, James, and John the brother of James. ³⁸They came to the house of the synagogue ruler and he saw a commotion, with weeping and much wailing. ³⁹After entering, he said to them, “Why are you making such a commotion and weeping? The child has not died, but is asleep.” ⁴⁰They were laughing at him, but, after he threw all of them out, he took the father and mother of the child and those with him and entered into where the child was. ⁴¹After grasping the hand of the child, he said to her, “Talitha koum,” which means, “Little girl, I say to you, arise.” ⁴²Immediately the little girl arose and was walking around. She was twelve years old. The others were beside themselves in great astonishment. ⁴³But he gave them strict orders that no one should know about this. Then he told them to give her something to eat.

5:25 Why is it significant that Mark lists the affliction of the woman? (Leviticus 15:25-30)

5:26 What do we learn by Mark comparing Jesus and the doctors?

5:30 What was remarkable about Jesus allowing himself to be interrupted by this bleeding woman?

5:31 Why does Jesus ask, “Who touched Me?”

5:36 Why does Jesus see the situation with the little girl differently than everyone else?

What meaning are the words, “Do not fear. Only trust.” intended to convey?

5:41 Why does Mark use Aramaic here amidst the original Greek? (And our English text just transliterates it)

5:21-43 What do we learn from the sandwiching of these two events in the narrative of Mark’s Gospel?

Understanding the Text:

The key appears to be Jesus’ statement “Your faith has saved you. Go into peace” (5:34). This level 1, explicit-in-words formulation makes two truths clear—first, that faith in Jesus is the key to entering into and being under the reign and rule of God, and second, that full salvation is what Jesus and his gracious deeds are all about. Jesus is not a magician, exerting power in this world, or a mere healer—what the thronging crowds see him to be. Rather, Jesus is the very Lord of Israel come to bring his people (and all peoples) already now in human history all the blessings of the new creation kingdom, which will be manifested without remainder at the end of time, blessings that can be characterized as salvation, and salvation issuing in peace. And his people respond to him in faith. Such salvation and such peace, made one’s own by faith, is the point of these sandwiching episodes.¹

¹Voelz, James W. (2013). Concordia Commentary: Mark 1:1-8:26. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House.