



Hear the Word

from Pastor James N. McEachran



Gather... Encourage... Equip... Send...

Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

July 1, 2018

Healed and Held

Mark 5:21-43

Our theme has been "Growing Forward." Each Sunday has found a foundation in miracles of Jesus: two weeks ago, a man who could not hear is healed, last week a man who could not see had vision restored. In each instance, the two who were healed were brought to Jesus with the trust that He would make a difference as they listened anew and saw out into the world. It is so for us as we Listen UP! AND See OUT!....

Today, Jesus returns from Gentile country, at the Sea of Galilee with those in need of URGENT CARE. Two cases. Recall the growing press of the crowds.

Case 1 = A leader of the synagogue, Jairus. He is named, he is male, wealthy, a person of stature, a parent concerned about a sick 12 year old daughter. Saw Jesus, came publicly; fell at his feet; begged a miracle of healing, "that she may be saved and live," for his little daughter was "at the point of death." But, receives far much more, life! And Jairus is told to tell no one.

Case 2 = A woman with hemorrhaging, ill, a flow of blood. She is not named, poor, unclean and excluded from synagogue, no children. Concerned about the living death which she bears in her body; sneaks up, touches the hem of his garment and is healed.

But, here is the mix. In what may have seemed a delay, the news comes that the daughter of Jairus has died. Yet, Jesus says, "Believe, not to fear." A private healing, witnessed by Peter, James and John; witnesses to tell the story! A SLIGHT BIT OF COMMOTION. And the words, "Talitha, cum, Little girl, get up." And she does!

Two miracles interwoven into one account with the point that at the nearness of death, Jesus is the power to overcome death and to bring to life, new life which is transformational.

In the midst of a world, our world, that so seems to need URGENT CARE, it is the POWER TO HEAL with the STEADFAST LOVE of Christ THAT IS LIFE RENEWING.

Both stories carry the narrative of the very power in which we too are HEALED AND HELD. With Jesus Christ we are given a past forgiven, a present renewed, and a life that lives forward with us WALKING AS ONE IN THE WORLD --- Abundantly, never in deficit!

Here are some of the things that I have learned from this story of two healings:

- † Jesus steps into the middle of the human situation. That means that nothing we experience is outside of the influence of the One in whom we have forgiveness and life;
- † With Jesus things always begin and continue in worship; they fell at His feet, knelt down as we will at the Table to confess our faith, our trust in the love that will never let us go.
- † His healing presence makes all the difference in the world. With all of the commotion, fear and trembling, weeping and wailing in the world, to be with Jesus calms and stills, slows and guides us to know that “The steadfast love of the Lord, never ceases, his mercies never come to an end.” Great is God’s faithfulness to us, to you, and to me, fear not! Blessed assurance!
- † Jesus approaches everyone with equality of access and response. Not one greater than the other. I keep sensing the power of the “12.” (No, not the Seahawks’ “12”!) 12 years of suffering, doc after doc, spent everything and never got better; 12 years old (One day short of womanhood according to Jewish custom) with life out before her. And in both cases, Jesus, gives a new day, a new life, with new relationship and the assurance that their witness will draw others to know him, love him as they are known and loved!

Summer is here, it would seem; times lived in a new key; the 4th of July sets us into a time which paths us to Labor Day of fall beginnings. In these times, where do we, where do you, feel/sense/see the presence of Christ’s healing in our, in your life today?

The Gospel Lesson is about our Growing Forward, each of us, Healed and Held. The future does not mean to be a time of the unknown, a waiting period to see what might happen in the next innings of our life together.

We are Pastor and people deeply engaged on the firm foundation of Jesus Christ, not looking back, living in God’s present time, knowing that the future is full of promise with the opportunity to deepen our faith in Christ and our relationships with one another.

There is one more “aha” in this Gospel story. Who were the key witnesses in the room in the house of Jairus? Peter, James and John. Only these three will be present at the Transfiguration (9:2) and in Gethsemane (14:33)...at the moment Jesus is truly revealed to be the beloved Son of the Father and at His arrest.

As slow witted as they sometimes were, they will become the prime witnesses that will carry the good news of Jesus’ life, death and resurrection to the ends of the earth, to each of us, to the world we share in this time and in this place.

These two stories point us to Jesus’ own resurrection. Readers and hearers are not asked if they believe that once-upon-a-time Jesus healed a woman or raised a little girl, but are called to believe, to trust, to confess that once-for-all-time God raised Jesus from the dead. The ground of our hope, the assurance that in the midst of our days, nothing can separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ.

And our wealth does not rest in stuff, our status, or the depth of faith, but on the confidence that in the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, though he was rich, yet, for our sake he came poor that we might know forgiveness and reconciliation; that we might walk in that love working as one people that all might see in us the presence and the power of the one who heals and hold on to us in all of our days.

In Jesus’ name, let it be, Amen!