

# **A Study of Mark's Gospel**

Week Seven

Mark 5:21 – 6:2

## **Day One**

21 When Jesus had again crossed over by boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around him while he was by the lake. 22 Then one of the synagogue rulers, named Jairus, came there. Seeing Jesus, he fell at his feet 23 and pleaded earnestly with him, "My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live." 24 So Jesus went with him. A large crowd followed and pressed around him.

v. 21 – So Jesus was asked to leave the region after He had healed the demon-possessed man. He now sooner arrived back on the other side of the lake when a large crowd gathered around Him. They must have been watching and waiting for Him. Jesus was a celebrity! People knew Him by face and wanted to hear or be near Him. It would be great if this were true for you and me. We don't have to be a celebrity; we just have to be someone who others want to be around! Why would others want to be around anyone else? Because that person builds them up, makes them feel closer to God and their purpose. That is what Jesus did and that is what we need to do as well.

I have often said that I want to be famous and well-known. That offends and puzzles some people. I was recently in the Amsterdam airport and someone came up to me at baggage claim to ask, "Aren't you John Stanko?" I was delighted. I love signing autographs and posing for pictures. I am willing to lose some of my privacy if that means God will use me to help others. **How about you? Are you willing to be a public figure?**

v. 22 – No sooner had Jesus healed the man and returned than a synagogue ruler came with a request. This man knew how to humble himself when he asked, for he fell at Jesus feet. It is interesting that the title for the synagogue leaders was "ruler." I wonder what these men ruled? The building would be one option; the people would be another. I would imagine that these rulers were elders. Many churches have adopted this style of government with elders overseeing the operation of the church. Then there are other churches that are "ruled" by one person with a supportive team of advisers.

I don't think the form of government is important. I think the gifting and attitude of the leaders are all important. I think the church has done a pretty poor job of developing and releasing leaders. **How would you evaluate the level of leadership in your own church? Adequate? Mediocre? Nice? Polite? Effective? Cutting-edge? Do you know your leaders and what they do? If you are a leader, how would you evaluate your own leadership? Do you maintain or advance? Rule or serve?**

v. 23 – This man pleaded with Jesus to come and heal his daughter. Whatever this little girl had, the father knew that she was dying. He was desperate. I would have been too if

I knew that my little girl was dying. Yet, I have known some people who were in desperate straights and they refused to plead with God. **Are you desperate? Do you have some specific need that only God can remedy?** If you are, then get on your knees and plead with God! I think the process is called earnest supplication! That is no time for propriety; it's a time for fervent seeking.

v. 24 – The father did not offend Jesus with his posture or desperation. Instead Jesus decided to go with him, presumably to answer the man's request. Imagine how elated the father must have felt! Yet he was about to have his hopes dashed, only to receive an even more dramatic answer to his prayer than he could have ever imagined! What's more, plenty of people were going to see the answer as well.

### Day Two

25 And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. 26 She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. 27 When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, 28 because she thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed."

v. 25 – First, there was the storm as they crossed the lake to minister to the man with a legion of demons, and then the synagogue elder's daughter's illness. But wait, there's more! While on his way to the ruler's home, a woman saw Jesus. Remember that there was a great crowd with Jesus, but this woman was as desperate as the girl's father. She had been subject to bleeding for 12 years. That's a long time.

This woman was in a perpetual state of uncleanness according to the Law. While other women were unclean only once a month, this woman could not escape her uncleanness. What's more, any man touching her was rendered unclean as well. So she had to be careful not to contaminate others with her condition.

"When a woman has her regular flow of blood, the impurity of her monthly period will last seven days, and anyone who touches her will be unclean till evening" (Leviticus 15:19).

v. 26 – This woman had consulted with many physicians and had spent all the money she had on a cure, all to no avail. Now, with nothing to lose and everything to gain, she hatched a desperate plan! She was going to touch Jesus! What boldness and perseverance! **Is there anything for which you have sought for 12 years?** This woman never gave up. She did not learn to live with her condition, but rather considered it an enemy and treated it as such. **Is there any situation that you have learned to live with and, consequently, have stopped making a matter of prayer?**

vs. 27&28 – There is no Bible verse that urges one to touch a holy man's cloak for healing. There was no precedent in Israel for what this woman was about to do. Desperation causes you to step outside the norm and do something unusual. There is a

saying that if you want to go where you've never been, you need to do something that you've never done. **If “business as usual” has gotten you what you have, isn't it time for “business as unusual?” What would that “unusual business” look like for you? In what area of your life would you need to apply this new approach?**

This woman had exactly the exactly the same attitude as Jesus had when He sought the Father, as we read in Hebrews:

During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered (Hebrews 5:7-8).

**Are you ready to follow Jesus' example along with the example that this woman set? Are you ready to seek the Lord? Don't answer too quickly.**

### **Day Three**

29 Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering. 30 At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?" 31 "You see the people crowding against you," his disciples answered, "and yet you can ask, 'Who touched me?'"

v. 29 – While many men were and continue to be aloof where women are concerned, Jesus was not and never is. While some men still consider women weak, emotional and unclean, Jesus welcomed them then and welcomes their touch now. **If you are a woman, do you feel free to touch Jesus with your femininity? If you are a man, how do you feel toward women, your equals in creation? Do you see them as equals?**

I marvel that much of the church today tries to achieve its mission without half of its gifts and members. By that I mean that the church doesn't really believe that women have an equal role to play in church matters and affairs. Thus, we forfeit the spiritual contributions that could be made by women.

This woman knew immediately that she was healed and freed from her suffering. Her touching Jesus did not render Him unclean; instead it rendered her clean. There are some who still feel that their presence will somehow take something away from God. That is why those people don't go to church. They believe that they must first “get right” with God and then approach Him. The opposite is true, however, and this woman is a good example of what I am saying. She got right when she came to God, not before.

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin. ***Let us then approach the***

*throne of grace with confidence*, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need (Hebrews 4:14-16 emphasis added).

**Are you confidently approaching God? If not, why not? Could this be the new approach that will yield new results that you have not encountered up to this point in your life?**

vs. 30&31 – I enjoy this exchange. Jesus knew that someone had touched Him in such a way that they had received something. The disciples respond by basically saying, "What, Lord, are you crazy? With all this crowd touching You, You are saying that someone touched you? Of course someone touched You! A lot of people touched You. Sheesh, Lord, You say some of the strangest things!"

Here it would be good to identify with the disciples. **Have I ever done this? Have I ever taken something the Lord said and mocked it? Scorned it as impossible?** I have. **Have you?** For example, has the Lord said, "Give freely," but you have responded, "That's crazy! I can't give everything away. I have bills to pay." Has the Lord said, "Love your enemies," but you responded, "That will make me weak and everyone will take advantage of me"? When you look at it from that perspective, we may not be that different from the disciples who ridiculed what Jesus said about someone touching Him..

#### **Day Four**

32 But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. 33 Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. 34 He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering." 35 While Jesus was still speaking, some men came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue ruler. "Your daughter is dead," they said. "Why bother the teacher any more?"

v. 32 – Jesus ignored what the disciples said and kept looking for whomever had touched Him. Notice that He didn't know who it was, only that it happened. Jesus was not omniscient while on earth; He didn't know everything. He was still God, however, and felt healing flow from His being.

v. 33 – I wonder how the disciples felt when this woman came forward to tell the whole story. They had rebuked Jesus and now they found out that Jesus was right. This story is similar to the one in Mark 2 where the men dug a hole in the roof to lower their friend into Jesus' presence. They were desperate and this woman was also desperate. And don't forget the synagogue ruler, for, while on hold for the moment, he was desperate, too. Jesus was surrounded by desperate people with needs, while His disciples seemed not to be desperate. It seems that there are still people desperate for Jesus who are being hindered in their seeking by those closest to Jesus who aren't that desperate or who don't understand how desperate people think and act.

**Into which category do you fall: Desperate people seeking Jesus' help or non-desperate people trying to keep the desperate people away?**

v. 34 – Jesus concluded that He had not healed the woman but her faith had really healed her. We know that God was the source of her healing, but it was her faith that enabled her to access that source. It is like Jesus was the hospital but the woman jumped in her car and drove to the hospital. In a sense, her vehicle saved her, for it was what she used to get access to the hospital. **Is faith your vehicle to Jesus and what He has to meet your need?**

v. 35 – Now the synagogue ruler came back into play after a brief diversion. Unfortunately, a delegation came to tell him that he no longer required Jesus' services. His daughter was dead. I wonder if the man felt anger toward the woman who had diverted Jesus' attention and cost them precious time, time that cost his daughter her life? The man had just seen Jesus heal the woman, but time ran out before He could do the same for the man's daughter. **I wonder how the man felt? How would you have felt?**

### **Day Five**

36 Ignoring what they said, Jesus told the synagogue ruler, "Don't be afraid; just believe."  
37 He did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James and John the brother of James.  
38 When they came to the home of the synagogue ruler, Jesus saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly. 39 He went in and said to them, "Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep."

v. 36 – It is important to ignore what others are saying around you when you are operating in faith. I have too often listened to someone with an opinion and treated that opinion like it was a confirmed fact from an expert. When I listened, I usually became discouraged in my faith. The advisers told the ruler that he no longer needed Jesus' help for his daughter was dead. Jesus didn't listen to them and urged the ruler not to as well.

**What is the opposite of faith? Is it unbelief?** That would seem to be the logical answer, but I'm not so sure that it isn't fear. When you don't have faith, you are afraid. When the storm almost swamped their boat in Mark 4, the men feared. Later when the disciples thought Jesus was dead, they were in the upper room with the door bolted because they were afraid. So faith replaces fear, if my assumption is correct. Fear would be a good indicator, furthermore, that faith is absent.

**That leads to the next logical question: Are you afraid? If so, is it because you lack faith? Faith is a decision, so are you ready to abandon fear and embrace faith?**

v. 37 – Jesus handpicked those who followed Him to the ruler's home. I wonder why? Perhaps Jesus own faith and ability were limited by those with fear. Remember what was said in Matthew:

And he did not do many miracles there because of their lack of faith (Matthew 13:58).

Not only did Jesus block out what some were saying, He wouldn't let others follow Him to the man's home. If you are serious about faith, you will have to choose your associates more carefully. You need those who will help your faith or at least not hinder it. **Is there someone in your life right now who is an un-faith agent? Someone who engenders fear and not faith? What are you prepared to do about that relationship?** I am not saying you need to break with that person. I am saying that you need to stop taking your faith cues from that person. You need to be careful what you say to them, what they say to you, and where you "take" them as you walk in faith.

v. 38 – This is the third thing Jesus had to filter. First, it was the initial report. Then he had to filter who came with Him. Now He had to block out the commotion at the house. People were wailing and carrying on, because the little girl was dead and they knew it. Her father, however, had taken some steps that no one knew about. He went to get Jesus and brought Him home to this scene. Now Jesus had to maintain His faith in the midst of pandemonium.

You may need to do the same thing, confronting the facts without wavering in faith. This is what Abraham had to do in regards to his situation:

Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, "So shall your offspring be." Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead — since he was about a hundred years old — and that Sarah's womb was also dead. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised (Romans 4:18-21).

Abraham did not ignore the facts. He just didn't let the facts affect his faith. That is what Jesus did and something you may have to do in your current situation.

v. 39 – Now Jesus spoke faith in the midst of fear and grief. Imagine how strange those words sounded. In fact, we shall see in the next verse that the people thought Jesus was crazy, which was nothing new.

### **Day Six**

40 But they laughed at him. After he put them all out, he took the child's father and mother and the disciples who were with him, and went in where the child was. 41 He took her by the hand and said to her, "Talitha koum!" (which means, "Little girl, I say to you, get up!"). 42 Immediately the girl stood up and walked around (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished. 43 He gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this, and told them to give her something to eat.

v. 40 – This is the fourth Jesus had to filter: the laughter of the people. They knew that the girl was dead but Jesus said she was only sleeping. Faith sometimes makes you laughingstock, for you walk not according to what you can see but what you know to be

true according to the word of the Lord. Again, Jesus had to restrict who was with Him at this time, so He threw everyone out of the house.

Jesus took His closest associates along with the girl's parents into where the girl's dead body was. Jesus was willing to look the fool because He had faith in His word that He would speak. He *knew* something would happen but He had to insure that the atmosphere was right for faith. **What can you do to make your atmosphere right for faith? Who can you surround yourself with that will support your faith ventures?**

v. 41 – Why did Mark have to translate the words “talitha koum?” Mark wrote in Greek but for some reason chose to record Jesus' literal phrase in this situation. The only other time this happens is when Jesus' words were recorded on the cross:

And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?"- which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34).

Why didn't Mark record other literal phrases that Jesus uttered? Why these two? I'm not sure. Would Mark's readers have been so unfamiliar with these words that he had to translate them? Someone conjectured that these phrases were not Aramaic at all but rather Jesus speaking in a heavenly language, similar to what is known as tongues today. That is an interesting thought, don't you think?

v. 42 – At any rate, Jesus ordered the little girl to get up and she could not help but obey. She truly was only asleep from Jesus' perspective, for His word could awaken her. The little girl got up and walked around. Here we have a *wow 5*, for they were all astonished that Jesus brought the girl back to life. **Can you imagine the joy of the parents? Can you imagine the elation of the father?** If he had waited longer to go to Jesus, it would have been too late. His timing was perfect.

This story is similar to one concerning Elisha in 2 Kings 4:

When Elisha reached the house, there was the boy lying dead on his couch. He went in, shut the door on the two of them and prayed to the LORD. Then he got on the bed and lay upon the boy, mouth to mouth, eyes to eyes, hands to hands. As he stretched himself out upon him, the boy's body grew warm. Elisha turned away and walked back and forth in the room and then got on the bed and stretched out upon him once more. The boy sneezed seven times and opened his eyes (2 Kings 4:32-35).

Some have said the God of the Old Testament was One of judgment, while the One in the New is One of grace. I disagree. I think the God of love is evident in both Testaments as evidenced by these two stories of children being brought back to life. **Do you agree?** God is the same yesterday, today and forever and that includes being the same throughout the entire Bible.

v. 43 – I doubt if that mother ever made a more important meal, or one accompanied by as much joy as she had at that moment. She had her little girl back! Notice that Jesus

instructed them not to tell anyone. He was neither concerned with proving that He was right, nor did He want to get back at those who had laughed at his report that the girl was only sleeping. If I were Jesus (that's a scary thought), I would have said, "Let's eat later. Right now, I want to show you off to all my skeptics! **It was never about Jesus, was it?** It was always about serving people and the mission of the Father.

### Day Seven

6:1 Jesus left there and went to his hometown, accompanied by his disciples. 2 When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed. "Where did this man get these things?" they asked. "What's this wisdom that has been given him, that he even does miracles!"

v. 1 – Having done His good deed for the synagogue ruler's family, Jesus went back home to Capernaum with His team. Even Jesus took time to come off the road to get focused back home. **Can you imagine the discussion on the way home?** The rest of the disciples were asking how it went, but those present could not tell them because Jesus had ordered them to tell no one.

I have to wonder what happened to the ruler and his family. **Did they become followers of Jesus, if not now, then later? What were their lives like from that point? Was their faith increased? Did they eventually tell others? And what about the little girl? What did she remember? What did she see when she was dead? What was her testimony from that point forward? Did she become a disciple at some point?**

When Jesus healed, there were no strings attached. He didn't tell the ruler that he would now have to be a follower. Jesus did His good deed and then went home.

v. 2 – Jesus work wasn't complete, for now the Sabbath arrived and He went about teaching in the local synagogue. Here we have a **wow 6**, for those who heard him were amazed at His teaching. They were curious as to His source of inspiration and insight, for they were hearing amazing things they had never heard before. They also saw Jesus doing great things, not just teaching great things. I'm sure those who knew that the little girl was dead circulated the story in the region, so everyone was talking about it, I'm sure.

The people recognized that wisdom is a gift, for they wondered who had *given* Jesus such insight. Jesus insight was so great that it allowed Him to do miracles and heal. Jesus saw that the girl was only asleep so He was able to act accordingly and raise her back to life. Everyone else "knew" that she was dead, but Jesus saw things differently.

Faith causes you to have a different viewpoint than others. You can then act accordingly with that different perspective. **Do you have this wisdom, this different perspective?** If not, then you may want to pray this prayer, for yourself and others:

I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come (Ephesians 1:18-22).

**Do you realize that you have this same power in your life that raised this little girl back to life, that also raised Christ? What are you doing with that power? What more can you do? What needs to happen to remove the restrictions to using this power in your life and work?**