

Mother’s Day is such a special day, filled with emotion and appreciation. I always enjoy celebrating this day with our church family as we worship God and study his Word. Mothers can live in a world of endless lists. A to-do list, a grocery list, a reminder list, a calendar filled with lists of where to be when — but on the top of the lists for moms are the hopes and fears that she has for her children. There are a boatload of things that can cause parents to feel fear: sickness, rebellion, unhappiness, drugs, peer group . . . are some of the things that can send a mother spinning. You knew I would talk about fear because that is the subject. Our focus in the Bible will bring us face to face with parental fear. The Scripture is **Luke 8:40-56**.

The main reason I chose this story is because of a phrase in verse 50, “Don’t be afraid.” This is one of the 21 times Jesus uses this command in the Gospels. Fear is definitely a part of this story. Where does one turn to when they are afraid for their children?

The second reason I chose this story is because of both differences and similarities. The two characters are very different . . . from respected to ignored, or being a leader versus being an outcast. From the highest to the lowest, this story represents the full spectrum; and it shows us that God cares for all. But the things that are similar far outweigh the things that are different, beginning with a 12 year old daughter and a woman with 12 years of sickness. Their response in this story is the main application for us because it is essentially the same . . .

Jairus/a woman —

- ✓ **Humble:** They both approach Jesus in honor and brokenness. In both stories they are bowing. “fell at Jesus’ feet.” (verse 41) And, “touched the edge of his cloak.” (verse 44) Jairus was the main religious leader in Capernaum. The woman was an unknown outcast who would be considered unclean. Both courageously sought Jesus in humility.
- ✓ **Faith:** “But come and put your hands on her and she will live.” (Matthew 9:18) “She said to herself, ‘If I only touch his cloak.’” (Matthew 9:21) There is no way that Jairus could know that Jesus would be able to raise the dead, but he believed. The woman had been ill for twelve years and no one had been able to heal her — not the doctors or medicine.

Jesus —

- ✓ **Compassion:** Concerning both encounters Jesus stopped. Jesus went with the religious leader. Jesus talked to the woman. One could be deemed as an intruder, the other as an interruption. Jesus responded to both people with mercy and kindness. Jesus was accessible . . . within reach. “When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.” (Matthew 9:36)
- ✓ **Power:** The work of God is seen in the hand of Jesus. Healing is significant and raising the dead shows power over the grave. Jesus did both to demonstrate who he was. In verse 48 he uses a unique word for healed. Literally the word is saved. Throughout the Gospels there is a strong message about the reason for Christ’s miracles. It was to point to the fact that he was the Savior. He would heal temporary bodies and change temporary circumstances so that we would know that he is the Savior of the world; the One who redeems and heals hearts for eternity.

In **Mark 5:37-43**, there are parts of the story that are filled in for us so that we can understand it even more deeply. Those that were mourning were people within the community. Even some commentaries would suggest that they were paid mourners. They didn’t have faith in the situation. So Jesus gathers three of his disciples, and the father and mother, who are hanging onto faith in humility. I want us to have the same . . .

You & Me —

- * **Pray and trust:** “(Jairus) . . . pleaded earnestly.” (Mark 5:23) “If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed.” (Mark 5:28)
- Parents we can gravitate in two directions. We can either try to control every move our children make, or we can let them go for it on their own. One way is to be paranoid, the other way is to be permissive. But the thing that Jesus honors every time is prayer. Jesus didn’t talk about parenting very much. He didn’t make any comment on spanking, breastfeeding, sibling rivalry or schooling. But each time a parent prays, he listens. He has the power to do the right thing at the right time. It is the most powerful parenting tool — Prayer.

Reflective Questions:

1. What do you appreciate about your mother? What example have you gained from her life?
2. Why is it so natural to fear for our children's wellbeing? Why do some husbands and wives avoid even being parents because of fear? What are your fears?
3. What stood out to you from this story in Luke 8? What is the message that you're taking with you that you want to apply to your life concerning those you love?
4. Why would prayer be the clearest application to the message? What does prayer demonstrate to God about you? Why does prayer work?

Reading Schedule for May 10th – 16th, 2010

We will begin with the amazing turnaround in Job's life as he repents and places his life in the hands of God. Then we will spend the rest of the week reading from the Book of Psalms. The selection includes the most magnificent Psalms from the whole book. We will only read seven specific chapters from Psalms, but these definitely are the highlight. We will be reading my favorite Psalm this next Sunday, which is Psalm 103. I think just reading a few Psalms will stir you to include the Book of Psalms in your prayer time with God. I found reading through a Psalm as a part of my time of prayer with God to be very meaningful.

May 10: **Job 38:1-41** – “Do you send the lightning bolts on their way? Do they report to you, ‘Here we are?’ Who endowed the heart with wisdom or gave understanding to the mind?” (vv. 35 & 36) God spoke according to the Book of Job for two chapters. This is the longest narration from God found in the Bible. God did not answer any of Job's questions; rather God posed questions to Job. What do you receive from this chapter? Why is this such a powerful presentation from the living God? What does it say about God? What does the chapter say about Job? What does this say about you?

May 11: **Job 42:1-17** – “I know that you can do all things; no plan of yours can be thwarted. You asked, ‘Who is this that obscures my counsel without knowledge?’ Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me to know.” (vv. 2 & 3) Job openly and honestly faced God and admitted he was the one who had been foolish. He praises God and puts his trust in the Lord, and at the same time repents. To repent means to turn back to God and to trust him with your life. What do you know about Job? What does this chapter say to you? How would you respond to God if you followed Job's example?

May 12: **Psalm 1:1-6** – “But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.” (vv. 2 & 3) This short Psalm is full of meaning. Essentially only two paths lie before us – the way of the Lord and the way of our selfish desires. If we choose God's path the Bible promises us spiritual prosperity. The key to finding God's way is in his Word. When we apply God's Word we receive his wisdom and God's favor rests upon us. This Psalm essentially teaches how important it is to have God's Word in your heart. Do you agree? What place does God's Word have in your life? What does the word “meditate” mean to you? Why is that important?

May 13: **Psalm 8:1-9** – “What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor.” (vv. 4 & 5) When we compare ourselves to God's greatness we are able to have a proper respect for God. This statement is not about man being insignificant, but rather about the greatness of God. Yet the most valuable part of his creation is mankind. God wants to use us to influence this world and to be his stewards for his creation. That is a marvelous affirmation from God about the significance he gives us. What stands out to you in this Psalm? Why is this such a wonderful Psalm for us to remember?

May 14: **Psalm 23:1-6** – This Psalm is the most recited Psalm in the whole book. Many people have memorized it. One time in my ministry life I did a six-week series from this Psalm. “The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul.” (vv. 1-3a) The imagery of God being our shepherd is a comforting one. Sheep are completely dependent on the shepherd for provision, guidance and protection. Jesus called himself the good shepherd. Being a pastor is sometimes likened to a shepherd. Being close to the shepherd is restorative to our soul. How does this Psalm give you comfort? What statement stands out to you? What does it mean to you that God is your shepherd?

May 15: **Psalm 51:1-19** – “Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.” (vv. 10-12) These verses have been put to song. They make up a powerful prayer that expresses something that God already wants to do in your life. God wants us to be close to him and to experience the joy of our salvation. He wants us to live with a pure heart. The Lord wants to restore you. What sins do you need to confess? How is your heart before God these days? Will you pray this prayer to God? What will that mean to you?

May 16: **Psalm 103:1-22** – “Praise the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits—who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.” (vv. 2-5) The Lord is so good to us. In these few verses it mentions several ways that God has helped us. Forgiveness, healing and satisfaction are just a few of the benefits that the Lord gives us when we put our faith in him. The rest of the Psalm talks about how to put your faith in him and again affirms what he will do for us. The assurance of forgiveness is one of the reoccurring themes in this Psalm. It says our sins are removed “as far as the east is from the west.” We can be assured that our past is the past, and God forgives and forgets. What does that mean to you? How could that help you? How would living by that truth help you?

Prayers: Pray for our ministry to Hallman Elementary, which continues week by week with reading buddies. Pray for our open invitation to the neighborhood to participate in the Food Bank this coming Saturday. Pray for our individual opportunities to share the love of Christ and his Gospel message.