

EXERCISE DYNAMIC FAITH IN JESUS

5 ²¹When Jesus had again crossed over in the boat to the other side [of the lake], a large crowd gathered around him. [While] he was [still] by the sea, ²²there came one of the rulers of the synagogue, a man named Jairus. Seeing [Jesus], he fell at his feet ²³and earnestly begged him, My little daughter is at the point of death; [I plead with you to] come and lay your hands on her, so that she may recover and live. ²⁴[Jesus] went with him; and a large crowd followed him, and they pressed upon him. ²⁵A woman—who had a hemorrhage for twelve years, ²⁶and had suffered many things at the hands of many physicians, and had spent all [her money], and was not at all better, but rather grew worse—²⁷having heard about Jesus, came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment. ²⁸She thought, If I can only touch his garments, I shall be healed. ²⁹And immediately her bleeding stopped; and she felt in her body that she was cured of her illness. ³⁰Realizing that the power proceeding from him had gone forth, Jesus immediately turned around in the crowd and said, Who touched my garments? ³¹And his disciples said to him, You see the crowd pressing upon you, and you ask, Who touched me? ³²But he looked around to see [the woman] who had done this thing. ³³And the woman, fearful and trembling, knowing what had been done to her, came and fell down before him, and told him the whole truth. ³⁴He said to her, Daughter, your faith has restored you; go in peace and be cured of your illness.

³⁵While he was still speaking, certain persons came from the ruler of the synagogue's [house] saying, Your daughter is dead. Why do you bother the Teacher any more? ³⁶But Jesus, ignoring what they said, told the ruler of the synagogue, Do not be afraid, only believe. ³⁷He permitted no one to come with him, except Peter, James, and John the brother of James. ³⁸When they came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, he saw a commotion, [with people] weeping and wailing loudly. ³⁹When he had entered [the house], he said to them, Why are you making such a commotion, why are you weeping? The child is not dead; she is [only] sleeping. ⁴⁰But they laughed at him scornfully. But he, after removing them all [from the house], took the father of the child and her mother and those who were with him, and went in to where the child was. ⁴¹Taking the child by the hand, he said to her, Talitha, cumi; which means, Little girl, I say to you, Get up. ⁴²Immediately the little girl got up and walked; for she was twelve years old. And they were overcome with great astonishment. ⁴³He sternly charged them that no one should know about this. Then he told them to give her something to eat.

6 [Jesus] left there and went to his hometown, accompanied by his disciples. ²When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue. Many who heard him were astonished, saying, Where did this man learn these things? and, What is the wisdom that has been given to this man, and [what is the meaning of] such mighty works preformed by his hands? ³Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary, and the brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? Are not his sisters here with us? So they took offense at him. ⁴But Jesus said to them, A prophet is not without honor, except in his own hometown, and among his own relatives, and in his own house. ⁵He could not do any mighty work there; although he did lay his hands upon a few sick people and heal

them. ⁶He was amazed at their unbelief. Then he went around from village to village teaching. (Mk. 5:21-6:6)

Introduction

I was having trouble with the bedroom lamp the other night; it just would not go on. I clicked it on and off, but no light; I tried shaking it, but no light; I changed the bulb, but still no light!

I was stumbling around in the dark, trying to cope as best I could, but not doing very well. I stubbed my toe on the bedpost; I later discovered that the shirt and tie I had selected in the dark were a terrible mismatch—I was not functioning very well in the dark and I did not have the help of the lamp.

Well, as this same frustrating routine was repeated night after night, I got more and more upset with that malfunctioning lamp, and I was losing confidence in it. The thing just does not work! Lamps may work for other people, but not for me! I finally gave up on it. I didn't throw that lamp away, mind you; after all, it was a wedding gift from grandma, it had been in the family for generations. I couldn't just throw it away; it was a real antique (maybe that's why it didn't work, maybe it was outdated!)

Then one evening my son came into the bedroom, he saw me stumbling around in the gathering darkness and asked, "Dad, why don't you turn on the lamp?" I tried to explain to him that the lamp doesn't work.

"I can see why," he said, "it's not plugged in! That lamp isn't going to give any light as long as it's not plugged into the wall socket. Without the electrical current from the power source running through the wire to the light bulb, that lamp is useless!"

So my son stooped down, plugged the cord into the socket, and I've been living in the light ever since!

The Christian faith is like that lamp. It is only dynamic when it is "plugged into the power source" of the Lord Jesus Christ. If you're having trouble with your "lamp," if your Christian faith is lifeless and powerless, it may be that it is "unplugged." If that's the case, you need to "plug it in," you need to exercise dynamic faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the kind of faith that accepts His word and acts upon it.

I. Exercise Dynamic Faith in Jesus, the Kind of Faith that Sees Christ Work (Mk. 5:21-24,35-43)

Having delivered the demoniac(s) in the region of the Gerasenes, Jesus and His disciples return once again to Galilee (Mk. 5:21.) As Jesus steps out of the little boat, amidst a great throng of people, there comes rushing up to Him a man named Jairus (an official of the local synagogue.) Jairus throws himself down at

Jesus' feet and pleads for the life of his young twelve-year-old daughter: she is at the point of death, will Jesus please come and restore her? (Mk. 5:22-23.)

Without saying a word, the Lord Jesus accompanies Jairus to his home. Along the way He is thronged by a great multitude of people (Mk. 5:24.) As they approach Jairus' house they are met by a delegation bearing the bad news: the little girl has died. In courtesy to Jesus, they exhort Jairus to accept the outcome and stop troubling "*the Teacher*" (Mk. 5:35.)

Jesus overhears the report of the delegation that came out to meet Jairus, and He quietly says to Jairus, Don't be afraid, just trust Me. (Mk. 5:36.) At this point Jesus commands the delegation, and everyone else, to stay where they are. He only allows Peter, James and John to accompany Him into Jairus' house; everyone else is shut out (Mk. 5:37.)

When they enter the house they encounter the mourners: the relatives and neighbors wailing over the dead girl's body (Mk. 5:38.) Upon entering the house, Jesus asks, "Why are you all mourning?" Then follows His startling announcement, "*The child is not dead, she is [only] sleeping.*" Note: Jesus is here using the term, "*sleeping,*" in the same way as He does in John 11 to describe the case of Lazarus:

After he had said this, he went on to tell them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up." ¹²His disciples replied, "Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better." ¹³Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep. ¹⁴So then he told them plainly, Lazarus is dead. (Jn. 11:11-14)

In both cases the persons were actually dead, but they would be raised back to life by the Lord Jesus.

With that statement the mourning turns into laughter—a scoffing derision of the Lord Jesus and the statement He has just uttered. When that happens Jesus sends them out of the house, permitting only Jairus and his wife, together with His disciples, to accompany Him to the little girl's bedside (Mk. 5:40.) In that intimate setting, the Lord Jesus gently raises the girl back to life; and then charges the family to keep this a secret (Mk. 5:41-43.)

What is the Lord teaching us through this incident? Contrast the confident faith of Jairus with the unbelief of the delegation that comes to report his daughter's death. Jairus acknowledges that his daughter is at the point of death, and indeed, has succumbed to death: "*My daughter has just died. But come and lay your hand upon her, and she shall live*" (Matt. 9:18b.) Matthew gives only a brief synopsis of this miracle, whereas Mark and Luke (8:41-56) present the full account. The delegation exhorts Jairus to stop bothering Jesus, (whom they merely identify as "*the Teacher*"), because the little girl has died. Here is an extremely limited

concept of the Person and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, and an exaggerated concept of the problem that is being presented to Him. This delegation fails to perceive the true identity of the Person before whom they stand. If they had rightly understood who Jesus truly is, hopefully they would have responded to Him with the words of Jeremiah, *“Ah, Sovereign LORD, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you”* (Jer. 32:17.)

Having considered the contrast between the confident faith of Jairus and the unbelief of the delegation, consider the reward of faith. Jesus encourages and supports Jairus’ faith when it is severely threatened by the delegation and their unbelieving counsel (Mk. 5:35-36.) Jairus’ faith is rewarded by witnessing and receiving a great work of God (Mk. 5:43.)

Finally, consider the consequence of unbelief. Every time unbelief manifests itself, Christ turns His back and walks away from it (Mark 5:35,37,39-40,43), and excludes the unbelieving crowd from even witnessing His mighty work.

Let us exercise dynamic faith in Jesus, the kind of faith that sees Christ work. Let us take heed to the words the Lord Jesus spoke to Martha as they stood at the tomb of her brother Lazarus, *“Then Jesus said, ‘Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?’”* (Jn. 11:40.)

II. Exercise Dynamic Faith in Jesus, the Kind of Faith that Really “Touches” Christ (Mk. 5:25-34)

As Jesus, surrounded by a great throng of people, makes His way to Jairus’ house, somebody **touches** Him. It proves to be a poor desperate woman who has been suffering from an issue of blood for the past twelve years. Her case was incurable. She had been to many doctors, had spent all of her life savings, but all to no avail; her condition was steadily growing worse (Mk. 5:35.) Having heard of the miraculous healing power of Jesus, this woman, with desperate determination, works her way through the crowd, reaches out, and touches His garment. Her reasoning—and her faith—are revealed to us: *“If I can only touch his garments, I shall be healed”* (Mk. 5:28.) May we learn from this poor woman that the soundest form of reasoning is that which proceeds from faith in Christ and is based upon faith in Christ. Sure enough, when this woman touched Jesus’ garment, her hemorrhaging ceased, and she actually felt her body being restored to health.

As soon as she touched His garment, Jesus immediately stopped, turned around, and confronted the crowd with the question, *“Who touched me?”* Note that the woman merely **touch**ed His garment; she did not grab His robe and hang on to it. But when she touched Him—in confident and even desperate faith—Jesus perceived that *“power had gone out from him”* (Mk. 5:30.) The disciples are

dumbfounded. A great multitude of people are pressing upon Jesus, and He wants to know, “Who **touched** me?”

When the woman comes forward and confesses what she has done, Jesus points to her faith as the instrument of her healing and salvation. Then He pronounces His benediction upon her.

Contrast this one desperate woman with the whole multitude. The crowd surrounds Jesus, they press against Him, but they receive no personal benefit from their contact with Him. Nothing happens in their lives; their lives remain untouched. This woman merely **touches** His garment—with confident, even desperate, faith—and the power of Jesus transforms her whole life!

Let us exercise dynamic faith in Jesus, the kind of faith that really “touches” Christ. Consider a modern day example of a woman who reached out and touched Christ with sincere and even desperate faith:

Renee still believed in God’s existence, but for many years she didn’t trust Him ...

“Finally, I surrendered to a God I didn’t even trust,” she said. “My foundation was crumbling so fast that I held on to the only shred of hope I could find—God!”

He responded by making the Bible come alive to her. Christian friends came into her life, one of whom was a pastor who cried with her and counseled her.

Since that time, much healing has occurred in her life. She says she has learned that ... God is always there to see her through. (*Our Daily Bread*, 7/29/94)

III. Exercise Dynamic Faith in Jesus, the Kind of Faith that Does Not “Hinder” Christ (Mk. 6:1-6)

Following the miraculous incidents recorded in Mark 5:21-43, Jesus comes to His hometown. On the Sabbath day He teaches at the local synagogue and those who hear Him are astounded.

They are overwhelmed by Him—in the sense of being offended. They cannot comprehend the connection between His wisdom and miraculous power on the one hand and their familiar acquaintance with Him on the other: Is not this the carpenter, is not this the son of Mary? How is **he** able to teach with such wisdom and work such mighty miracles? “*They took offense at him*” (Mk. 6:3.)

Jesus' words and deeds did not fit into their conception of Him. They therefore take offence at Him; and this leads to unbelief. Rather than adjusting their conception of Jesus in the light of the evidence He presents, they reject Him and distance themselves from Him.

Their unbelief "hindered" Jesus from working powerfully among them. We must not draw the conclusion that Jesus' ability to perform mighty works was not absolutely dependent upon the faith of the people; note the case recorded in John 5:1-9 where Jesus performs a work of healing upon a man who expressed no faith in Him,

Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for a feast of the Jews. ²Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades. ³Here a great number of disabled people used to lie—the blind, the lame, the paralyzed. ⁵One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. ⁶When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, "Do you want to get well?" ⁷"Sir," the invalid replied, "I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me." ⁸Then Jesus said to him, "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk." ⁹At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked. (Jn. 5:1-9)

The mighty power of God is not dependent upon the faith of finite man for it to operate; but, nevertheless, God has ordained that faith shall be the instrument through which we experience the saving power of Christ. With regard to the people of Jesus' hometown, their unbelief "limited" Jesus to merely a teaching ministry among them; they were not permitted to witness or experience His saving power.

Let us beware of "Faith Quenchers." One such "Faith Quencher" is the fear of change: the traditional becomes comfortable, even "sacred." An example of this is seen in the previous passage of the Gospel of Mark, the Garasenes found Jesus' saving power to be too disturbing for them

Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the demon-possessed man—and told about the pigs as well. ¹⁷Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region. (Mk. 5:16-17)

Another "Faith Quencher" is the fear for personal safety: an unwillingness to follow Jesus out of our "comfort zone." We need to follow the example of the Apostle Paul who testified: *"I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me"* (Acts 20:24.)

A third "Faith Quencher" is the fear of relinquishing control of our lives. Rather than allow that fear to control us, may the Lord enable us to become like Jesus

Himself. As He hung upon the cross, *“Jesus called out with a loud voice, ‘Father, into your hands I commit my spirit’”* (Lk. 23:46.)

A fourth “Faith Quencher” is the fear of the unknown. May we follow the example of Abraham, our forefather in the faith, of whom we are told: *“By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going”* (Heb. 11:8.)

A fifth “Faith Quencher” is the fear of suffering loss. We need to heed the counsel of our Lord:

Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne ... everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life.” (Matt. 19:28-29)

A sixth “Faith Quencher” is the fear of failure. May we be encouraged by the example of Moses: *“By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; and he survived, almost seeing him who is invisible”* (Heb. 11:27.)

Let us exercise dynamic faith in Jesus, the kind of faith that does not “hinder” Christ. The Apostle Paul prays that we might know *“the exceedingly great power [made available] to us who are believing”* (Eph. 1:19); that is, we who are exercising dynamic faith in the Lord Jesus Christ—the faith that takes Christ at His word and acts upon it.

Conclusion

If you have been having trouble with your “lamp,” if you are finding that your Christian life is dead and powerless, it may be that it has become “unplugged” from a vital connection with the Lord Jesus Christ. If that, indeed, is the case, “plug it in:” exercise a dynamic faith in Jesus. Exercise the kind of faith that simply rests in Jesus, taking Him at His word, and receives from Him life and grace and all that you need. Exercise the kind of faith that places complete confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ, accepting His word and acting upon it.