

Trust, healing, discipleship

Introduction. Two contrasting people and their faith/trust in Jesus. In these encounters Jesus heals each and true discipleship is shown. Mark seems to have two foci; faith as the mark of true discipleship and what these events reveal about who Jesus is and what he has come to do.

1. (V. 21-24) **The first scene:** the unexpected faith/trust of one of the synagogue rulers in Jesus. Jairus, out of desperation, takes the dangerous step of publicly putting his complete trust in Jesus to heal his daughter.
2. (V. 25-34). **The second scene:** the unnamed woman approaches and trusts Jesus to heal her. She is immediately healed when she touches Jesus, so her desire has been met.
 - i. **She acts in secret** probably because of her shame and because she would have been shunned by others, being ritually unclean.
 - ii. **Jesus discerns that some 'power' has left him** and he wants to speak with her. The woman's secret act contrasts with Jesus' response.
 - iii. **Jesus seems to ask a genuine question** to which his disciples respond with incredulity because of the large crowd pressing around Jesus.

Reflection/Response. Why does Jesus want to speak with the woman after her healing? How does the woman's response to Jesus grow in depth and understanding?

3. **Jesus affirms that she possesses what his own disciples lack (4:40) – faith (trust) in him (34),** the mark of a true disciple.
4. (V. 35-43). The healing of the woman seems disastrous for Jairus and his daughter. They are informed that his daughter **has died while Jesus was delayed.**
5. Jesus' response, **'do not be afraid; just believe'**, seems to indicate that Jairus' initial faith in him was waning. The healed woman now becomes the model for Jairus of true faith/trust in Jesus. **Jesus challenges Jairus to 'keep on believing' in him, in spite of the circumstances.**

Reflection/Response. Why does Jesus call for continual trust in him and how is this related to his journey to Gethsemane, the Cross and beyond?

6. Jesus continues to Jairus' home, and before seeing her, pronounces that **'the child is not dead but asleep'**. What does he mean? There seems little doubt that the girl is really dead (the mourners outside and the derisive laughter at Jesus' claim). Jesus sees her death as like sleep (see Gen. 47:30; Deut. 31:16; 1 Co. 15:20) because he will reverse the process and give her back her life. This shows he is united to the giver of life (God), and foreshadows **his resurrection which will mean new life, beyond death, for those who trust in him (Mk. 8:31-38; Jn. 6:34-40; Jn. 11:25 Rm. 6:1-10).**

Reflection/Response: Why does Jesus not want the people to tell others about her healing? **How do the woman and Jairus show true discipleship?**

Trusting in Jesus enables us to receive the new life he makes possible