

“Fell At His Feet and Implored Him Earnestly”

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22 “One of the synagogue officials named Jairus came up, and on seeing Him, fell at His feet 23 and implored Him earnestly, saying, ‘My little daughter is at the point of death; please come and lay Your hands on her, so that she will get well and live’” (Mark 5:22, 23).

This passage has a couple of dynamics within it. First, one can get lost in the debate as to whether or not God still heals as dramatically as we read in this passage. Whether or not we believe He heals in this fashion might have little immediate or direct impact on us if we are not facing the imminent death of a loved one. The second dynamic is immensely practical and strikes much closer to the heart – the humbling of the individual in his coming to Jesus. The description of this man’s humbling in his coming to Jesus continues to mark those who would come to Jesus. No one comes in any other way. The means our Lord employs to bring us to this point is varied, but the process is always the same. It is only when we come to the end of self that we find the Savior.

Although the study as to whether or not our Lord heals as directly and immediately and supernaturally as He did then is necessary to understand, what I would like us to consider is the necessary brokenness that we must face in our pursuit of God and our fellowship with Him.

The New Testament is clear: God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

⁵ “for GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.

⁶ Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time” (1 Pet. 5:5, 6).

“But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, ‘GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE’” (James 4:6).

When we consider our justification, this principle is non-negotiable. The grace of God to save sinners is contingent on them giving way to Him. Unless they humble themselves before Him, He will not save them. There is always more to this idea than what is stated, but what is stated is true. When using the word “contingent” we simply mean conditional. For example, God saves only lost people. The condition to salvation is first being lost. In the reformation several ideas were present. Three of those ideas are captured in the statement summarizing our salvation: By grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone (***sola gracia, sola fida, solus Christus***). In order to be saved from sin, these three aspects are always present. The “condition” is three-fold: grace, faith, Christ. Thus, the receiving of God’s gift of eternal life is “contingent” on grace, faith, and Christ.

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When we consider our sanctification, this principle has a different face but we still come to God by faith. The idea of grace through faith in Christ is still operative. Sanctification is the continued outworking of justification. Justification produces sanctification. The one flows from the other, and the two are inseparably linked.

Humility does not merit grace. Grace, by its very nature, is incapable of being earned. If grace is earnable, it ceases to be grace. This principle is equally operative in our justification. Faith of itself does not merit salvation. God saves by grace and faith is a door through which grace works. In our sanctification, faith continues to be a door through which grace works, thus the call to walk by faith and not by sight.

In looking at the Christian life, let us consider for just a moment the evil of pride. Pride places one's confidence in one's ability rather than in Christ's sufficiency. Pride takes credit for what He has done. Pride deceives itself into believing that what it possesses is earned and deserved. Pride takes from Christ the glory and adds to Christ self-boasting. Just as faith opens the door through which grace works, pride closes the door through which grace works.

In our present story, Jairus came in faith to Jesus. As such, the grace of God passed through the door of faith and worked the miracle. Had Jairus not come because of pride, then in this instance the grace of God may have had no door through which to work. His faith was not necessary for God to choose to work, but in this case it seemed to be the vehicle through which Jesus extended grace.

The storms of life place us in positions whereby our deceived selves see our completely bankrupt state and, in faith, come to Jesus for help. Jesus sees our simple faith and works grace. Our faith does not merit grace. Our faith is the door through which grace walks and thus works. God calls us to live by faith, not by sight. A faith walk consistently senses the grace of God at work in everything, everywhere, at all times. A sight walk, one marked by pride, fails to see the sufficiency of Christ and thus lives a wretched existence. Pride does not acknowledge the need and the necessity of God's grace and consequently seeks to merit what cannot be earned.

It is only as we are lost to self that we are found by Him. And in losing, we win. Our loss becomes our greatest gain. Although the breaking is horrific, let us not lose faith and let us continue to believe that He is in control and that He truly cares.