

## PUT ON HOLD

Devotional for July 1, 2018 based upon Mark 5: 21-43

Picture the frantic father in our Gospel lesson for this morning. His little girl was at the point of death when he hears that there is someone who just might be able to save her life. So even though he is a man of power, prominence, and prestige – he is Jairus, leader of the synagogue – in desperation he lays aside all pride, falls at Jesus' feet, and begs Him repeatedly, "My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well and live." His request is specific, focused, and intense.

Will Jesus go? Of course He will go. Mark tells us, "He went with him." But then look at what happens next. Beginning with verse 25 Mark tells us, "There was a woman who had been suffering from bleeding for twelve years. She had heard about Jesus and came up behind Him in the crowd and touched His cloak. Immediately her bleeding stopped." There is a break in the story. An interruption happens. Jairus' obtaining help from Jesus is put on hold.

Now just imagine how you would feel if you were Jairus. Here is a woman whose problem is far less serious than your daughter's problem. But she is interrupting your being able to get help from the one person in the whole world who might be able to help you. Can you imagine the panic that this frantic father must have been feeling at that particular moment? Here is the Master, ministering to someone else, whose problem is far less serious than mine, and His doing so is putting me on hold.

Why does the Master sometimes seem to delay? Why isn't He quicker to respond to my needs? Doesn't He know that the matter is urgent? Why does He sometimes put me on hold? These are questions that go right to the heart of the nature of prayer. Why does it sometimes seem that my prayers go no higher than the ceiling?

Picture this frantic father, waiting for Jesus to minister to the woman with the flow of blood, when, according to Mark, his worst fears happen. Some friends come from the house. As soon as he sees their faces, he knows what has taken place. It is the news no parent ever wants to hear. "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?"

Up to this point Jairus had had a faint glimmer of hope. But now there seems to be no hope. His friends try to support and comfort him as best they can. But there is a limit to the help that even your best friend can give at a moment like this. Something much more is needed. Something that only Jesus can give.

Fortunately, Jesus is still there. He may have been delayed, but He is still there. Just like Jesus is still there in your times of greatest need. I have a feeling that Jesus touched him gently on the shoulder as He said, "Do not fear; only believe." Which admittedly is asking a lot of this man.

Whenever we feel put on hold is when we need to hold on even tighter to the promises of God.

And so Jesus makes His way to Jairus' house, accompanied by His three closest friends – Peter, James, and John. When He comes to the house, He sees family and friends gathered there. He sees hired mourners and hears a great crowd weeping and wailing loudly. "Why do you make a commotion and weep?" He asks. "The child is not dead but sleeping."

They laugh at Him. They ridicule His diagnosis. He asks them to leave the house and then goes into the room where the little girl is lying. He takes her by the hand and says, "Little girl, get up!" Immediately she gets up and begins to walk around.

Today do you feel like you have been put on hold? Do you feel like your prayers are going no higher than the ceiling? Do you feel like Jesus must be responding to someone else because He certainly is not responding to you?

Know this. Whenever we feel put on hold is when we need to hold on even tighter to the promises of God. Whenever you feel put on hold, do not let go of Him. He will never let go of you. He loves you with a love that will not let you go.

Pastor Dennis D. Nelson