

Mark 5:35-37

*"While He was still speaking, they came from the house of the synagogue official, saying, 'Your daughter has died; why trouble the Teacher anymore?' But Jesus, overhearing what was being spoken, said to the synagogue official, 'Do not be afraid any longer, only believe.'"*

The theme of belief runs through the gospel of Mark. But belief is one of the least understood concepts today. We have confused biblical belief with opinions, personal desires, and the evaluation of people and situations. When we lump the belief in Jesus Christ with our belief in a political philosophy, our plans for the future and the likelihood of our favorite team making the playoffs, is it any wonder we do not see the power of God in our lives?

Belief opens the door to the power of God. By it, divine power is given to those who are utterly powerless. Faith can be bold; it can be halting; it can be imperfect and it can be filled with trepidation. All that is needed for it to be effective is for it to be directed to Jesus Christ. When faith is in the person of Jesus Christ, it overcomes obstacles. The woman worked her way through the crowds and overcomes any sense of shame she had to reach out and touch His garments. The synagogue leader had to overcome the peer pressure of the other religious leaders who were already conspiring how they may put Jesus to death and humbly ask Jesus for the healing of his daughter.

Belief is not invisible, but always demonstrated by action. It is seen in the men digging through the roof to lower their friend to Jesus. It kneels, begs and reaches out to touch. It is not merely belief about Jesus that brings about healing, but a faith in Jesus that causes action which does. Neither Jairus nor the woman identifies Jesus as Messiah or even as a prophet. But they believe He has the power to heal and are willing to put their faith to the test to come to Jesus. Faith does not wait for the sea to divide before stepping out. Belief steps out, trusting God will do what is needed.

Belief is not a magic bullet to receive everything we may desire. Evil, illness and death still continue in our lives. Not every touch will bring healing, and those with great faith still hear the dreaded words from the doctor, "Your daughter is dead." A miracle does not occur in every situation, but it does not diminish God's power to save. If God intervened in every situation we asked of Him, we would never have to exercise faith. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego expressed the only kind of faith that will carry us through tragedy when they declared, *"If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up."* (Daniel 3:17-18).