**Sunday, 6/27/21, Sermon**

**For Gospel Reading**

**Mark 5:21-43**

Jeremy was only 8 years old, and looked so small in the hospital bed.

The heart surgeon sat next to him and quietly told Jeremy:

“Tomorrow morning I will open up your heart.”

"You will find Jesus there," the boy said.

The surgeon continued: "I'll open your heart, and check the damage."

"You will find Jesus there," Jeremy said again.

"When I see the damage, I will suture you back up,

          and then think about the next step," said the surgeon.

Jeremy looked at the doctor and said:

          "You will find Jesus in my heart,

          because my Sunday school teacher told me so.

          She said it says so in the Bible.

          And our Sunday school songs say He lives there."

The surgery took place the next day.

After the surgery the doctor began to make notes of what he found.

In his mind there was no hope and there was no cure.

8 year old Jeremy would die within a matter of months.

The doctor stared at his notes, frustrated at his inability to help Jeremy.

Suddenly he cried out to God:  "Why did you do this to the boy?

                                                  Why can't he live a normal life?

                                                  Why did you let this happen?

                                                  Why didn't you help him?"

Tears fell as the surgeon sat silently all alone.

But then the doctor held a quiet voice as God spoke to him.

          "The boy is one of my children, and I love him dearly.

          He will always be one of my children.

          When he comes to me there will be no more suffering and pain.

          He will have comfort, and joy, and peace.

          One day his parents, as well as you, will join him,

                    and there will be no more tears."

The next day the surgeon went to the boy's room

          and sat down with the parents beside the bed.

Within a few minutes, Jeremy opened his eyes and asked very quietly,

“What did you find in my heart?”

With tears flowing down his cheeks, the surgeon said, "I found Jesus there."

In our reading this morning we have two stories in one.

Actually one comes in the middle of the other,

          two people who need Jesus, in a special way.

Two people who have problems they are unable to solve themselves,

          so they turn to the one who can help.

Jairus approached Jesus as a man on a mission.

He had a storm in his life.

His little girl was about to die, and he was not ready to let her go.

His approach was a desperate one.

There was no other chance to save his daughter.

So he did the only thing which could help –

          he turned to the one who could heal her.

There was a woman in the huge crowd which followed Jesus.

She had been suffering for twelve years.

She had tried everything she could.

She had endured much suffering, and spent everything she had.

But she was not any getting better, but was getting worse.

In some way she had heard about Jesus and his power to heal.

In spite of her shame and helplessness, she believed Jesus could heal her.

Her faith in his power gave her the courage and strength to approach him.

She didn't believe she had to encounter him, she didn't need to speak to him,

          she simply needed to touch his clothes.

She was desperate as she fought through the crowd, and reached out to touch him. When she touched Him, she immediately was made whole.

But Jesus wanted to give her more than simply physical healing.

So he stopped and asked who had touched him.

She had been healed physically.

But Jesus wanted to heal her in other ways also.

He wanted to set aside her fear and trembling.

He wanted her to know she was accepted and loved.

He wanted her to experience peace and joy.

Jesus looked all around until he found her.

With great faith, the woman had reached out and touched his clothes.

Because she went to him, she was touched by his love.

We have all had times when we have tried everything.

We have searched to fill the emptiness which we have inside us,

          the feeling of failure and helplessness.

When we turn to Jesus, when we dare to reach out and touch Him,

          we discover he can heal our brokenness, he can heal your pain.

He can help us find the peace and joy we have been searching for.

Jairus must have been devastated.

So close to help for his daughter, he was told she was dead.

Yet somehow when Jesus told him:

“Do not fear, only believe,”

          he continued to his home with Jesus.

And he received the miracle he had been praying for:

          his daughter was alive and well.

Two people who desperately needed help.

Two miraculous healings.

Two who trusted and turned to Jesus, and received his help.

In October 1987, a little girl named Jessica McClure

          fell down an abandoned well shaft,

          8 inches in diameter, and 22 feet deep, outside of Midland, Texas.

When rescuers discovered her in the well,

          she was in near total darkness, with a broken arm, unable to move,

          and singing Sunday School songs to herself.

Her rescue became the focus of the entire country.

It dominated television and newspapers headlines for 58 continuous hours.

As President Ronald Reagan put it,

          "Everybody in America became godmothers and godfathers of Jessica

          while this was going on."

Officials initially thought the rescue would be quick and easy.

But then they ran into limestone which blunted equipment.

And progress slowed to a crawl.

Near the rescue area people gathered, holding candles, and praying nonstop.

Hour after hour, they stayed, and prayed, and dared to hope.

When Jessica was finally brought up out of the well alive,

          cameras were flashing, the rescuers were crying,

          the parents were crying, newscasters were crying,

          and bystanders continued to thank God for his help.

Tragedies happen,

          and we grieve for those who are lost.

But miracles also happen,

          and we rejoice and thank God for his help.

When we turn to God,

          and trust his promises,

                    we do find love, and peace, and joy, in our lives.

AMEN