

**INTRODUCTION:**

This morning we are going to look at three different stories of Jesus working miracles. As we go through the gospel of Luke I have tried to reiterate that each story is intentional. They are placed in a particular order on purpose. And Luke places these stories here right after the parable of the sower. I believe that each of these stories illustrate the parable of the Sower.

Last week Pastor Rob walked us through the parable. A sower casts seed into different kinds of soil. All of them grow, but most of them struggle and die. Only the seed in the good soil grows and bears fruit. The focus of the parable is how we are to be good soil by hearing and obeying the word. As we look at these stories I want you to have that parable in the back of your mind. Because someone in each story represents a different kind of soil.

But there is a difference in these passages, because Jesus is a better sower. In the parable only the good soil grows. But here in each of these stories Jesus works great miracles. Because Jesus can bring dead things back to life.

Turn with me in your Bibles to Luke 8:22-56 and stand if you are able.

**Point 1: The disciples faith is ruined by suffering (v. 22-25).**

The disciples here are much like the rocky soil.

They grew on the rock and had no roots.

They believed for awhile until trials came, then fell away.

The storm of life literally comes for the disciples.

It was easy to trust God when everything is going great.

It is much harder when Jesus is sleeping and the storm is raging.

Verse 22, **"One day he got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side of the lake." So they set out, 23 and as they sailed he fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling with water and were in danger."**

They are traveling on a boat going across the lake.

And once they get going, Jesus takes a nap.

Then their boat is overtaken by a huge windstorm.  
They are not exaggerating the danger.  
This storm is so big that the boat begins to sink.  
It is starting to get filled with water and looks like it could sink at any moment.  
I would be terrified.

I grew up in Nebraska, which means that I don't know the water.  
I was in a small sailboat once on a small manmade lake.  
And once we got going I noticed a hole in the boat.  
I pointed this out to my friend who was only a year older than me.  
He told me it was normal and nothing to worry about.  
Now I am freaking out.  
I mean I trust him right up to the point where there is water in the boat.  
I protested so much and made him drop me off even though it was the other side of the lake.  
And I waited there until his dad came back to get me in the boat that didn't have a hole in it.  
The disciples had a lot more reason to fear.

Verse 24, **"And they went and woke him, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" And he awoke and rebuked the wind and the raging waves, and they ceased, and there was a calm."**

With a word, Jesus calms the storm.  
He wakes up and takes of everything.  
The wind stops howling.  
The waves stop raging.  
Everything becomes calm.

Verse 25, **"He said to them, "Where is your faith?" And they were afraid, and they marveled, saying to one another, "Who then is this, that he commands even winds and water, and they obey him?"**

I want to focus on that question.

**"where is your faith?"**

They had faith.

They have seen Jesus work miracle after miracle.

They have seen Jesus heal the sick and even raise the dead.

They have seen God do great things for those with faith.

But their faith disappeared when the clouds came.

This often happens to us doesn't it?

We believe in Jesus.

We want to follow Him and give Him our lives.

But then challenges come.

Then our spouses or children die.

Then we lose our jobs.

Then our lives start to fall apart.

And when the waves come and the boat fills, we lose our faith.

We wonder if Jesus really is in control or if He is just asleep.

We can feel like the prophets of Baal cutting themselves and screaming out for their god to send down fire, but nothing comes.

But here is the beauty of the story.

It is the reminder of the gospel.

The disciples don't have any faith.

They are rocky soil.

The waves have choked them out.

Yet, what does Jesus do?

Does Jesus let them drown?

No.

Jesus calms the waves.

He saves them anyway.

Because our salvation does not depend on us.

It does not depend on the greatness of our faith, but on our Savior.

And Jesus is still willing to save us.  
Even when His disciples doubt.

And their deliverance leads them to marvel and wonder at Jesus.  
The God who can calm all of the waves.  
Jesus can calm every storm in your life.

When it looks like God is silent or asleep, we should not fear.  
We should have faith because it is all under control.  
No matter what your circumstances appear to be.  
And even if we don't trust, Jesus still can calm the waves.

**Point 2: Faith can be hindered by demons (v. 26-39).**

Our second story centers around a man with demons.

Verse 26, **"Then they sailed to the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee."**

The boat finishes sailing on the other side of the sea.  
And right when they land Jesus runs into someone.

Verse 27, **"When Jesus had stepped out on land, there met him a man from the city who had demons. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he had not lived in a house but among the tombs."**

It just so happens that the first person Jesus sees is a man who is possessed by demons.

This is not a coincidence.

This is not random chance.

I think this is why Jesus crossed the Sea of Galilee in the first place.  
He came and landed on this spot at this moment to set this man free.

Jesus is willing to go across the sea for this man.  
The man does not come to find Jesus.  
Jesus goes to him.

And this man is in a pathetic state.  
He is naked.  
And he lives in the tombs.

Demons have taken everything from him.  
They have not just taken away his ability to have faith and to follow after God,  
they have taken away from him the very things that define us as human beings.  
They've stripped him of his humanity and make him live as an animal.

Because the enemy comes to kill steal and destroy.  
Demons do not just want to take away your faith.  
They do not just want to hinder your walk with Jesus.  
They want to do everything in their power to destroy you.

Verse 29, **"For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many a time it had seized him. He was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the desert.)"**

They take control of his very body.  
Even when the people tie him up in order to keep him safe they escape.  
Because we do not fight against flesh and blood.  
And when they over power him, they drive him into he desert alone.

But their power disappears when Jesus comes to shore.  
And they know it.

Verse 28, **"When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him and said with a loud voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me."**

The demons come and beg for mercy.

They don't try to fight Jesus.

They don't try to get the best of Jesus.

They don't try to trick Jesus.

They see him, they cry out loudly, they fall down in humility in front of Jesus's feet, and loudly beg.

Of all of the stories the demons actually show all of the signs of someone who has faith.

Because even the demons believe in Jesus but it makes them shudder in fear.

Verse 30, **"Jesus then asked him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion," for many demons had entered him."**

Often I see a lot made about the fact that Demon's name is Legion cuz there's so many.

You might see it in horror movies or in art.

And it's often depicted and talked about as if it is a horrifying thing.

Which it would be horrifying to be possessed by so many demons but they don't have time to give Jesus the Roll Call.

But the point of telling us the Demon's name is not because we need to find out the name of demons before we can cast them out.

The point is not that Jesus knowing their name now gives him power.

The point is that this demon who is begging at Jesus's feet is not just some lowly weakling.

It is not the least powerful demon.

This is an overwhelming army of demons and they fall on their faces and beg Jesus to stop.

It is like a cage fighter tapping out before the fight begins.  
It was like a boxer throwing in the towel before they ring the bell.  
Don't be impressed by Legion, be impressed by Jesus.

Verse 31, **"And they begged him not to command them to depart into the abyss."**

Again these demons beg.

They plead with Jesus for mercy.

They do not want to be sent to the Abyss.

The abyss is mentioned in Revelation 9, 11, 17, and 20.

It is the bottomless pit that Satan and all the demons will be trapped in for a thousand years while Christ reigns.

They don't want to be sent and trapped there yet.

So they beg for mercy and have a suggestion.

Verse 32, **"Now a large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, and they begged him to let them enter these. So he gave them permission. 33 Then the demons came out of the man and entered the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and drowned."**

They ask to be allowed to torture pigs instead of people.

And Jesus allows it.

There is a complicated question here of why Jesus allows this.

But there are a few things Luke wants us to notice.

First, a crowd of pigs are possessed to demonstrate that this really was an entire legion of demons.

This was not just funny word play on the demons name.

It also shows us God's sovereignty.

The demons have to ask permission even to harm animals.

This can lead to complicated questions about how God is sovereign yet allows evil to happen.

But the point here is to bring us comfort.

Even legions of demons have no power of Christ.

It also happens to show some irony.

Pigs are unclean animals.

And demons are unclean spirits.

The Jews would have not seen this as a tragedy, but as fitting.

The unclean spirits had to enter something that was unclean.

Verse 34, **"When the herdsmen saw what had happened, they fled and told it in the city and in the country. 35 Then people went out to see what had happened, and they came to Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had gone, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid."**

Verse 36, **"And those who had seen it told them how the demon-possessed man had been healed. 37 Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked him to depart from them, for they were seized with great fear. So he got into the boat and returned."**

They want Jesus to leave.

He has too much power and it is overwhelming to them.

They want Him to just leaven town and stop causing trouble.

Verse 38, **"The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying, 39 "Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you." And he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole city how much Jesus had done for him."**

The man with the demon shows faith.

He wants to come and be one of Jesus' disciples.

But Jesus says no.

Not because the man is not allowed to follow Jesus.

But because Jesus has another mission for him.

Jesus commissions him to be His herald.

He is told to go and preach the good news of the Kingdom.

To declare what Jesus has accomplished.

The man with a legion of demons now gets to preach to a legion of people.

What we are to see from this story is that demons cannot keep you from Jesus.

They may try to destroy your faith.

They may try to take close people's hearts that they may not hear the gospel.

But they cannot win.

The good news of the gospel is that Jesus can save even those who are completely possessed by demons.

And if that is true for this man, then that means the demons cannot destroy our faith now either.

Not if we depend on Jesus.

**[transition]** This demon possessed man was the seed along the path. The demons tried to hinder his faith, but Jesus made it grow anyway.

Point number 3: **Jairus' faith is the seed on the thorns** (v. 40-42, 49-56).

He has faith.

He believes in Jesus and comes to him.

But Jairus' faith is not mature and the thorns choke it.

Verse 40, **"Now when Jesus returned, the crowd welcomed him, for they were all waiting for him. 41 And there came a man named Jairus, who was a ruler of the synagogue. And falling at Jesus' feet, he implored him to come to his house, 42 for he had an only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she was dying"**

We see right away that the man has faith.

He is a ruler and leader in the synagogue.

He is a religious man and would be righteous.

He even acknowledges Jesus.  
He comes to Him to beg and honor Him.  
He falls at Jesus' feet out of respect.  
And Jarius comes to beg.  
He comes to Jesus to beg for healing.  
Because his only daughter is a child and is dying.

But Jesus gets distracted by a woman who is bleeding.  
We will skip over her story now and come back to it on our last point.

Verse 49, **"While he was still speaking, someone from the ruler's house came and said, "Your daughter is dead; do not trouble the Teacher any more."**

While Jesus is still talking.  
While Jarius is still trying to get Jesus to come he gets the worst news.  
Every single parents worst nightmare.  
He is told that it's over.  
His daughter is dead and hope is gone.

Verse 50, **"But Jesus on hearing this answered him, "Do not fear; only believe, and she will be well."**

Jesus says that, "all will be well, and all will be well, and all manner of things shall be well."<sup>1</sup>

Jesus' response to the news of death is do not fear.  
Because death is not the end.  
And Jesus brings resurrection.  
And Jesus encourages them to believe Him.

Verse 51, **"And when he came to the house, he allowed no one to enter with him, except Peter and John and James, and the father and mother of the child."**

Only a few get to go inside to see this miracle.

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<sup>1</sup> This was a saying of Julian of Norwich.

The inner circle of Jesus' disciples.

The same three who get to see the transfiguration now get to see a resurrection.

Verse 52, **"And all were weeping and mourning for her, but he said, "Do not weep, for she is not dead but sleeping."**

Verse 53, **"And they laughed at him, knowing that she was dead."**

Much like Abraham's wife Sarah, they laugh.

When they hear the promise of God, they believe it is absurd.

They laugh.

What would you do if you were Jesus?

If you told them to trust you and believe in you, and they laughed?

If they mocked you?

I would want to just throw up my hands and walk away.

But not Jesus.

Verse 54, **"But taking her by the hand he called, saying, "Child, arise." 55 And her spirit returned, and she got up at once. And he directed that something should be given her to eat. 56 And her parents were amazed, but he charged them to tell no one what had happened."**

Jesus heals her anyway.

Jesus takes the little girl's hand and guides her back to life.

His voice beckons her from the grave into His arms.

Right away she comes back.

And while everyone is shocked and amazed,

Jesus tells them that she will be hungry.

Because Jesus is the master of life and death.

This is an extraordinary moment for the girl and her family, but it's ordinary for Christ.

And He knows just what to do.

That same voice will one day call for you.  
You will hear it after you pass from this life to the next.  
And you will hear it again when the trumpet sounds.  
You will hear it when Jesus calls all the dead in Christ to rise to new life.

Now the parents faith has not matured.  
They are not ready to trust Jesus in the face of death.  
Yet, they see resurrection.  
This should remind us that the resurrection is for all believers.  
It is not only for those with mature extraordinary faith.

What Christians will experience resurrection when Christ returns?  
The most mature Christians?  
Will it only be the apostles Paul, John and Peter?  
Will only be the martyrs?  
Those who have died for their faith?  
Will those Christians who have done the most good works be the only ones to experience new bodies?  
Will it only be pastors?  
The most spiritually mature and theologically educated among us?  
What about those of us who have struggled?  
What about those of us who doubt often when the storm is raging and the waves crash over our heads?  
What about those who have very little faith and still have so much to learn?  
The answer is yes.  
The resurrection is for any who have faith in Jesus.  
It does not depend on the maturity of our faith, but on our Savior.  
It is not about how strong our faith is, but how strong our Savior is.  
Your faith does not even depend on you.

How much faith did this little girl show?  
Yet she was brought back to life.  
How much faith did her parents have?  
Enough to ask

How much faith did widow show when Jesus brought her son back to life at his funeral?

The power of the resurrection does not depend on us.

Now, we absolutely should have faith.

We need to have our faith in Jesus.

And we should long and desire to be good soil.

But the reality is that our fruit does not depend on how good we are as soil, but how good Jesus is as a farmer.

And Jesus brings life even to dead soil.

Because Jesus is a better sower.

Point number 4: **The woman's faith is the seed in the good soil (v. 40-48).**

She is sandwiched in the middle of Jairus' story.

Because is the best example of faith.

Everyone else doubts.

Everyone fails.

Everyone else has their faith hindered by suffering or circumstances.

But she is the good soil.

She does not let anything hold her back.

Verse 42, **"As Jesus went, the people pressed around him. 43 And there was a woman who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years, and though she had spent all her living on physicians, she could not be healed by anyone."**

Jesus is walking through a crowd and they are all around Him.

All of them are pressing close trying to touch Him and hear Him.

But one woman in the crowd stands out.

She has been bleeding for twelve years.

We don't know all of the details of her medical condition.

It is likely some kind of menstrual disorder.

But the doctors don't know either.  
She has spent every single dollar she has.  
All of her money has been spent on trying to be well.  
But no one could heal her.  
No one could solve this problem.

And her bleeding was significant because it makes her unclean.  
Anyone who is bleeding, including women while menstruating, are unclean  
She would had to isolate herself and lived an unfortunate existence.  
The pain of her disease would be compounded by the shame.

And no one could heal her.  
But the great Physician has come to town.  
And she doesn't have any more money.  
But she comes with all that she has in desperation.  
She comes in faith.

Verse 44, **"She came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment, and immediately her discharge of blood ceased."**

She gets close enough to Jesus and touches Him.  
Not His hands, or part of His skin.  
She gets the very ends of his robe.

You can almost feel the drama of the moment.  
She is pushing through the crowd.  
It would be like trying to push through a crowd at a concert.  
She is doing this just trying to touch Him.  
She gets closer and closer.  
She finally is almost there, but He is getting away.  
All she can get is the end of His garment and she barely touches it.  
But the moment she does, she is healed.  
Her bleeding ceases and all is well.

Verse 45, **"And Jesus said, "Who was it that touched me?" When all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the crowds surround you and are pressing in on you!" 46 But Jesus said, "Someone touched me, for I perceive that power has gone out from me."**

The disciples are confused.

Everyone is touching Jesus, why does He care now?

But Jesus knows He has healed someone.

Now this was not involuntary.

It is not like Jesus healed her against His will.

Jesus is not a genie lamp that anyone who touches will be healed.

Lots of people have touched Him and not been healed.

But this woman has.

And Jesus wants to have a conversation with her.

Verse 47, **"And when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling, and falling down before him declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed."**

She comes out in fear.

She falls down in front of Him and confesses everything.

She explains her disorder.

She explains her plan and why she was so desperate to touch Him.

And she tells Him she has been healed.

We can only imagine her fear.

Her wonder of how Jesus would receive her.

If she would be rebuked or shamed further.

If Jesus would take the healing back.

Verse 48, **"And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace."**

She is not healed because she touched Jesus.

Lots of people have been touching Jesus.

She is healed because of her faith.

The touch only had power because she believed in Jesus.  
Her faith healed her, not her works.

So Jesus calls her daughter.  
He honors her and sends her away in peace.  
He only called her out so that she could know she is loved.

Jesus heals her because of her faith.  
She is the only one in the story who shows true and lasting faith.  
And Jesus heals her because of it.

But in all of these stories we see the wonder of Jesus.  
We see the beauty of the gospel.  
We see how Jesus saves.  
His miracles are not just for the powerful and the mature.  
They are not just for the people with the most faith.  
Because all of these miracles are undeserved.

The good news of the gospel is that Jesus saves us.  
Jesus can bring resurrection even to those in bad soil.  
He is the better sower.

#### CONCLUSION:

1. [Summary] The disciple's faith is the seed on the rock (v. 22-25). The demon possessed man's faith is the seed on the path (v. 26-39) Jairus' faith is the seed on the thorns (v. 40-42, 49-56). The woman's faith is the seed in the good soil (v. 40-48).
2. [Challenge] At TBF we want to be a greenhouse for spiritual growth. We want to be a place and environment that can encourage your growth in Christ. But we can't make you different soil. I can't guarantee that my sermons will help you grow. But Jesus can. He is the better sower who can work miracles and bring life where there was none. Come to Jesus in all the faith you can muster, and watch Him work miracles.