



The Fine Art Of Not Paying Attention

TEXT: Mark 5:35-36

Mark 5:35-36 KJV While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's house certain which said, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further? [36] As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe.

Mark 5:36 GOODSPEED But Jesus paid no attention to what they said.

Mark 5:36 MESSAGE Jesus overheard what they were talking about and said to the leader, "Don't listen to them; just trust me."

Mark 5:36 AMPLIFIED Overhearing but ignoring what they said, Jesus said to the ruler of the synagogue, Do not be seized with alarm and struck with fear; only keep on believing.

Mark 5:36 MOFFATT Instantly Jesus ignored the remark and told the President, "Have no fear, only believe."

I. INTRODUCTION -- YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE. . .

-There are times when you ought to pay attention in fact you must pay attention.

Greenpeace is an organization that is made up of tree-huggers, believers of global warming, and those who intensely defend the legacy of the spotted owl. All-in-all this organization is probably made up of those who need a real job more than anything else or anyone else in the world.

Greenpeace has a flagship, Rainbow Warrior II, that travels the world's waterways trying to protect the water. In October 2005, while they were studying the effects of global warming on a fragile underwater coral reef in the Philippines, the ship accidentally ran aground on the reef causing it significant damage. They were fined 384,000 pesos (\$6,800).

-They should have been paying attention.

In 2005 Bob Schwartz, crime adviser to the governor of New Mexico, authored a law that would allow felony charges to be brought against any owner of a dangerous dog involved in a vicious attack. A few months after the law was passed, Schwartz was in his backyard when his own dog attacked him, biting both of his arms and sending him to the hospital. He recovered but was not arrested.

-Mr. Schwartz probably should have been paying attention.

It was supposed to be a celebration marking the end of Fire Awareness week in a town in southern Japan. But the festivities were cut short when the two-story fire station where the event was taking place caught on fire. Everyone made it out, but the station was severely damaged. The cause of the fire was a gas tank that had been improperly attached to a barbecue grill the firefighters were using to cook dinner. "It's very embarrassing that this should happen to people who job it is to go out and put out fires," said one of the fire-fighters.

-The Fire Department probably should have been paying attention. (All of these stories were adapted from Uncle

John's Curiously Compelling Bathroom Reader, All New 19th Edition, pp. 273-274, Ironic, Isn't It?)

-But just as there are times that we ought to pay attention and we don't, there are other times when we pay attention and we should not.

-One of the most important things in living a victorious life for the Lord is learning how to ignore things or to not pay attention.

Ephesians 4:27 KJV Neither give place to the devil.

James 4:7 KJV Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

-This is one of the most important lessons the Lord ...

learned all throughout His ministry. Always there were voices clamoring for His attention.

Multitudes pushed Him toward an earthly throne.

Others encouraged a sword but He knew those who live by the sword will perish by it.

Some warned Him about the Cross but He paid no attention to them.

-He learned the fine art of not paying attention.

II. THE STORY

A. Jairus, Ruler of the Synagogue

-Jairus was a good man. He was the leader of the synagogue. In the days of Jesus, he was one of the most important men in the community. The synagogue was the center of religion, education, leadership, and social activities.

-The leader of the synagogue was the senior religious leader, the highest ranking professor, the mayor, and the best known citizen all rolled into one. But his whole situation had turned him into a beggar.

-Jairus was a desperate man with a very sick daughter. He pleads with Jesus and informs him of the gravity of the situation. "Will You please heal my daughter?" When Jesus hears of the plight of his daughter, He turns toward the house of suffering.

-But in the meantime a miracle interrupts His progress. There are some elements of the story that makes it even more of a dilemma.

A frantic father.

A sick woman.

A dying daughter.

A huge crowd.

A group of impatient disciples.

-All of these people are pushing toward a solution to their problems.

The father wants healing for his child.

The sick woman wants relief from her pain.

The daughter wants her symptoms to subside.

The crowd is filled with various and overwhelming needs.

The disciples want to get the trip over with.

B. The Carriers of Bad News

-Then top all of this noise off with some carriers of bad news. They are officious and they are marked by a very dark intent. It is almost as if they are delighting in telling their news.

I once worked with a physician that had a bedside manner that was almost sadistic. I heard him tell patients more than once, "You have cancer. You are going to die!" No explanation, no lead-in to prepare them, simply the bad news and very little hope to be extended to them. More than once, I saw patients' and their family members almost wilt when he would give them this information. There were a few whose family members would leap up and tell him to get out of their rooms. In fact I knew of one situation that it almost degenerated into a physical confrontation.

-This is the way bearers of gloom and doom came into the life of the Lord on that fateful day.

-"Thy daughter is dead. Why trouble the Master?" Suddenly hope dies too. But there was something that happened in the face of this bad news. According to the Goodspeed translation (and others), "Jesus paid no attention to what they said."!

-The Lord prevailed because He refused to pay attention to the prophets of doom. There are some valuable lessons to be learned in this miracle in Mark.

III. THE LESSONS OF NOT PAYING ATTENTION

-There are some incredible lessons that come to us from looking at this miracle.

A. Every Quest will have its Protest.

The First Lesson: Every Quest will have its protest.

-Any time there is a high quest for something noble and great you can count on having to meet the prophets of doom.

-The Bible is filled with examples of men who had to overcome adversity anytime they ...

began construction on the things of God. It does not matter if you are building your life or building a church, adversity is going to come.

-Nehemiah was faced with the dilemma of a broken down wall and of an enemy who was attempting to thwart every effort toward reconstruction.

-No matter who you are or how long you may live, when you start trying to reconstruct and rebuild something spiritual in your life you will be forced to face with the struggle.

-Sometimes when you look at the challenges that are around us, you may even echo the question of Sanballat:

Will a revival come from a trash pile?

Will there be reconstruction from the rubbish?

Can riches come from the refuse?

-When we look at the trash pile of what used to be a wall and a Temple in Jerusalem, something within shrinks back and asks, How in this world can anything constructive come out of this thing?

-But it is possible for it to come to pass. Nothing is impossible with God. Just be alert to the fact you will have to contend with many voices.

Some of them will come from the past.

Some will come from the failures of yesterday.

Some will come from the doubts of tomorrow.

Some will come from well-intentioned and practical people.

Some will come from those satisfied with the status quo.

-The cynical voices also make their contributions.

The crooked will never be straight.

It will always be like this.

You are too much like your daddy or mother.

You cannot change you have tried too hard before.

You never finish what you start.

You will never make it you have too much bad blood in you.

-Let those voices howl in their funeral dirges, don't let them stifle your faith or your hope.

B. Listening Is Dangerous.

The first lesson: Every quest will have its protest.

The second lesson: Listening to the wrong voices can be dangerous.

-If you choose to listen there will be a tendency to become half-hearted or to give up entirely.

James 1:8 KJV A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

-Half-hearted is half-starved. A man becomes half-hearted with a heart half-full of the Spirit.

-Others give up entirely. There is a tragedy in listening to the wrong voices. When you quit, you leave the vision, the quest, and the dream all unmanned.

One man said one time, "The devil has my church so I am not going anymore." But another robust saint of God from the same church heard him say that. He put in his two-cents worth and said, "He may have your pew because I never see you in it. But he hasn't gotten mine yet, I in it every time the church doors are opened."

-I am convinced that part of the reason that this miracle is recorded is to briefly give a small picture of an aspect of spiritual warfare. If the devil can merely just get you to listen to his little voice of doubt, failure, and half-truth, much of his battle is completed.

-Notice the pattern throughout Scripture. Watch how the devil uses words with those he is attacking.

Jezebel's threat of death puts Elijah running from his monumental victory.

Sennacherib's letter to Hezekiah put him into trembling fear.

The serpent speaking to Eve, "Hath God said?"

-The downfall literally starts with a voice.

-Listen to what the terrible Tempter will say to us:

Trouble not the Master. . . there is no use in your praying.

Trouble not the Master.... .your problem is too difficult.

Trouble not the Master. . . the Lord cannot do anything for you.

Trouble not the Master. . . your difficulty is too small to ask a big God to take care of.

Trouble not the Master. . . this is just a part of life and it cannot be changed.

Trouble not the Master. . . and we are filled with doubt as to what He really can do for us.

-Listening to the wrong voices can be hazardous to your spiritual health. This is what Jesus and Jairus had spoken to them throughout the course of the miraculous:

Thy daughter is dead -- Mark 5:35

Why troublest thou the Master -- Mark 5:35

They wept and wailed greatly -- Mark 5:38

There was a funeral dirge being played by the minstrels -- Matthew 9:23

They were making a great noise -- Matthew 9:23

They laughed Him to scorn -- Mark 5:40

-Bringing it a little closer to home, I have to tell you to be extremely careful to the voices that you listen to when you are moving in the direction toward your miracle. Get to the Church. . . Get to the House of God. . . Continue to move through the clutter of voices that sometimes will say. . . .

If they stop all that yammering about apostolic doctrine. . .

They are just a bunch of hypocrites down there. . .

If they would go see so-and-so and get them in here. . .

All they want done there is to use folks and make them work. . .

If the Church had a better youth program. . . .

If they didn't stand up all the time. . .

If the leadership was different. . . . (To which I sometimes respond, If the "followership" were different.)

I don't understand all the things about holiness and separation from the world they are preaching. . .

If so-and-so were in charge of the French-fry committee. . . .

If there was not so much gossip going around about (fill-in-the-blank). . .

-What is it that you have heard?

-What is always interesting about this sort of thing is that I look around and see that there are many who are thriving and having spiritual growth to take place in their life! So the best thing to do. . .

-Do what the Lord did. . . .

Mark 5:36 GOODSPEED But Jesus paid no attention to what they said.

-He paid no attention to what they said. . . . He did not go through all the Pentecostal calisthenics and postures. . . He just ignored what they said.

C. You Can Ignore It

The first lesson: Every quest will have its protest.

The second lesson: Listening to the wrong voices can be dangerous.

The third (and last) lesson: You can ignore the deranged voices of doubt.

-You can simply follow the example of the Lord. . . . Pay no attention at all their sad wails. This is the method of any man who has ever had any success at all.

-There comes a point when you have to determine that I will not listen to all the mourners and bearers of bad news. You will lose your mind if you listen to every voice you hear. All the talking heads around you will stifle the miracle that God is on His way to perform.

-If Jesus was going at the request of Jairus, He very well could have turned around if Jairus had requested Him to do so. This is the dilemma of our days, stopping the Lord before He ever gets to the place of need.

-Tune out the worthless and tune in the worthy. Not only do we see Jesus refusing to listen to their voices, when He arrived at Jairus' home, he put them all out ...

(Mark 5:40).

-Abraham did this when he listened to what was worthy. He was lured on by the Promise. It looked as if it were not going to come to pass. The years turned him into an old man. But Paul gives us some insight into the secret.

Romans 4:19-21 KJV And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb: [20] He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; [21] And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

IV. CONCLUSION -- THROWN OUT!!!!

-There are critical hours in every life. Almost every experience has its share of calamities and turning points. There are single moments and actions that act as rudders and steer us in the direction of the goal or the direction of true spiritual success or drastic misfortune.

-Somewhere between your desert and your Promised Land there will seemingly be insurmountable odds and great barriers. Fight on, struggle on, and allow God to see you through the difficulties. But just keep walking with the Lord in the direction of your miracle.

-Notice one of the most powerful things about this miracle is the voices that were troubling the Lord and Jairus would be thrown out. The Lord literally had as much as He could take with their innuendo and commanded the very voice of doubt to be tossed out.

-This will happen in the course of every miracle that takes place in your life. You have to be able to not pay attention to the dissenting voices. But if you can ever get past those voices and into the house with the Lord, great victory will come to pass.

-Furthermore this whole thing speaks of spiritual maturity also. There will come a time in your life when you will find incredible focus and there will be very few voices that will strike fear in your heart.

Mark 5:39-42 KJV And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. [40] And they laughed him to scorn. But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying. [41] And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise. [42] And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment.