

MARK 5:21-24a IDOL FREE, BUT NOT RISK FREE

²¹ When Jesus had again crossed over by boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around him while he was by the lake. ²² Then one of the synagogue rulers, named Jairus, came there. Seeing Jesus, he fell at his feet ²³ and pleaded earnestly with him, "My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live." ²⁴ So Jesus went with him.

Jairus was one of the rulers of the synagogue. He was an important and influential layman in that teaching and worship institution. As such, he presided over the synagogue gatherings and was a member of the Jewish elite. He was a member of the religious leadership that seriously and consistently opposed Jesus, even to the point of attributing his power to the Devil. Yet, here he is, on his face at the feet of Jesus in the dust by the Sea of Galilee, begging him to help. Somehow, perhaps driven by his excruciating need, he has come to trust this One as the only one who can deliver him. He is acting against incredible odds and at great risk. At that moment in the dust, Jairus is willing to give up everything he has worked for, the status, privilege and respect, perhaps even membership in the synagogue, in order to trust Jesus. Recognizing this risk-it-all trust, without a word, Jesus goes with him.

It is not our religious affiliation, our position in the church, or our academic credentials that are important in the kingdom of heaven. The one deal-breaking attitude is a risk-it-all trust in Jesus. That is the manifestation of true faith. Anything that stands in the way of such faith is an idol, which is powerless to deliver you. Watch out for the forest of idols in which you live. There is only one place sure to be free of idols...at the feet of Jesus.

May I rededicate myself to you every day, Lord Jesus. Strip away whatever is in my life that stands in the way of my whole hearted trust in you. Keep my focus on you rather than me or my needs. Make me a person of true faith. Amen.