

Dr. Mark Jennings, Mark, Lecture 10, Mark 5:21-6:6, Jairus' Daughter, Rejection at Home

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This is Dr. Mark Jennings in his teaching on the Gospel of Mark. This is session 10, Mark 5:21-6:6, Jairus' Daughter, Rejection at Home.

We're continuing in Mark chapter 5, but before we do, I'd like to take a little bit of a chance to give a brief note about the Gentiles in the Gospel of Mark with the Legion Demonic episode of Mark chapter 5, verses 1 through 20.

That was our first interaction with a Gentile in the Gospel of Mark, and it's probably a good opportunity here to give us just some hint of how Gentiles function in the Gospel. Kelly Iverson has written a book called *Even the Dogs Under the Table*, where she traces the Gentile characters, if you will, or character groups, and there are potentially 11 indications with Gentiles. One, the crowds by the sea may be in Mark chapter 3, the Gerizim Demonic, which we just saw in Mark chapter 5, the Syrophenician woman in Mark 7, the deaf man right after that in Mark 7, the feeding of the 4,000 in Mark 8, the blind man later in Mark 8, the father with the demon-possessed son in Mark 9, of course Pilate, the soldiers, the Roman soldiers at the cross, Simon of Cyrene, and then lastly the Centurion.

Those are the Gentiles who come into the story. Each of these encounters is unique. Even in those where Jesus does a similar deed, there are clearly differences spatially and temporally, and there are title details that show that these are not the same story.

Interestingly enough, no two episodes are exactly alike. A Gentile character introduced doesn't reappear later in the narrative. We've had the 12, the religious leaders and the apostles appear all the way throughout, but a Gentile episode seems to be standalone.

One of the things I think is fascinating, going from the idea that Mark is selectively choosing what he puts in his gospel, is that there is some uniformity or at least similarity in Mark's presentation of his Gentile characters. In other words, he presents them in a very similar way, though not in a stereotypical fashion. They are certainly individual, but the typical presentation of the Gentiles is positive.

Not exclusively so, but in general, they are presented in a positive light. Even when you think of Pilate, Pilate in the Gospel of Mark has a bit more positive presentation than some of the other Gospels. The Gentiles will often show some form of desperation in some form, some sort of need that Jesus looks to fill.

Maybe it's sickness, disease, demonic possession, or other physical ailments. In other words, Mark shows the Gentiles as being plagued with the same problems as the Jews, sometimes perhaps even in greater severity. If you think of the demoniac that we just talked about.

The demon possessed boy in chapter 9, the disciples can't exercise it, though they had some success in other situations. It may suggest the severity of the demon. You have this Gentile, that crowd that had followed Jesus for three days in chapter 8. The Syrophenician woman, the deaf man, the blind man, they are all desperate.

In a sense, their desperateness is also for a deeper need of salvation. We see faith in the Gentiles. A belief in trust is found among many of the Gentile individuals in the Gospel, both in action and in deed.

You see a response in other words by the Gentiles that are very similar to response by certain Jews, and often in contrast with many Jews, the Jewish leadership specifically, that reject Jesus. There is an understanding, the Gentiles seem to show some understanding of the mysteries of the Kingdom. The Syrophenician woman, for example, is the only character to hear and seemingly understand one of Jesus' parables without having to have it explained.

She understands that Gentiles are not excluded from God's purposes, though priority is given to the Jews. The healing of the deaf and the blind man, the Gentile deaf man and Gentile blind man, might underscore the abilities of the Gentiles to come to understand. Of course, in 15:21, Simon of Cyrene carries the cross, which is, I think, connected with the model of discipleship presented in Mark chapter 8. And, of course, the centurion gives the quintessential confession at the cross, that the centurion, which we will speak to more later, is the first human, if you will, in the Gospel of Mark to understand who Jesus is without there being any correction or silencing.

So, we see then that with the Gentiles, like the Jewish people, the Gentiles have a need, a same need, a similar need, and that Jesus also cares and responds to those needs. Prior to the passion narrative, all the Gentiles mentioned received Jesus' compassion. Though they might be outsiders to Israel, politically or culturally understood, they are not outsiders to God's family.

He heals them, feeds them, exercises demons in the same way as he does the Jews. We see accounts in the Gospel of Mark of Jesus receiving Gentiles in the Jewish homeland, as well as him intentionally traveling to Gentile lands. We just saw that recently.

We see also, though, disobedience. On three occasions, we do have some measure of disobedience by Gentiles. After the healing of the deaf man, for example, in chapter 7, the Gentile crowds disobey God's command not to tell.

The irony is, in their disbelief, the Gentiles are also the first group to make some sort of messianic proclamation. There's an interplay between what they're saying and their disobedience. There's a bit of an irony there.

The Gentiles are included among a group that's called an adulterous generation. We'll see that later on in the Gospel of Mark. They are put in a similar position as the Jews in 8:12. There is, in chapter 10:42 through 45, this contrast between Gentile leaders and Jesus and this argument that develops among the disciples about who's going to be great.

We see places, too, where Jesus rebukes and seems to rebuke everyone, not just Jewish people. Pilate, of course, ultimately doesn't believe. Jesus is handed over to Gentiles for judgment at the Passion.

The people were in fear of Jesus, the demoniac legion exorcism. He looked at them and asked them to leave. So, there are negative aspects of the Gentiles' role, but the negatives pale in Mark in comparison to the positives.

So, I think one of the things that we see then in the way the Gentiles are used in the Gospel of Mark is that there is generally a positive thrust that's occurring. The structure of Mark's Gospel has this move of the Kingdom of God beginning to go to the Gentiles in chapter 5, verses 1-20, with even this hint of the mission where the now restored man is instructed to go tell people. This will eventually lead to the centurion making this proclamation.

You have this positive feeling. Even in the cleansing or cursing of the temple, which we'll talk about later, when Jesus responds and accuses the leadership of saying, my house was to be a house of prayer, but you have made it into a den of thieves, what's interesting is in Mark, it's my house was to be a house of prayer for the nations. Now, when we look at some of the other Gospels, it doesn't have the for the nations part.

It ends at a house of prayer. But Mark makes sure we have the full quote, which is for the nations, indicating there also this welcoming and inclusion of the Gentiles. And so, I think that there is in the Gospel of Mark this positive attention given to the Gentile response, not in a situation as if somehow the Gentiles are better than the Jewish people, but rather almost a sameness.

The Gentiles are suffering in the same way the Jewish people are suffering. And Jesus is going to the Jewish people as well as to the Gentile people. But there is a slight

difference in that the Gentile people seem to be more positively responding to the message in a way that certainly the Jewish leadership at least was not.

And so, to some extent, to use the language of crumbs for the dogs, there is this idea that the dogs may wait for the crumbs to fall, but by the end of the Gospel of Mark, they no longer have to wait for the children to drop it, but they have even become children themselves. So, as we look into the Gospel of Mark and the Gentiles, I want us to keep in mind how the Gentiles function in the Gospel of Mark. All right, let's continue to move on in our account.

And so we get to chapter 5 now, and verses 21 through 43. It's interesting that this is the second of Mark's intercalations, or the Markan Sandwich, where a story begins, and then in the middle of that telling of the story is a second story that's told in full, and then the first story concludes itself. Now, this Markan Sandwich isn't as striking, as you will, as the one with the family of Jesus and then the controversy with Beelzebul and returning to the family of Jesus.

Those are clearly two separate events. Here, the meat of the story: you have the account that begins with Jairus' daughter and the pleading that Jesus would come and help her, and then that's interrupted by the story of the woman with the bleeding disorder and then the return of the story of Jairus' daughter. In a lot of ways, it still functions as one story because the events with the woman with the bleeding disorder are along the way, but there is still this structure of split storytelling.

Interesting enough, when you look at the story of Jairus' daughter and the story of the woman with the bleeding disorder, there is a common theme. There's a common theme of faith involved in both. There's the common use of 12 years of time.

The woman suffers for 12 years. The young girl is 12 years old. Both episodes concern females.

Both have ceremonial impurity, the blood and bleeding disorder of the woman, and the death of the girl. But there's also a difference. One is a Jewish male leader in the community, a synagogue leader who comes to Jesus.

The other is a poor woman, outcast, ceremonial, and impure. So, there are some interesting interplays between them. Instead of reading through as we have been, I'm going to start the story one, discuss it, look at the bleeding woman, and then finish the story of Jairus' daughter.

So, when Jesus had again crossed over by boat to the other side of the lake, so we've had this on one side of the lake, he goes across it, there's a storm, he gets to the other side, there's the legion demoniac, he leaves, now he's crossed back over. A

large crowd gathered around him while he was by the lake, and this again is consistent with what we've been seeing in terms of his popularity. Then, Jairus, one of the synagogue rulers, came there.

Interesting enough because to now, now a synagogue leader, a synagogue ruler was an administrator of the synagogue, one who probably made sure that worship was orderly and the functions of the synagogue were proper. Up to this point, religious leaders have tended to be on the outside. And here we have a religious leader who's coming to him to plead for need.

I think this is good because it also indicates that not all the leaders of Israel have rejected Jesus. It hasn't been a wholesale full rejection, but there are some who are still coming to him. It also speaks to the recognition and popularity of Jesus to be able to do amazing and wonderful miracles when he comes here.

Interesting enough too is it's very unusual to have an individual named in a miracle story. Think of the miracle stories that we've had already. It was usually the state of the affair, no name was given, the paralyzed man, the blind man, the deaf man, and so forth.

Here we actually get a name of an individual involved, Jairus. In fact, only here and then Bartimaeus in Mark 10 are the only time that we have individuals named. Now this could be, I mean, for a couple of reasons.

One thing is rhetorically, you tended to name your friends. So, friends' names tend to get remembered. And so, this may be an indication of a figure who was remembered later on.

The audience would have known of Jairus or some connection. This also speaks to the historicity of the event, that this isn't a caricature; this is a specific individual. Perhaps even speaks to the amazing nature of the miracle that's going to happen with his daughter being resuscitated back to life, which was such a volatile event that the story could not be told without mentioning the person involved.

Regardless, it's fascinating that we get the name mentioned. And so, we have this situation, seeing Jesus, he fell at his feet. And again, we need to be careful here because falling at his feet doesn't indicate worship.

It indicates pleading here to someone who could do something that Jairus could not. So here's a synagogue ruler pleading at the feet of a man who is causing lots of controversy in synagogues, pleading at his feet to do something. There's a desperate need.

My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live. So, Jesus went with him.

Now, that's where the story of Jairus and his daughter begins. Now, this story gets interrupted. We get an event that happens into the middle of this story with this bleeding woman.

Now, a large crowd followed and pressed around him. And a woman who was there, who had been subject to bleeding for 12 years, had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had. Yet, instead of getting better, she grew worse.

So, we have this picture of this woman in this condition, and it's very pitiful. One is she's perpetually bleeding. Though not mentioned specifically, it's largely assumed that this condition was likely some sort of menstrual bleeding, which would have also made her ceremonially unclean.

She would have been unable to participate in some of the religious life. Her poverty is made known. It speaks to how she spent everything she had on this.

There was a desperate nature to have this restored, and every bit of her money was spent on trying to get it solved. And yet, there has been no human success. I mean, in this one of the settings, there's no human doctor who was able to restore that.

In fact, her situation was getting worse. It's been often remarked, and I find it amusing I'll share with you here, that when Luke tells this story, Luke doesn't mention doctors unable to do something. And some people have always joked that maybe Luke just doesn't want to demean his profession.

Regardless, we see Mark tells us clearly that she has sought help from others who were the supposed experts in the field and has been unable to receive any relief. And so here, this woman who's ceremonially unclean, who is impoverished, who would be an outsider, if you will, in a lot of ways, disenfranchised. And when she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak.

Because she thought, if I just touch his clothes, I will be healed. Now, we've talked about this, that this idea of touching clothing to heal is not an uncommon thought or superstition, and that somehow the power would be available and somehow infused into the clothing. We see this with the Apostle Paul and his handkerchiefs, and Acts, Peter, and his shadow.

And so, she says, I want to touch because she believes if she touches the cloak, she will be healed. And immediately, her bleeding stopped, and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering. It's a fascinating account here.

So, similar to other miracle accounts in the Gospel of Mark, there's an immediacy. She'd been bleeding for 12 years. No one could stop the bleeding.

Now she touches Jesus' cloak. She immediately is made whole. Now, a difference though, is that in the other accounts, the other miracles, and even like Jairus, the person has come to Jesus and has made their concern known, has made their need known, and has had a muscular response to their belief, pulling apart the roof to let the paralyzed man down, and so forth.

She hasn't made her situation known to Jesus. She has just gone to Jesus for healing. And so, then I think that helps explain what happens next.

At once, Jesus realized the power had gone out for him; he turned in the crowd and asked, who touched my clothes? The disciples, of course, find the question absurd because they say, don't you see the people crowding against you, and yet you can ask who touched me? There's a sense of everyone's touching you, Jesus. What do you mean, who touched? But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. Now, given what we know about Jesus already in the Gospel of Mark, I think it's important to keep in mind that Jesus has the power to understand thoughts.

We know Jesus has the perspective of God on the hearts. So, the picture here, then, I don't think should be of Jesus asking this question and looking around because he has no idea what has just happened, and he wants an answer because he is as surprised as anyone else is. I think the sense is he has stopped the moment, and has now created a situation that will force this woman to make a muscular demonstration of her faith.

Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet. Notice how this continues to happen now, how frequently we've had people falling at the feet of Jesus. There is a recognized authority here.

Fell at his feet, trembling with fear. Once again, fear. We've had fear from the disciples on the boat.

We've had fear from the people who witnessed what had happened with the demoniac legion, and now we have fear from this woman. The fear here is clearly within this state of this idea of the Old Testament of fear, of the right and proper awe and response and the presence of a power that doesn't make sense in the human realm, that only makes sense in the divine. So, she has fear and told him the whole truth.

Probably the whole truth is not only her symptoms and how long she's had them but also why she wanted to touch him. Perhaps it was because of her state of

uncleanliness that she didn't even want to make known her presence to Jesus; she didn't want to make known the fact that she was going to try to touch him because that impurity never contaminates purity. We saw that with the leper and the idea of the ceremonial understanding of cleanliness if one was touched by something impure, they became impure and had to then be ritually restored.

So maybe there was even some concern there. Of course, as with the man with leprosy and with the woman with the bleeding disorder, it is Jesus' purity that is the stronger, not the impurity. So she tells the whole story, and he says to her, daughter.

Now this is the only place where Jesus addresses someone as daughter in the Gospel. It's a very tender statement, similar to what he says to the paralyzed man in Mark 2 where he calls him son. And so there is a familial intimacy, a family intimacy.

Remember when the family of Jesus thought Jesus was crazy and they were trying to get him to stop what he was doing? Jesus said, here are my mothers and my daughters and my brothers, and he looks at the people, anyone who does the will of God. And so there is this connection here between what this woman has just done in demonstrating a faith, not only to touch, but also to come out and state why she touched him, what drove that to happen, and her telling of the whole story that he responds by saying, you now belong to my family very tenderly. And, of course, there is also an interplay here with Jairus.

Jairus came because of a concern about his daughter. And here in this middle of the story, Jesus is calling this woman daughter. So then this bit has occurred, this meat in the Mark and sandwich, if you will, and he says, your faith has healed you.

Go in peace and be freed from your suffering, this idea of going in peace. You are now in the right relationship and no longer are outside. Then, while Jesus was still speaking, some men from the house of Jairus, the synagogue ruler, came back into the picture and said, your daughter is dead.

So Jairus has been there. I want to perhaps anxiously so, because now there's been this delay. Your daughter is dead.

Why bother the teacher anymore? Ignoring what they said, Jesus told the synagogue ruler, don't be afraid. Interesting. Don't be overcome by your fear.

Just believe. Here though, the fear is not a don't have a godly fear, but rather don't have a human fear. And it's hard not to think about the panic of the disciples in the boat who, because of the circumstances, were afraid.

What they did wrong was be afraid and wake up Jesus. They didn't trust, they didn't believe. In this moment, which Mark I believe is connecting, we're to see this, that Jesus says to Jairus, don't have a human fear, have faith.

Trust that because I have agreed to come to your daughter, that the reason for me coming, the solution to your problem, has not yet been taken away by circumstances. So in the story of the storm, Jesus said he wants to go to the other side. Storm comes up, the disciples panic.

He rebukes them for their panic. Why didn't they trust that Jesus said he wanted to go to the other side, that he would get there? Jesus had told Jairus, I will go with you to your daughter. Don't worry, I've said I'm going to go there.

I will get there. Do not be afraid. Just believe. So, there's that interplay between human fear and belief, with belief, I think, being associated with godly fear.

There's human fear, faith/godly fear. He did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James. This is the first time this special group of three is separated.

So, we had the four, the two brothers, Andrew, Peter, James, John, and then the twelve, but this is the first time that we get Peter, James, and John with no Andrew being allowed to witness this event, which is going to be one of the greatest miracles in Mark. When they got there, Jesus saw the house of the synagogue ruler; they saw a commotion with people crying and wailing loudly, an indication of mourning that had happened. Its loudness may also indicate there was a lot there.

Of course, in this culture, when someone died, there was a professional group of mourners you would call upon who would come and also mourn with you. That was their vocation. I don't think it's a manipulative vocation.

It was something to just be a part of the community of the moment. So, these mourners that are here, some would have known the family, others probably would have been paid for to also mourn the death. So, we have them and there's this huge commotion and wailing.

Again, this environment seems similar to the storm, this out-of-control situation. Jesus says, why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep. Some have wondered, is Jesus saying she's in a coma? He's technically right.

More than likely, this sleep is playing on the reference to how sleep and death, sleep is often a metaphor of death. So, I think Jesus is speaking that she is dead but not in a state of where Jesus can't awaken her. So, I think there's a bit of an interplay that is happening here.

I don't think the girl is actually asleep, but whether the child is not dead in the sense of beyond healing. I think that's the idea. And after he put them all, of course, the child was not dead, and they laughed at him.

Notice that this group goes from crying and wailing and mourning to laughing. I think this immediate switch in emotion might also indicate that they weren't really authentically mourning, but they were paid mourners. And so they can have such an emotional switch.

And I wonder if there's not just a bit of foreshadowing of the mocking that Jesus will receive that's associated with his own death. And here, the mocking he receives at talking about his power over death, this girl. And after he had put them out, he took the child's father and mother and the three who were with him, the disciples, and went where the child was.

He took her by the hand and says to her, and we get Aramaic. We don't usually get the Aramaic, but we get the Aramaic, Talitha kum, which means, little girl, I say to you, get up. Actually, it almost means little lamb, I say to you, get up.

But the little lamb was often a pet name used for a little girl, an intimate statement. And immediately the girl stood up, walked around. She was 12 years old.

The woman had been bleeding for 12 years. This girl was 12 years old. The woman, one thought of the interconnection to is, at 12 years of age, during that culture was about the time you would start being considered for marriage or having a family.

And so now she's restored to the ability to give birth, to be alive, to have a family, to enjoy that at 12 years old. The woman had menstrual bleeding for 12 years, and now that was also restored, and there is a similar relationship there, perhaps, between it. And then, at this, they were completely astonished.

He gave strict orders, which I think is an understatement of the year. He gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this, and told her to give something to eat. It seems almost crazy to think that here was a girl who was dead, now alive, and Jesus is telling people not to tell anyone.

Again, I think twofold, maybe part of Jesus, again, trying to dampen the fervor that might result. Maybe the instructions have to do with not telling anyone how it exactly happened, the restoration. I'm not sure on that.

I do know, though, with it, that Mark creates a literary tension. So throughout, he's been always having these, when something happens, don't tell anyone. When something happens, don't tell anyone.

And here seems to be the most absurd example of not telling anyone. Here is a dead who's come to life. From a literary standpoint, there's almost this question of when it is okay to tell someone. When can we no longer be silenced about what Jesus is doing? Or maybe better put, when do we have a right understanding of who Jesus is, so that we can tell? And at this point, the answer would be it's not sufficient enough just to know that he resuscitated this girl, raised her from death now to life.

Again, building towards what I believe will be the centurion's confession. Now, there's also, it's hard not to miss that throughout this process, his miracles have been talking about the effects of the fall being undone, illness, restoration of the hand, the demonic possession, and now the ultimate result of the fall being undone. Which would be death and that aspect of it.

So, we're speaking to an authority that's unlike any other authority, an authority that can reverse the fall. And of course, the three here have witnessed it, even though the other ones have not. Now, it's fascinating.

So, we move here from Mark chapter 5 and into Mark chapter 2, and chapter 6. And we'll just barely get into chapter 6. But there is, in the first six verses, and this will be the extent of what we look at, Jesus has been having this great response to him. There's been this huge acceptance in terms of Jesus as a great miracle worker and as a teacher. There's been the faith of the demoniac who wanted to follow him.

There's been the faith of the people who have been sick, trying to come, and their faith has made them heal. Because of your faith, your sins are forgiven. Again, we've just been getting this strong, fable response.

And then with chapter 6, perhaps it comes, the story comes back to earth a little bit, if you will, as one commentator put it. There's a different response. Leading up to this series, we've, of course, had the calming of the storms and Legion, the healing of a woman, and the raising of a girl back to life.

But here we get something else, and it happens in Jesus' hometown. When Jesus left there, verse 1, went to his hometown, accompanied by his disciples. When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed.

This itself is nothing different than we've seen before. Jesus' hometown, of course, is Nazareth. Nazareth is a small village, not mentioned in the Old Testament.

Nathanael in John, chapter 1, verse 46, says, can anything good come from Nazareth? The disdainful statement. The only reason we know of Nazareth is because Jesus is from there. So, he's returned to his hometown.

His hometown is not Bethlehem. Bethlehem is where he was born. Nazareth is where he was raised.

And he returns to his hometown, and we are ready in chapter 6 from the Gospel of Mark to know this may not be a favorable reception. Remember, his family has already had trouble and difficulty with what Jesus has been doing. We know that from earlier.

But so this thing starts out. He is teaching. They are amazed at his teaching.

He's doing it in a synagogue, which is very reminiscent of how chapter 1 in the day in Capernaum starts out. We get a question: where did this man get these things? Talking about his teaching. What's this wisdom that he has been given that he even does miracles? Those questions there sound like the questions in the synagogue in Capernaum, chapter 1, who is like this, and he teaches with such authority that the demons even obey him.

They are amazed. Where is this wisdom coming from? He even does miracles. Very similar.

But then the questions turn a little negative. Isn't this the carpenter? Isn't this Mary's son? The brother of James, Joseph, Judas, and Simon? Aren't his sisters here with us? And they took offense at him. So, the final two questions here aren't about what he is able to do, but they start looking at his local origins.

His family relations are stressed: Mary, brother James, Joseph, Judas, and Simon. James is mentioned first.

Most likely he is the oldest, and that is why he is mentioned first. Interesting enough, which we talked about before, James will become a senior leader in the church. Here he is being associated as a negative, but we know he will see the risen Jesus and he will be inspired to write one of the books of the New Testament.

Same with Jude. Jude 1 identifies himself as the brother of James. But these questions start to have this idea of his unable to accept how Jesus, who would have been just the son of a carpenter.

It's interesting Joseph isn't mentioned by name. Mary is mentioned by name. Most likely, this may indicate that there has been a substantial passage of time, perhaps with Joseph's death, and that Jesus was primarily raised with Mary.

The New Testament is very silent on Joseph after the birth narrative and the early childhood. But anyway, these questions are absurd. They are offended.

Instead of this town being excited that here is this one of their own doing these amazing things, it almost turns to a question of inability to accept how one of their own would have the audacity to say such things. Very similar to what his family had said earlier in the Gospel of Mark. And then Jesus responds.

Jesus said to them, only in his hometown, among his relatives, in his own house, is a prophet without honor. Now some version of this statement is very common throughout the ancient world. Philosophers use it as well to talk about how these great speakers and thinkers seem to be loved by everyone except the people they come from.

Now, Jesus identifies himself as a prophet here; we shouldn't think of that in terms of did Jesus understand who he truly was or not, but actually, in terms of the history of the prophets of the Old Testament is that they were rejected by their own. That they are continually rejected. And this, of course, will even become more to the fact that Jesus will be rejected not simply by his hometown and his relatives and his own house, the town and his house, but also by his people in general.

And then you have this very complicated statement. He could not do any miracles there except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. He was amazed at their lack of faith.

Mark's statement here about the inability to do miracles is a little clearer when Matthew makes it a little clearer that it's not due to a lack of ability but of choice. And I think that's the sense here that in Mark, Mark's been telling us that Jesus' miracles are a response to faith. And that they provoke faith.

They require demonstration of faith. They are in relationship to someone making a statement about who Jesus is or what they believe Jesus can do. And the town of Nazareth here is rejecting Jesus.

I mean, there's irony. Isn't there irony? Except lay hands on a few sick people and heal them. Laying hands on a few sick people and healing them is now a low bar in terms of it.

That should have been some great act, but here, Mark presents it: some of these amazing things Jesus would do in response to faith, he won't do. The unbelief of the ones in Nazareth stands in stark contrast, in other words, to Jairus, to the woman with the bleeding disorder, and to all the other figures in Mark who have come to Jesus for help. It also perhaps speaks to an ignorance of the point of the people of Nazareth that they were in desperate need of Jesus.

Jesus' miracles then, of course, were never simply a display of his power, but were a part of his design to generate and respond to faith. The theme here then being that Nazareth rejection was quite strong and quite sure. That takes us through just the beginning of chapter six.

When we meet again, we will continue to work through chapter six in the expansion of the public ministry of Jesus.

This is Dr. Mark Jennings in his teaching on the Gospel of Mark. This is session 10, Mark 5:21-6:6, Jairus' Daughter, Rejection at Home.