

Sermon Series: “Comfort for Tough Times”—Lord of Life Lutheran Church, Westfield, IN—2/9/2003

Title: “Comfort for Bereaved Times”

Text: Luke 8: 40-56

Intro.: Ills.: Well-meaning but mis-spoken “

Theme: Jesus comes to our greatest need for comfort at the time of the death of a loved-one and gives to us words of life which will fill us with hope and enable us to be the source of comfort and hope to others.

When “just words” won’t do (vs. 41-42a)

- The greatest fear for the dying and the bereaved is being alone
 1. We don’t want to face death alone
 1. Jairus wanted Jesus *“to come to his house”* even though Jesus could have easily done it from a distance
 2. We are afraid the loneliness that commences at the death of a loved one
 1. *“Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death--that is, the devil--and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.” Hebrews 2:14-15*
- Christ-care to the bereaved hooks up words with presence
 1. **Ills.: Comforted by their presence**
 2. Just as Jesus said *“lo I am with you always;”* he fulfills that promised in his people who become him in the flesh

Don’t allow your grieving to cause you to miss what Jesus is doing (vs.43-50)

- Often Jesus leads us through the divine interruptions of our lives for what is yet to come
 1. God’s interruptions of our life allow Jesus to do an even greater miracle
 1. The human interruption of the sick woman was divinely intended to allow Jairus’ daughter to die
 2. By what Jesus did to death and for death in his death/resurrection he has redeemed our deaths for a noble purpose
 2. Death never comes at a convenient time but it is always in God’s time
 1. Jairus’ servants response is a typical response: *“Why bother, anymore!”*
 2. Often in our frustrated impatience with what we can’t see, we go away before God even has begun
 3. *“Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.” Psalm 116:15*
 4. Instead of looking back with regret and anger; looking ahead with hope and expectation at the death of a loved one
- Has anybody got a witness!
 3. The woman’s testimony gave Jairus everything he needed for hope in his situation
 1. *“She declared in the presence of all the people the reason why she had touched Him, and how she had been immediately healed.” (vs. 47)*
 2. *“Your faith has made you well!” (vs. 48)*
 3. *“Do not be afraid any longer; only believe, and she shall be made well.” (vs. 50)*
 4. What witness is God teaching you through the death of someone close to you?

Focus on resurrection-based grief rather than worldly-based grief (vs. 51-56)

- Don’t let the world’s clamor disturb your resurrection peace
 1. It is not surprising that Jesus took the actions that he did when he arrived at Jairus’ home
 1. Kicked out the professional mourners (vs. 51)
 2. Took only those who needed comfort and who would receive comfort (P,J,J and parents) (51)
 2. Do you believe that eternal life has already begun for you?
 1. Parents and disciples surprised that Jesus says, *“she sleeps”*—didn’t believe in the present reality of eternal life
 2. Sometimes we buy so much into the present culture’s denial of death—as believers we do strange things
 3. *“We do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope.” 1 Thess. 4:13*
- Mentored by Jesus’ own comfort-giving to give hope to the bereaved

3. Be present; speak clearly and show respect; and give hope in Jesus
 1. "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect." 1 Peter 3: 15
4. Applying Jesus' resurrection comfort rather than denying it
 1. **Ills.: Waking Up in Jesus' Arms**

Well-meaning but mis-spoken words

Pat Krantz: A bereaved parent who comforts others Pat Krantz lost her 9-week-old baby, Michael, in 1975 during open heart surgery. Well-meaning friends and family tried to comfort her: "You're so young [22 at the time]; you can have another baby" or "You have one healthy child already; you should ..."

Comforted by their presence

Ray and Judy Williamson's son, David, was killed in a fall at Red River Gorge several weeks ago. Speaking later, Ray said, "I used to wonder if I should go to the funeral home when somebody had a tragedy because I always feel so awkward and don't know what to say. But I'll never ask again. I'll always go. It's not what you say but your presence that makes the difference."

Waking up in Jesus' arms

"A little boy had a terminal illness. He knew he was dying even though his parents hadn't told him, so one day he asked his mother, "Mom what's it like to die? Will it hurt? The mother thought for a moment as she searched for an answer to the question then said, "Charlie", do you remember when you used to play with your friends all day? You'd be so tired that when we'd sit around and watch TV afterwards, you'd fall asleep in the chair with your clothes on. Well, that wasn't where you belonged, but in the morning, you always woke up where you did belong--in your own bed. Your Dad carried you up the stairs, into your room, and tucked you into your own bed where you belonged." "Charlie," she continued, "I think that's what death is like. It's like waking up some morning and finding ourselves in another room, in the place where we belong. safe in the strong loving arms of Jesus."...

Luke 8:40-56

And as Jesus returned, the multitude welcomed Him, for they had all been waiting for Him. ⁴¹And behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was an official of the synagogue; and he fell at Jesus' feet, and *began* to entreat Him to come to his house; ⁴²for he had an only daughter, about twelve years old, and she was dying. But as He went, the multitudes were pressing against Him.

⁴³And a woman who had a hemorrhage for twelve years, and could not be healed by anyone, ⁴⁴came up behind Him, and touched the fringe of His cloak; and immediately her hemorrhage stopped. ⁴⁵And Jesus said, "Who is the one who touched Me?" And while they were all denying it, Peter said, "Master, the multitudes are crowding and pressing upon You." ⁴⁶But Jesus said, "Someone did touch Me, for I was aware that power had gone out of Me." ⁴⁷And when the woman saw that she had not escaped notice, she came trembling and fell down before Him, and declared in the presence of all the people the reason why she had touched Him, and how she had been immediately healed. ⁴⁸And He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace."

⁴⁹While He was still speaking, someone came from *the house of* the synagogue official, saying, "Your daughter has died; do not trouble the Teacher anymore." ⁵⁰But when Jesus heard *this*, He answered him, "Do not be afraid *any longer*; only believe, and she shall be made well." ⁵¹And when He had come to the house, He did not allow anyone to enter with Him, except Peter and John and James, and the girl's father and mother. ⁵²Now they were all weeping and lamenting for her; but He said, "Stop weeping, for she has not died, but is asleep." ⁵³And they *began* laughing at Him, knowing that she had died. ⁵⁴He, however, took her by the hand and called, saying, "Child, arise!" ⁵⁵And her spirit returned, and she rose immediately; and He gave orders for *something* to be given her to eat. ⁵⁶And her parents were amazed; but He instructed them to tell no one what had happened. [NASB]