

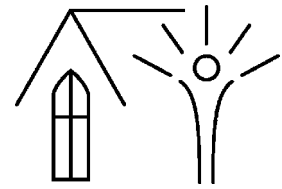


**ROSELLE**  
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*Our Mission Statement:*

*“To Know Christ,  
To Grow in Christ,  
To Show Others Christ”*



July 2, 2006

## “Impossible Possibility: Faith”

Mark 5:21-43

Reverend Thomas Kim

There are so many stories about competitions between Jesus and Satan. There is a modern version. Jesus and Satan have an argument about who is the better computer programmer. After debating back and forth for a while they decided to have a contest, with God as the judge.

They take their seats in front of their computers, and Satan begins a program to destroy the world, and Jesus does a program to save the world. They type furiously, lines of code screaming up the screen. Then suddenly, seconds before the time is up, a bolt of lightning hits and knocks out the power. The power comes back moments, and God announces that the contest is over. God asks Satan to show what he has come up with. Satan turns his computer on, pushes a button, and the screen is blank. Horrified Satan exclaims, “Oh, no. I’m ruined. I’ve lost it all when the power went out.” “Well, that happens sometimes.” says God.

“Let’s see what you’ve got, Son.” Jesus turns on his computer, enters a command, and the screen comes to life in vivid display, the voices of an angelic choir pour forth from the speakers.

Satan is distraught. “How could this be? I lost everything, yet Jesus’ program is intact!” God just smiles and says, “Well, everyone knows that **Jesus saves.**”

That’s the theme for today. Jesus saves us! Jesus means “He will save his people from their sins.” (Matthew 1:21) **That’s the beginning of our faith.** He saves.

On Wednesday, June 28, Superman returns in Superman Returns. In this version, you’ll see his arms outstretched, as though he is being crucified, and watch as he receives a wound in the side — like the spear-stabbing endured by Jesus. At one point in the movie, a bitter Lois Lane says, “The world doesn’t need a savior, and neither do I.” ***But we do, Lois — we do!***

We do believe in Jesus Christ, our Savior, and we do need Jesus Christ, our Lord. This morning I want to talk about faith. Everybody knows that faith is fundamental and central to Christian life. The Bible uses the word “faith” or the word “believing” 485 times in the New Testament. What is your own understanding of faith? What is your definition of faith?

There are many different definitions of faith. Hebrews 11:1-3 says, “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval. By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.” And in Mark 9:23, Jesus says, *“Everything is possible for the person who has faith.”* Faith is believing that God is able to do more than we think or imagine. Faith is believing that nothing is impossible with God.

There are over 7,000 promises in the Bible, and faith is the key that *unlocks those promises*. Theologian [Reinhold Niebuhr](#) said it, "Impossible Possibility." Faith makes the impossible possible. It's the secret to achievement.

How many times did Jesus say, "According to your faith, it will be done unto you?" God says, "It's your choice." You get to choose. You can determine how much God blesses you, your life, your family, your business. You make the choice. You're as close to God as you want to be. You have as many blessings in your life as you expect God to give in your life.

Faith gives you confidence. It neutralizes fear. It gives you the ability to press on. Can you imagine Moses and Aaron standing before the Red Sea and it's getting ready to part and Moses turns to Aaron and says, "You first!" or "Ladies first!" Faith gives you the ability to have the confidence to move ahead which produces the success in your life.

When there is a problem, the world sees the world through the problem, but people of faith see the problem in God's point of view. With faith, you look at it from God's point of view. It is the same when seeing a person. People of faith see a person from God's point of view, but not from man's point of view.

Today's Gospel lesson from Mark 5 tells about a woman who had been sick for twelve years. She had an issue of blood. She could not stop the bleeding in her life. That made her unclean in Jewish culture. That meant she had no social life. She couldn't be out in a crowd. One day she heard that Jesus Christ was coming to town. She said, "If I could just touch His robe I'll be healed."

Jesus stuns the woman, and all those around her, by stating that her faith has saved her. Not his clothes. Not her touch. Not anything in or on his body at all. Instead, Jesus says that her faith is the source of her healing — she is saved by her conviction that Jesus is the decisive expression of the power and the presence of God.

Listen what the woman from today's Gospel lesson says, "*If I but touch his clothes, I will be made well. Immediately her hemorrhage stopped; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease.*" Faith is risking a failure. There is no faith without risk. Faith means stepping out into the unknown and you don't know what's in the unknown. Faith is, however, expecting the best.

Do you know the name of the man who founded the space age? Werner von Braun, the man who founded the space age, who initiated the United States rocket system, said, "There has never been a single great achievement in history without faith."

The Bible has some very important principles on how you recover from failure. Some of you the last week fell flat on your face. And that's not so important as what your response is to that failure. Are you going to lay around and let it get you down? Or are you going to get up and do something about it?

Some of you are still reacting to a past crisis: a divorce, a bankruptcy, a major embarrassment, a problem in your past that you're ashamed of? Faith refuses to have a pity party. Faith says, "I will not look at the past. I will go ahead. I will look at the future. I will see what God wants to do in my life." What you focus on you move toward. Faith looks ahead.

A successful person is not a person who has never failed. A successful person is a person who gets up from the failure and goes on. Why is my faith so important? Faith unlocks God's promises, and turns dreams into reality.

Faith can do anything God can do. That's why I ask you to spend this month on FAITH. We're going to take each of these individually and look at them in depth and learn; How do I break out of the procrastination habit, how do I get off dead center, how do I take risks, how can I expect the best, how do I learn to wait for the answer, how do I follow instructions when it seems absurd, how do I keep on keeping on, how do I rebound from a failure?

The key is FAITH, impossible possibility. Faith unlocks God's promises.

I would like to share a story of William Willimon, chaplain of Duke University from Christian Century. He writes:

*When I was serving a little church in rural Georgia, one of my member=s relatives died, and my wife and I went to the funeral as a show of support for the family. It was held in a small, hot, crowded, independent Baptist country church. They wheeled the coffin in and the preacher began to preach. He shouted, fumed, and flailed his arms.*

*"It's too late for Joe," he screamed. "He might have wanted to do this or that in life, but it's too late for him now. He's dead. It's all over for him. He might have wanted to straighten his life out, but he can't now. It's over."*

*"What a comfort this must be to the family," Willimon thought sarcastically.*

*"But it ain't too late for you!" the preacher continued. "So why wait? Now is the day for decision. Now is the time to make your life count for something. Give your life to Jesus!"*

*It was the worst thing I have ever heard. "Can you imagine a preacher doing that kind of thing to a grieving family?" I asked my wife on the way home. "I've never heard anything to manipulative, cheap, and inappropriate. I would never preach a sermon like that." She agreed with me. "Of course," she added, "the worst part of all is that it's true."*

It is not too late to have faith in Christ. Believe in God, and Believe in Jesus Christ today. Let us remember another spiritual principle that faith is the key that ***unlocks God's promises for you.*** "Impossible Possibility" happens with Faith in Christ.