

Sermon 2009 Pentecost 4
June 29, 2009
Text: Mark 5: 21-43
Theme: "Jesus Is and Jesus Does"

Jesus was and Jesus did...BUT, Jesus still is and still does.

We talk about faith a great deal and we talk about Jesus a great deal. But have you noticed that we often talk about these things as though they were merely historic fact? For instance, most of us are familiar with the basic facts of John F. Kennedy's life and work. But I don't think that any of us believe that JFK can help us with anything right now. He is, after all, dead. We can talk about him all we like and we can remember him for the many great things he did while alive, but when all is said and done, JFK can do nothing for us.

How often do we talk about Jesus in the same vein, as though we were speaking of an historic figure? Our English District Mission Exec talks about the hymn, "I love to tell the story." He says that what we really love is not **telling the story** but **singing about** telling the story. The stories are great, but listen to them. Listen to the way we describe Jesus...Once upon a time, a long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away.... No...Jesus was

and Jesus did, but we too often forget that Jesus IS and Jesus DOES!

Jesus rose from the dead and he continues to work in our lives right now. He walks with us today. The generations of boomers are retiring but their influence on the Church is waning. People today who are under 50 and certainly those under 35 no longer care about the boomer rules and norms against which those crazy boomers rebelled. They watched the boomers rebel and rebel until the boomers discovered capitalism and discovered that their rebellion would not purchase nice cars and vacation homes. So the generations that followed the boomers saw that the rebellion was largely fake and without real foundation. This mass revolution turned out to be a societal blip. Sadly many transferred that to faith as well.

The boomers told their children and grandchildren all about the historic Jesus. So many of us grew up knowing all about Jesus. We learned about all the major moments of his life and all the amazing things he did but memorizing his complete biography

and all the boomer rules of life attached therein has proven unsatisfactory.

If you are an insulin-dependent diabetic and I tell you all about the wonders of insulin, but I fail to give insulin, I have not helped you and you will soon be dead. Likewise, if I show you the insulin – hold it right up to your face – but give you no needle – no means for receiving the insulin – again you will soon be dead. Jesus surely was and he absolutely did – but we can never forget that Jesus IS and Jesus DOES still.

I hear often that people are frustrated that so many younger people fail to live up the standards that society seemed to have thought were set in stone. But whoever condemns the younger people better take a long look in the mirror because they will see that the rules that were set in stone were secretly broken when it was convenient to do so – when keeping the rule would have necessitated too much of a sacrifice. People walked away from their marriages because someone did not feel fulfilled in their lives. People drank and drugged to mediate their pain. Money and possessions became the benchmark for all success.

Now don't misunderstand me. I am not setting up the generations who followed the boomers as paragons of virtue. I am simply saying that they saw through the hypocrisy of rules that were not kept when it was not expedient to do so. The same people who taught them the rules taught them about Jesus. Religious people taught their children all about Jesus but rarely took the time to even say hello to the savior themselves. Just drop the kids off for Sunday School and show up for worship Christmas, Easter and whenever else we have to as dictated by social contract. Talk about your faith all the time but never let worship interfere with work and fun. That is rank hypocrisy and people have seen right through it – and by the way – the boomers in Islam and Buddhism are experiencing similar challenges with their children and grandchildren because they did likewise – I love to sing about telling the story. Yes Jesus did and Jesus was but have we forgotten that Jesus IS and Jesus DOES?

The woman in the Gospel who had suffered for 12 years did not think of Jesus as an interesting notion. She thought of him as her savior. She did not decide to live a more virtuous life in

order to attract his attention or curry his favor. She did not study the reality of Jesus and decide to pursue the reality of his line of thought. She just believed that he could help her and reached out to touch him without knowing exactly what he would do. See, she was no theologian but she knew what was most important to know - Jesus IS and Jesus DOES.

This woman's faith literally commanded the power of Jesus Christ. It was after her faith had commanded the power that the Lord turned and noticed her. Her faith had the ability to draw power from Christ before he even turned his face to her and you and I have that same power. We have it but we seldom use it. We spend our time talking about Jesus. We condemn all who fail to measure up to Jesus. We pray about and talk about what Jesus would do if he had a mind to do it and we faithfully commemorate the events of Jesus' life as we snore through another Sunday in the pew.

That is why the generations behind us often find it difficult to take our religiosity seriously. Don't talk to people about Jesus - introduce them to your Savior. Reach out and touch him - no

wait – do more than that – eat his body – drink his blood.

Experience the power of Christ unbridled. I will promise you that it is a wild and crazy ride because you never know just what Jesus will do but he will bless you every time and whatever happens, it will be better for you.

There is nothing safe about Jesus. He IS and He Does. He acts in our lives, if we wish him to, like no historic figure can. I think we have tried to make Jesus safe and in so doing, we have made him boring. Reach out. Touch his robe. See what happens. Amen.