

“Cross on Over” 6/28/2009 Kenmore UMC
Mark 5:21-43

Jesus leads us to cross on over in relationship to him to wholeness, to ministry, and to new people.

A friend of mine defines Christian worship as “bending the life toward God.”

Graduation excitement pervades our community these days. Kenmore East yesterday, Ken West today, each day this week it seemed was another graduation. Wonderful celebrations, poignant stories, like the young man, from Sweet Home, stricken with inoperable cancer, speaking to his classmates about the life they had lived together through their school years and the life he was going to live.

Graduations are times of hope, of new possibilities, of celebrations of accomplishments. Even while graduations are celebrations there is the sadness of leaving a part of your life behind, a certain sadness when what has been the focus of your life of so many years is completed and a new focus awaits. There is both an ending and a beginning in graduations as we cross over to a new day in our lives.

And there are crowds, moving and jostling each other while waiting to get to our seats, and the real challenge trying to find your son or daughter, your Mom and Dad after the graduation. And in the midst of your focus on a your pursuit, there’s that special friend you have to say hello to, or your so glad you bumped into.

There was a whole crowd of people around Jesus as he returned from across the Sea of Galilee. All the excitement caused by Jesus’ ministry was waiting for him, when out of the crowd comes a man, a leader, well respected in the community, a man of authority in the community, who falls at Jesus feet and begs him repeatedly with an anguish in his voice that has touched the hearts of not only those who heard him so long ago, but the hearts of people throughout the generations. *“My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well, and live.”* *“So Jesus went with him.”*

Jesus and Jairus had **crossed over** into a new relationship, a new life.

Even while he walked amongst the crowd with purpose in his step to Jairus’ home and daughter, there is a woman, ostracized, an outcast, hopeless after twelve years of hemorrhaging, who **crosses over** to hope. *“If I but touch the hem of his garment I will be made well.”* And she does and she is.

Meanwhile, you see those who have not crossed over. When Jesus felt the power of God’s compassion and healing power within him go out of him he asked his disciples, *“who touched my clothes,”* And the disciples caught in the crowd, had not crossed over to see beyond themselves, said to him, Don’t you see the crowds, how in the world should we know.

But Jesus and the woman knew, they had crossed over to hope and wholeness, to peace and well-being.

And when they came to Jairus’ home, the mourners came to Jairus to say your daughter is dead, do not trouble Jesus any more, Jesus called them not to fear, but only believe. He called them to cross over to hope, to life.

When the mourners at the house heard Jesus say, she is not dead, but only asleep. *“They laughed at him.”* Caught in death, in hopelessness, Jesus’ presence invited them to **cross over** to life and hope, but they could not see.

So Jesus had them leave and took only Jairus and his wife and three disciples and went in and took the little girls hand and told her to get up, and she did.

Life, circumstances, people, are always trying to keep us where we are, not always hopelessness and death, but sometimes just the way things are, or even thinking maybe the way they were. But Jesus and the faith he gives us calls us to **Cross Over** to way things could be, to the vision of the way God would have them be.

Jesus calls us at graduations and in each new day in our lives to **cross over** to faith, to belief, to hope, to the life waiting for us to life and share in the new day, in the new world waiting for us as God's kingdom is revealed in us and around us.

John Lane once wrote in Expository Times of the story of Mary Verghese. Mary Verghese was a brilliant young Indian surgeon. Crippled as a result of a car accident, she was able to feel and move only her arms and her head. But she believed God could still use her, and she became interested in lepers. John Lane said, "She realized she could transform their wasted stumps into something like hands and feet. Mary Verghese underwent major surgery herself so that she could be made to sit upright in a wheelchair. Today, in her operating room at Vellore, she reconstructs hands and feet and faces – the type of surgery that can be performed from a wheelchair, a type of surgery she would never have done if she had not been deprived of her normal strength. What for many would be catastrophe, for Mary Verghese became opportunity.

In faith, Mary **crossed over** to hope, to life.

Graduation is a time to claim life lessons learned, and in faith to **cross over** to a new day, a new beginning of life lived and life shared.

Jesus is ready to heal us at any moment of our lives from that which holds us in place; so that in belief we may **cross over** to the new life of fullness, hope and meaning he has for us in the major transitions, like graduation, but also in the moments of our lives.