

“I Am A Keeper”

Part I

WHY THIS SERIES....

The aim of this series is to highlight that faith is not only about how we begin,
but *learning to preserve* through every season of life.

Many people have enough faith to start, but struggle to *CONTINUE*.

We *start* praying, *start* believing, *start* serving, *start* giving,
start trusting and *start* walking with God.

BUT when *THE ANSWER* is delayed, *THE OPPOSITION* increases, *THE EXCITEMENT* fades,
or *THE CIRCUMSTANCES* become difficult...

CAN WE KEEP PUSHING AND KEEP BELIEVING

Most people have *enough faith to come*, but the real challenge is having *enough faith to keep going*.

We know *how to come to church*, *come to the altar*, come asking, and come believing.

Coming is not the Issue ~ Scripture is filled with people who *started and didn't finish*

Coming is a decision ~ Keeping Requires Discipline

Coming Gets You In The Door ~ Keeping Is what Gets You To The Promise

This series will teach us that *KEEPING IS A KINGDOM PRINCIPLE*.

WHY THIS SERIES....

We must learn to....

Keep believing when the circumstances contradict the promise.

Keep praying when heaven appears silent.

Keep going when the journey becomes difficult.

Keep the faith when life attempts to make us turn away from God.

Keeping does not mean that we never become tired, discouraged, disappointed, or afraid. It means that *none of those emotions* are allowed to *make the final decision* concerning our faith.

A keeper may be wounded; BUT refuses to give up on what God has Promised.

This series is designed to move believers *from temporary inspiration to spiritual endurance*.

It will challenge us to become people who *do not abandon our faith* when life becomes difficult, but who *remain committed, consistent, and confident UNTIL God completes what He has begun*.

By the end of this series, every believer should be able to declare:

I am not just a starter... I am a finisher

I am not a quitter... I am a keeper.

Tonight

Keep Believing

Key Verse

Mark 5:22-24 (NLT)

22 Then a leader of the local synagogue, whose name was Jairus, arrived. When he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet, 23 pleading fervently with him. “My little daughter is dying,” he said. “*Please come and lay your hands on her; heal her so she can live.*” 24 *Jesus went with him*, and all the people followed, crowding around him.

Mark 5:35-36 (NLT)

35 While he was still speaking to her, messengers arrived from the home of Jairus, the leader of the synagogue. They told him, “*Your daughter is dead.* There’s no use troubling the Teacher now.” 36 But Jesus overheard them and said to Jairus, “*Don’t be afraid. Just have faith.*”

Introduction....

*What do **YOU DO** when you come to Jesus **believing**,
but something happens that seems to **contradict** what you believed?*

*Most believers come believing that Jesus can do **something about our situation**.
But the challenge is not always **coming**. The challenge is **keeping**.*

Can you keep believing when the answer is delayed?

Can you keep believing when somebody else receives their miracle while you are still waiting on yours?

Can you keep believing when the report changes?

Can you keep believing when the people around you tell you that it is over?

Can you keep believing when what you see does not look like what God said?

Jairus had enough faith to come to Jesus.

*But before Jesus **reached Jairus' house**, the report came:*

"Your daughter is dead....Why trouble the Teacher any further?"

*Jairus now faced a different kind of **FAITH TEST**.*

*He had already demonstrated coming faith, but now he **NEEDED CONTINUING/KEEPING FAITH**.*

*Jesus looked at Jairus and essentially said: "**YOU BELIEVED ME WHEN YOU CAME.***

***NOW KEEP BELIEVING WHILE WE WALK.**"*

Keep Believing Through The Delays

Mark 5:22-24 (NLT)

22 Then a leader of the local synagogue, whose name was Jairus, arrived. When he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet,
23 **pleading fervently with him.** “**My little daughter is dying,**” he said. “**Please come and lay your hands on her; heal her so she can live.**” 24 Jesus went with him, and all the people followed, crowding around him.

Mark introduces Jairus as “**one of the rulers of the synagogue.**”

He had status, influence, authority, and respect. As a ruler of the synagogue, he would have been responsible for helping oversee the affairs of the synagogue, organizing worship, maintaining order, and selecting those who participated in the service.

He was accustomed to being the person others approached when they needed assistance.

He had a position ~ He had a title ~ He had influence ~ He had connections
But he also had a problem that his position could not solve ~ His daughter was dying.

Jairus had authority in the synagogue, but he had **no authority** over the sickness attacking his daughter.
He could **manage the synagogue**, but he could not manage **THIS CRISIS**.

We must give Jairus credit: **HE HAD ENOUGH FAITH TO COME...** **Some people have a need but never come.**

SO THERE IS AN **ARRANGED OR ALLOWED SITUATION** TO TEST HIS FAITH

HE HAD ENOUGH FAITH TO COME ~

THE TEST WOULD BE... WOULD HE HAVE ENOUGH FAITH TO **KEEP...**

KEEP WAITING, **KEEP** WALKING, **KEEP** BELIEVING, **KEEP** TRUSTING

Keep Believing Through The Delays

Mark 5:22-24 (NLT)

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Notice the connection between **COMING AND BELIEVING**.

The person who comes to God **must believe that God exists, that God is able,**
and **THAT GOD RESPONDS TO THOSE WHO DILIGENTLY SEEK HIM.**

JAIRUS CAME BECAUSE HE BELIEVED.

Jairus had enough faith **to believe** that Jesus’ presence could change the atmosphere in his house.

He **believed** that one touch from Jesus could reverse the condition.

He **believed** that what sickness was destroying, Jesus had the power to restore.

He **believed** that although his daughter was near death, she was not beyond the reach of Christ.

This is where faith begins: **FAITH BEGINS BY BELIEVING THAT JESUS CAN.**

Hebrews 11:6

“But **without faith it is impossible to please Him,** for he who comes to God must believe that He is.”

Mark 9:23

“**IF YOU CAN BELIEVE,** all things are possible to him **WHO BELIEVES.**”

Matthew 21:22

“And whatever things you ask in prayer, **BELIEVING,** you will receive.”

Keep Believing Through The Delays

Mark 5:30-34 (NLT)

30 Jesus realized at once that healing power had gone out from him, *so he turned around in the crowd* and asked, "Who touched my robe?" 31 His disciples said to him, "*Look at this crowd pressing around you*. How can you ask, 'Who touched me?'" 32 But *he kept on looking around* to see who had done it. 33 Then the frightened woman, trembling at the realization of what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and told him what she had done.

34 And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well.

Go in peace. Your suffering is over."

BUT HERE IS THE CHALLENGE OF THE TEXT...

The faith that brought Jairus to Jesus would eventually have to BECOME the faith that kept Jairus with Jesus. It is one thing to believe when you *first come*. It is another thing to keep believing when Jesus does not move *as quickly as you expected*.

It is one thing to believe while your daughter is sick.

It is another thing to keep believing after they say she is dead.

Jairus had enough faith *to begin the journey*, but Jesus was about to *develop in him* the kind of faith *that could endure the journey*.

YOUR NEED may bring you to Jesus, but *YOUR FAITH* must *keep you* with Jesus. Jairus had enough faith to *bring Jesus into the situation*, but now he had to learn how to trust Jesus when Jesus did not move according to *HIS SCHEDULE*.

That is where many believers struggle.

We believe God has the power, but we question His timing.

Keep Believing Through The Delays

THE DELAY WAS NOT DESIGNED TO DESTROY JAIRUS' FAITH.

THE DELAY WAS DEVELOPING A DEEPER DIMENSION OF HIS FAITH.

During the delay, Jairus had to do two things.... *Keep Waiting and Keep Watching*

KEEP WAITING

Waiting is one of the most difficult disciplines of faith because waiting places us in the uncomfortable space between *what Jesus has promised* and *what Jesus has performed*.

HE IS BETWEEN BELIEVING AND RECEIVING.

When God makes you wait, He is not wasting your time. He is *working beyond* what you can see.

Psalm 27:14

"Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and HE SHALL STRENGTHEN YOUR HEART"

Isaiah 40:31

"But those who wait on the Lord SHALL RENEW THEIR STRENGTH."

Waiting on God does not mean doing nothing. It means *refusing to leave* the place of faith *while God is working*.

To wait means... *I do not walk away* because it is taking longer than expected.

I do not abandon my confidence because God has not moved on my timetable.

I do not interpret God's silence as His absence.

Jairus had to *keep standing* there while Jesus spoke to the woman.

A keeper understands... *I MAY NOT LIKE THE WAIT, but I will not leave Until I RECEIVE WHAT I CAME FOR*

Keep Believing Through The Delays

THE DELAY WAS NOT DESIGNED TO DESTROY JAIRUS' FAITH.
THE DELAY WAS DEVELOPING A DEEPER DIMENSION OF HIS FAITH.

KEEP WATCHING

While Jairus was waiting, he was also watching.
He watched a woman who had suffered for twelve years receive her healing.

Sometimes God lets you see what He has done for somebody else
SO THAT you will have strength to **keep believing for yourself**.
It would have been easy for Jairus to **become frustrated** while watching someone else receive
what he desperately needed. The woman's miracle could have looked like an interruption,
BUT IT WAS ALSO EVIDENCE.

Jesus allowed Jairus to witness a miracle while he was waiting on his own.

Their blessing is **EVIDENCE** that Jesus is still working.
Their healing is **PROOF** that He is still able.

What God does for someone else while you are waiting
should **STRENGTHEN YOUR EXPECTATION**, not weaken your faith.
Do not become discouraged by another person's blessing.

Watch it ~ Celebrate it ~ Learn from it
LET IT REMIND YOU THAT GOD IS STILL IN THE MIRACLE-WORKING BUSINESS.

Keep Believing Through The Difficult Seasons

Mark 5:35-36 (NLT)

35 While he was still speaking to her, messengers arrived from the home of Jairus, the leader of the synagogue.

They told him, “Your daughter is dead. There’s no use troubling the Teacher now.”

36 But Jesus overheard them and said to Jairus, “DON’T BE AFRAID. JUST HAVE FAITH.”

There will be times when the report *does not match your expected conclusion.*

You prayed for healing, *but the condition became worse.*

You expected the door to open, *but it closed.*

You believed things would improve, *but the situation became more difficult.*

THE CONDITION CHANGED, BUT JESUS DID NOT. The situation became difficult, *but Jesus was still present and still powerful.* *THIS WAS DIFFICULT, BUT IT WAS ONLY A TEST.*

KEEP TRUSTING

Jesus did not deny the difficulty of the situation ~ The report was real, but it was not final.

He challenged Jairus not to allow the report to change what he believed about Him.

Difficult situations *test whether our trust* is based on *what we see* or *on who God is.*

Can you TRUST GOD when the outcome is different FROM WHAT YOU EXPECTED?

Can you TRUST HIM when you do not understand the delay?

Fear said, “*IT IS OVER.*” Jesus said, “*KEEP BELIEVING.*”

Psalm 56:3 ~ “*Whenever I am afraid, I WILL TRUST IN YOU.*”

Keep Believing Through The Difficult Seasons

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35 They told him, “Your daughter is dead. There’s no use troubling the Teacher now.”

36 But Jesus overheard them and said to Jairus, “Don’t be afraid. Just have faith.”

They were telling Jairus there was no reason to continue.

Stop walking ~ Stop expecting ~ Stop believing ~ Stop trusting

But Jairus kept walking with Jesus.

KEEP WALKING

2 Corinthians 5:7

“For we walk by faith, not by sight.”

He did not know *what Jesus was going to do*.

He did not understand *how Jesus would handle the situation*. **HE SIMPLY CONTINUED THE JOURNEY.**

Sometimes faith is not *having all the answers*. Sometimes faith is *taking the next step with Jesus*.

You may not *understand* what God is doing...*keep walking*.

You may not *know how* He will turn it around...*keep walking*.

You may not *see any evidence* of change...*keep walking*.

Jairus expected Jesus to heal a sick girl, but Jesus was preparing to raise a dead girl.

What appeared to be the end was only an *opportunity* for Jesus to reveal *a greater dimension of His power*.

So through difficult situations: Keep trusting when you do not understand.

KEEP WALKING WHEN YOU DO NOT SEE THE OUTCOME.

Keep Believing Despite The Doubters

Mark 5:38-40 (NLT)

38 When they came to the home of the synagogue leader, **Jesus saw much commotion and weeping and wailing.**

39 He went inside and asked, “**Why all this commotion and weeping? The child isn’t dead; she’s only asleep.**”

40 The crowd laughed at him. **BUT HE MADE THEM ALL LEAVE**, and he took the girl’s father and mother and his three disciples into the room where the girl was lying.

The miracle was about to happen in the house, but **everybody in the house could not remain in the room.**

There are some seasons in which Jesus will **change the atmosphere BEFORE** He changes the situation

Not everyone can accompany you into the place where your faith is being tested.
Some people **know** too much about what happened and **too little** about **who Jesus is.**

They know the diagnosis ~ They know the history ~ They know the mistakes ~ They know the statistics
They know why it should not work ~ But they do not know what Jesus is preparing to do for you.

Do not allow the laughter of doubters **to become** louder than the word of Jesus...
You may have to **remove** some voices. You may have to **limit** some conversations.
You may have to **stop explaining your faith to people** who have already decided that nothing can change.
You do not need everybody to believe.

YOU JUST NEED TO KEEP BELIEVING...KEEP TRUSTING... KEEP WALKING...KEEP WAITING...KEEP WATCHING
IN DUE SEASON GOD WILL PERFORM WHAT HE PROMISED

In Conclusion

Keep Believing Through The Delays

Keep Waiting ~ Keep Watching

Keep Believing Through The Difficult Seasons

Keep Trusting ~ Keep Walking

Keep Believing Despite The Doubters