

The Purpose of Providence | Luke 8:40-56

Select among the following questions those most helpful to you:

1. The sermon highlighted the deliberate structural contrast Luke sets up between v. 37 and v. 40 – the Gerasenes begged Jesus to leave, while Jairus begged Jesus to come. How does the fact that Jairus – a synagogue ruler who had likely been hostile to Jesus – is the one now prostrating himself at his feet illustrate the sermon's point that "desperation is often the precursor to grace"?
2. The sermon observed that the number twelve appears twice in this passage – the woman bled for twelve years, and Jairus's daughter was twelve years old. Luke almost certainly intends this as more than coincidence. How does the pairing of the woman and the daughter expand our picture – not only of Jesus' saving power, but also of his providential purpose to grow Jairus' faith for the trial ahead?
3. The sermon argued that the "providential disruption" – Jesus stopping to heal the hemorrhaging woman while Jairus's daughter was dying – was not an interruption of Jesus' plan but part of it, designed to grow Jairus's faith before the greater test arrived. How does this connect to what we've seen throughout Luke 8 – the disciples in the storm, the demoniac, the parable of the soils – as a recurring pattern of Jesus orchestrating circumstances to test and deepen faith? What does it reveal about how Jesus makes and grows disciples... and makes and grows us?
4. Jesus tells the crowd the girl is "not dead but sleeping" (v. 52), and they laugh at him. The sermon connected this to 1 Thessalonians 4:13-15, where Paul describes deceased

believers as those who have “fallen asleep.” How does the resurrection of Jairus’s daughter function as a preview of the general resurrection Jesus describes in John 5:28-29? And what does the laughter of the crowd – people who knew she was dead – reveal about the relationship between unbelief and the ability to witness God’s present and future glory (cf. John 11:40)?

5. Jesus tells Jairus in v. 50 – at the most devastating possible moment, when the messenger arrives to say his daughter is dead – simply: “Do not fear; only believe.” The sermon called this “the secret of comfort during times of trouble.” How does this command connect to what Jesus said in Luke 6:46-49 (the wise builder who hears and obeys) and to what Hebrews 11:1 defines as faith (“the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen”)? What does it practically mean to obey the command to “only believe” in a moment of crisis?
6. The sermon noted that Jesus felt power go out from him (v. 46) when the woman touched him – describing this as evidence that God’s power is personal and relational, not impersonal or mechanical. The sermon cited Galatians 2:20, Colossians 3:3, and 2 Corinthians 4:10 to describe the believer’s living union with Christ. How does the Vine and Branches imagery in John 15:1-8 – where Jesus describes a living, organic, flowing relationship between himself and his disciples – illuminate what Jesus experienced in that moment? What does this teach us about how we draw on Christ’s power in our own daily lives?
7. The sermon outlined three categories of providential experience: desperation (being brought to the end of yourself), disruption (having your plans interrupted), and

demonstration (seeing God work in unexpected ways after the darkness). Looking at your own life honestly, which of these three is God most clearly using right now – and what does this passage suggest he is trying to grow in you through it? How does Romans 8:28-29 help clarify what “good” actually means in the phrase “all things work together for good”?

8. The sermon described the hemorrhaging woman as spending everything she had on physicians who “could not heal” – a picture of someone who had exhausted every human remedy before coming to Christ. A 2026 survey found that one in three Americans say they are experiencing an existential crisis, rising to 52% of Gen Z, with financial pressure, loss of control, and a widening gap between how life feels and how people thought it would feel cited as the primary drivers (*Talker Research, “35% of Americans Say 2026 Is ‘Stressful,’”* 2026). How does the woman’s story – desperate, out of options, quietly reaching for Jesus in a crowd – speak directly into this cultural moment? And how does it shape the way we present the gospel to people who are already exhausted by every other remedy our culture offers?
9. The passage ends with a resurrection – a dead girl raised to life by a word. The sermon connected this to the final resurrection and to the promise of reunion for believing families. In an age where existential dread has become the baseline for many Americans – with anxiety about death, meaning, and the future running across every generation – how does the bodily resurrection of Jairus’s daughter serve as hope that death is not the final word? How would you articulate the hope of resurrection to a grieving or despairing friend or neighbor?