

## **BUMPY ROADS SMOOTHED OVER BY JESUS**

One of my favourite stories in the Bible which can be found in Mark 5, is about a man named Jairus. Jairus was the leader of the local synagogue and he had been on a bumpy road prior to Jesus arriving in his town. Jairus' daughter, who was 12 at the time, had become very ill. I imagine he had seen doctors and tried many things as any parent would in order to help his daughter get better but unfortunately Jairus experienced many bumps in these attempts.

On the day Jesus arrived in the town, the daughter's condition had become even worse. Jairus went to greet Jesus and pleaded with Him to come heal his daughter. Jairus must have breathed a sigh of relief when Jesus agreed. As the two of them began the journey to his home Jairus experienced a few bumps along the way:

1. The first bump came when Jesus stopped to find out who had touched His robe in the crowd of people resulting in healing power flowing out from Him.
2. The second bump came when Jesus took time to listen to the story of the woman who had touched Him and shared with her how her faith had made her well.

These were bumps in the road that must have frustrated Jairus. He knew time was of the essence to get Jesus to his house in order to heal his daughter. Before Jesus' conversation with this woman finished, Jairus experienced the worst bump of all when he was notified by a messenger that his daughter had died. This bump would have shattered Jairus' heart and soul of all hope. Jesus heard what had been said and told Jairus:

**"Don't be afraid. Just have faith." (Mark 5:36)**

If anybody other than Jesus had said this to Jairus after the bump he had just experienced, the words would have come across as being insensitive. Jesus was smoothing the bump Jairus had just experienced out by giving him hope. When Jesus arrived at Jairus' home, He went into the room where the daughter was, took her hand and raised her back to life. One of the lessons we can take away from this story is how Jesus smoothes out the bumps we experience through His power, grace, and desire to help.

I have been on a similar journey during these past two months experiencing so many bumps trying to find enough players to form a basketball team this year. Normally, a coach will post tryout dates in August and have enough players come out to them to select a team. For many reasons a lot of girls in the high school age groups have decided not to play basketball this year.

My first bump came when four of my players from last year's team decided not to play at all this season. My next bump came when the two new players who did show up to try out did not accept my offer to play for the team. After my first two tryouts I only had six players. I waited a few weeks and held another tryout. Thankfully we were able to sign one new player, but we were still three players short of our goal of forming a team.

Throughout September we advertised on social media that we were looking for more players but nobody was responding. Some of my committed players and their parents were losing hope we could form a team and began to look at other clubs. These were hard bumps for me to take, but I understood fully their desire to want to play basketball somewhere this year. When this option did not work out for them many of these parents shared with me their daughters were losing all hope of playing this year. My heart was breaking for them with these bumps.

In October I hit a hard bump when one of the original six who signed decided she no longer wanted to play basketball. Just like Jairus did, I went to Jesus each time in prayer asking for His help to smooth out these bumps along the way. Doing this helped me to stay calm and hopeful through this bumpy journey. Other parents and players were losing hope, but I never lost it despite the bumps.

Prior to Thanksgiving, I received an e-mail out of the blue from a player interested in trying out. This player's high school basketball team was playing at the same tournament that weekend that my daughter's school team was in. I had the chance to meet her for the first time. At the same tournament another player from the junior team at my daughter's school was interested in playing for us. I could see this was Jesus at work answering my prayer to smooth out the bumps and help us to be able to form a team.

Both players joined our team giving us eight. There were two more bumps I needed Jesus to help smooth over. One of these girls needed financial assistance in order to cover the fees to play. Her joining our team was conditional on her receiving a grant from Jump Start. This girl crossed her fingers, and I joined my hands in prayer asking Jesus to overcome this bump. Last Friday she received word from Jump Start they would cover some of the costs.

The final bump I needed Jesus' help with was to get the organization to agree to support us as a team with just eight players and not ten like last year. Thankfully they have agreed to support us forming a team even with just eight players. As you can see it has been a very bumpy journey for me as a coach over these past two months. Most would have given up hope, and I might have too if it had not been for stories like Jairus in the Bible that remind me not to be afraid in these bumpy situations but rather have faith.

I share this story to hopefully inspire anyone who may be experiencing a bumpy road in life right now not to lose hope but to keep praying that Jesus will smooth out the way ahead. It is not easy to be on a bumpy road, whatever may be causing the bumps. It is far easier to handle them by asking Jesus in prayer to help smooth them over for us and provide a happy arrival at the end. Jesus did this for Jairus 2,000 years ago and He is still doing the same thing for us today.

**Here is to a great season ahead, and here is to a great Saviour we have in Jesus.**

Keep Safe and God Bless

Pastor and Coach Dean