

THE TENDER LOVE OF JESUS (Mk. 5:35-43)

In our previous study we watched as Jesus was approached by Jairus to come to his home and heal his seriously ill daughter, ²³ And besought him greatly, saying, *My little daughter lieth at the point of death: I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live.* On the way, He also came into contact with the woman who touched the hem of His garment as she sought healing. Indeed, she was not only healed, but her life was also changed to the glory of God.

And so we are back on the road with Jesus as He makes His way with Jairus towards the home. Along the way, though, they were met with the devastating news the young twelve year old girl had died. Jesus was too late, and nothing could be done. ... The awful reality of death.

I know we as Christians talk about not being afraid of death. ... I trust we are not afraid of it, but at the same time we are only human and we have our natural feelings to contend with. In my earlier days, I remember being with a Godly man who knew he was on his deathbed and he was soon going home to be with the Lord. And yet, - even with such a great and wonderful prospect drawing inevitably closer, - he was already missing his wife and his family. ...

I know we can look forward to being with Christ ... but at the same time death brings the sadness of parting. This human life is all we have known. Our family and friends are precious to us ... and death is the most desperate of all human conditions. The author of Hebrews wrote, ^{2:14} Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he [*the Lord Jesus*] also himself likewise took part of the same [*i.e. our flesh and blood*]; that through death he [*Christ*] might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; ¹⁵ And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage [*... that's you and me who have the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour*]. Death is the consequence of sin, - that is how it has been since the Fall in the Garden of Eden. The reason we die is because of sin, - it is not because of old age, illness or anything else ... Here is the reason we die, wrote Paul, **Rom. 6:28** For the wages of sin is death. Bildad the Shuhite who came to Job said, **Job 18:11** Terrors shall make him afraid on every side ... ¹⁴ ... and it shall bring him to the king of terrors ... *death!* ... David cried surrounded by his enemies, **Ps. 55:4** My heart is sore pained within me: and the terrors of death are fallen upon me. ⁵ Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me.

Is death the unconquerable enemy, though? What do I believe? What do I believe about death, and the triumph over death? ... Acknowledging the sin that threatened to render him powerless and desperate, Paul asked the question, **Rom. 7:24** O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? ...

And as soon as the words had fallen from his lips, the Lord reminded him of the victory belonging to every believer, **25** I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Out of every religion this world has ever known, there is only one that presents an empty tomb. The same Jesus Christ Who was impaled upon a throne is no longer there, and neither is He in a place of burial where all His devotees flock to and visit. He is neither nailed to a cross, nor lying in a grave for He has risen! And the knowledge of knowing that Jesus Christ is alive today is the great hope of every born-again believing child of God, **1 Cor. 15:42** So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: **43** It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power ... **49** And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. **50** Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. **51** Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, **52** In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. **53** For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. **54** So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. **55** O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory? **56** The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. **57** But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. ... He is the way, the truth, and **the life** (Jn. 14:6)!

There is a great day coming, the likes of which this world which has seen so much ... but it has never before seen anything like what is going to happen on this great day, **1 Thess. 4:14** For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. **15** For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. **16** For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: **17** Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. And Paul concluded, **8** Wherefore comfort one another with these words. ... That is the living hope of every child of God. Our Saviour defeated death when He rose from the dead and, as He told His disciples, **Jn. 14:19** **because I live, ye shall live also.**

Now, after Jesus had spoken with the woman, and was continuing to speak, - presumably to the crowds, **35** While he yet spake, - some of the household of Jairus came running, "She's dead! ... She's dead". ... They came running up to Jairus with the devastating news, **35** Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further? ... Too late! There is no longer any point in bringing Jesus home with you.

Your little girl has died. Maybe if that woman hadn't kept Jesus back ... Maybe He could have done something ... but it is too late now ... She's dead".

Consider their words, *why troublest thou the Master any further?* ... That is how they saw it, - troubling Jesus ... The father running off to get Jesus wasn't really worth the bother. He would have been better spending those last few hours with his little girl. ... I can't help but see a little blame being placed here. Maybe the household reckoned Jairus had wasted his time, - valuable time, - going to find Jesus ... I also wonder if these men would have said the same thing if it was a little *boy* that was ill, - I wonder if they reckoned a little girl's life wasn't just as precious?

... And notice how they described the Saviour, *why troublest thou the Master?* The word is διδάσκαλος, 'teacher'. ... Anyone can teach, but when your child is seriously ill and at death's door, it is not a 'teacher' you need, it is someone to bring healing! You see, they did not have the faith of Jairus because Jairus believed Jesus could heal his daughter. ... Jairus knew something he was only able to believe because God the Holy Spirit had opened his heart to understand. ... Jairus saw in Jesus not only the teacher, but also the healer for he had already declared to the Saviour, *²³ My little daughter lieth at the point of death: I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live* ... Jairus was convinced Jesus could and would heal his little girl! ... And then these members of his household came with the devastating news, *Thy daughter is dead*.

I wonder why Jairus had gone to find Jesus, instead of sending one of his household? I believe if it was me, I would not have left my daughter's side ... every moment with her would have been precious. But maybe he didn't send any of his household because none of them had the same burden to seek Jesus as he had. ... When you come to God in prayer, you must come believing, otherwise there is no point! ... Jairus came believing!

Jesus picked up on what the members of the household were saying, so He addressed Jairus, - not the servants, - but Jairus, *³⁶ he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue [ἀρχισυνάγωγος], Be not afraid, only believe*. ... Don't be afraid, but keep on believing. You came here to bring Me to your daughter so that I would heal her ... Keep on believing. These men have come and given you this news, but, - said Jesus, - I'm telling you, the trust you placed in Me at the beginning, don't let it waver ... *Be not afraid, only believe*. ... Luke tells the same story, and he adds **Lk. 8:50** *Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole*.

And so Jairus continued with Jesus. At this point Jesus left all the observers and only took with Him Peter, James, and John. Inside the home, the daughter was lying still on her bed, or most probably a table [*the word ἀνάκειμαι indicates she was probably lying on a table*]. Her mother, - Jairus' wife, - would have been heartbroken. Obviously the little girl had been dead long enough to 'call in' the 'weepers and the wailers and the flute players'. These were a band of professionals that you paid to come to your house and do these things.

And into the midst of all this comes the Saviour, so calmly. Just as, - when they were in the storm on the sea, - He awoke and brought peace to the winds and the waves ... He is about to do the same again in this home that had been visited by death. These were different types of 'winds' and 'storms' but they were very real, all the same! Matthew records, **23** *And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise.* ... Such commotion! When it was first heard the girl had died, the news would have spread into the local homes and streets, and there would have been such howling and shrieking ... like what we see on the news programmes when tragedies occur in the Middle East. And then they would tear their clothes, and the Jewish tradition actually had thirty-nine regulations on how to tear your clothes.

... If you belonged to the family, you had to tear the garment that covered your heart, and you were to wear that same garment for thirty days. If you weren't related, you would tear your garment somewhere else near the heart. ... So it was quite a scene, - people shrieking and howling and wailing and tearing their clothes! ... Then you had 'professional' wailers to keep it all going on and on!

... And here is Jesus in the middle of all this! ... And He announced, **39** *Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth.* ... However, they laughed at Him ... in fact, *they laughed him to scorn!* They mocked Him. They knew better than Him, - don't be so stupid, of course, the girl is dead! The young girl is no longer breathing, she has changed colour ... she is no longer living, - she is dead! They 'looked down their noses' at Him. They treated Him as a fool!

In v.37, *he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James* ... That is all He took with Him but obviously these other individuals sneaked in, - it's hard to keep them out! But in v.40 He definitely did put them out! He wasn't going to take any more disruption from them. They had no place there. There was no room in that home for unbelievers! *Get out!* ... The word is ἐκβάλλω, - they were thrown out! ... The world laughs at Jesus, but He will not allow them to limit His power ... *the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth.*

That was a very profound statement! And Jesus was using it to redefine death as being a temporary condition. It's not permanent ... That was how He used the analogy of sleep. ... You sleep, and you waken up ... You die, but *death is not forever for there is life after death!*

This was all new to them, of course. They had never seen or heard the likes of this before! So after Jesus had cleared the house of the mockers, **40** *he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel [παίδιον], and them that were with him ... seven of them in the room (Peter, James, John, the father, the mother, the young girl, and Jesus) ... and entereth in [went into] where the damsel was lying ... on the ἀνάκειμαι (table, bed). There would have been a hush, - a holy hush, - as Jesus approached her, and as He took the girl's hand in His ... the grieving mother and father watching so intently, with their eyes upon Jesus* **41** *And he took the damsel by the hand, - the personal touch of Jesus, - and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel [little girl], I say unto thee, arise, - the powerful voice of Jesus.*

Here He is ... speaking to a dead girl. There is not an ounce of life in her body ... not a breath ... and Jesus speaks to her, **42** *And straightway [εὐθέως] the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years. She got up straightaway. Her mother and father didn't have to help her off that table. She didn't have to take lessons on how to walk again, - no rehabilitation necessary ... When Jesus told her, "arise" ... - even though she was dead, - she arose! She returned immediately to being a twelve year old girl with all the strength and purpose they possess. She was back to being normal! Because of Jesus, she was back to being alive!*

And they were astonished with a great astonishment. The reason Jairus went to find Jesus was for this very outcome, **23** *And besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live. ... The Lord had honoured his faith. But even when it happened, his astonishment was none the less. ... Jesus does far more for us than we could ever ask! This was what this father had invited the Saviour to come into his home and do ... and yet it was far more than either he or his wife would have imagined! ... It was better than better ... what Jesus had done for them! Their joy was on a completely new level altogether! ... And Jairus had his original faith confirmed ... the faith that brought him to Jesus!*

Before the Saviour departed from their home, He gave strict instructions, **43** *And he charged them straitly that no man should know it ... Why were they not allowed to report such a great event? ... Surely the people would have seen the young girl in the streets in the days afterwards ... yes, they would have.*

Maybe Jesus said it for a few reasons. Firstly, that home would have become an attraction, and all kinds of people would have come from near and far to visit, - ... it would have been like a ‘magnet’ to all sorts! They would have flocked to see the young girl who was raised from the dead. Another reason could have been to deter the wild imaginations of those people who, - on the basis of a miracle, - might have wanted to elevate Jesus to a position that was not yet appropriate for Him. That is to say, on the basis of the spectacular they could have made a whole fuss to give Him Messianic status ... and that would not have been the right reason for them to choose Him. After all, He came to save them from their sins ... and that had to be achieved first.

... and [*He*] commanded that something should be given her to eat. There was such excitement in that house the family forgot and overlooked the basics. So that the ordinary necessities were met, Jesus reminded this loving mother and father to not forget to feed their daughter ... What a family meal that must have been!

At the command of Jesus, she had been raised from the dead ... and now she was feeding. ... What a meal that would have been with the young girl and Jesus seated at the table together! This young girl had been dead, but the voice of Jesus had awakened her! ... There is a day coming when all of God’s people, - all whom He has awakened to salvation, - will be raised to eat at the marriage supper of the Lamb. ... On another occasion when Jesus was in Jerusalem, he said to the Pharisees that were hounding Him, **Jn. 5:28** *the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, ²⁹ And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.* ... *That* is the powerful authority in the voice of Jesus! “He breaks the power of cancelled sin, He sets the prisoner free ... He speaks, and, listening to His voice, New life, the dead receive” ... You see, the grave is not the end. The decomposed body will be formed again to obey the command of Christ to *arise*, **Rev. 11:12** *And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.*

Death is not permanent ... It is merely the pathway from out of this life into either Heaven with God, or Hell without Him.

The complete story of the Lord Jesus does not end with the account of the resurrection of this young girl ... There was much more to it for it had to include the cross, and His death there for sinners. He came into this world to do more than bring healing of the body ... He came to bring salvation for the soul.

Jesus left the home of Jairus ... and what a joy it would have been to see that mother and father and their daughter standing together in the doorway bidding Him farewell. What happened in that home took faith in Christ for it to happen. The faith Jairus had, - as we said previously, - was a faith different to the people around him. His was not simply *a* faith, but it was *true* faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Just consider what it must have been like after Jesus left their home, and they turned and went in and considered all He had done for them ... What a changed household that was! The mother and father had first met Him ... and then they took Him into the room where their daughter was lying ... and then she also met her Saviour. Can't we see something there that is so important? Yes, we can. Here was a mother and father who, - even through such sad circumstances, - introduced their child to the Saviour.

There are many lessons we see in this passage ... but *there* is an important one ... introducing our families to Christ. It's hard. It's difficult. Jairus started the process when he left his home and went along the road to find Jesus. And, even though Jesus was so tremendously busy He privileged this family with entering into their home. Sometimes it might be through happy circumstances, sometimes sad ... but when Jesus was invited by Jairus ... look at what the Word says, **24** *And Jesus went with him.* ... That is the confidence we have ... He never disappoints those who come to Him in true believing faith, and *that* is the abiding grace with which our Saviour and Lord meets our every need. Amen.