

Mark 5:21-24, 35-43
Ruler Over Death

²¹ And when Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered about him, and he was beside the sea. ²² Then came one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name, and seeing him, he fell at his feet ²³ and implored him earnestly, saying, "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." ²⁴ And he went with him....

³⁵ While he was still speaking, there came from the ruler's house some who said, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?" ³⁶ But overhearing^[e] what they said, Jesus said to the ruler of the synagogue, "Do not fear, only believe." ³⁷ And he allowed no one to follow him except Peter and James and John the brother of James.³⁸ They came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and Jesus^[f] saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. ³⁹ And when he had entered, he said to them, "Why are you making a commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but sleeping." ⁴⁰ And they laughed at him. But he put them all outside and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him and went in where the child was. ⁴¹ Taking her by the hand he said to her, "Talitha cumi," which means, "Little girl, I say to you, arise." ⁴² And immediately the girl got up and began walking (for she was twelve years of age), and they were immediately overcome with amazement. ⁴³ And he strictly charged them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.

May God add his blessing to the reading and ministry of his Word today. Let us pray:

Heavenly Father, how grateful we are that this great event happened – that your Son and our Savior came to the aide of this desperate father and restored his deceased little daughter to life once again. Your Son is truly the author of life – in him is life and that life is the light of men. May the living Christ by his Spirit teach us his Word today and teach us of himself, for we would seek to know more of Christ and of his life restoring, life generating power. We ask in his name. Amen.

At 7:48 am on Dec. 7, 1941, the Imperial Japanese Navy Air Service directed a surprise attack on the United States Naval Base at Pearl Harbor in the Hawaiian Islands. Many U.S. Naval ships and aircraft were destroyed or damaged and 2,403 Americans were killed.

After the attack Japanese Admiral Yamamoto is reported to have said:

"I fear all we have done is to awaken a sleeping giant and fill him with a terrible resolve."

Japan put itself in opposition to a nation more powerful than she was. She faced a formidable foe in the United States of America, and she was soundly defeated and had to unconditionally surrender on Sept. 2, 1945.

Today we are going to read how a powerful force of destruction, death itself, was defeated and overcome by a force greater and more powerful, the power of the Lord Jesus Christ. A sick 12-year-old girl, the only child of her parents, had succumbed to sickness and death. But the Lord Jesus Christ arrived on the scene, took her gently by the hand, and told her to rise up. Breath returned to her body, and she rose up and began to walk. Relief and the gratitude of joy flooded the hearts of her parents. She who was the apple of her parents' eyes, who was dead, now was alive again. She who had succumbed to death's power was restored to life by Jesus' power over death. Oh, what an unforgettable day that was!

Maybe we should not be too surprised at what happened here. Think of what we have been studying the last few weeks in Mark's gospel. From the end of chapter 4 to the present passage at the end of chapter 5...

...we have seen the Lord Jesus Christ as compassionate and powerful in four situations:

- -to those in danger on the stormy Sea of Galilee – he commanded the storm to cease and there was a great calm. (the end of chp. 4)
- -to the man captivated by thousands of demons – he delivered him completely from all the demons and the former demoniac sat at peace, “clothed and in his right mind.”
- -to the woman with a 12-year unstoppable discharge of blood, he healed her as she in faith touched the hem of his garment.

Compassionate and powerful...

- -to Jairus here, the synagogue ruler, to the desperate father, fearful that he would soon lose his daughter to the cold clutches of death, Jesus brought healing and recovery from death.

Storms, demons, disease and death – all fell beneath Jesus' powerful sway. Who is this man Jesus? Where did he get this power? How could a carpenter from an obscure town in northern Galilee work such mighty works among men and women?

The woman with the discharge of blood had heard of Jesus healing power and she believed it was real. She had faith that if she could just get to Jesus he would heal her. And her faith was rewarded.

Now let's consider the other major character in this chapter: Jairus the synagogue ruler. As I see it, there are basically two major things happening in his passage:

Jairus' Desperate Situation
 Jesus' Command over the Situation

Two men: one buffeted about by the circumstances of life – living in a sinful world where disease and death often break in unexpectedly and disrupt our lives. One had been crazy from demons; the other was crazy with worry as his daughter **dangled** between life and death.

So let's look at these two situations:

Jairus' Desperate Situation

Jesus' Command over the Situation

I. **Jairus' Desperate Situation** – v. 21-24, 35

A. **His distress** over his daughter's dangerous illness.

She was in a medical crisis.

She probably had some kind of unexplained illness

- likely had fever
- was weak- bedridden
- may have been coughing
- breathing was labored
- no appetite

-we don't know how long she had been so sick-

likely a couple of weeks

B. **His faith**

Jairus, the synagogue ruler, had likely already met Jesus at the synagogue in Capernaum, the city on the western shore of the Lake of Galilee. which had become Jesus' headquarters for his itinerant preaching ministry. He may have heard him teaching and heard of his miracles and maybe had even seen people healed by Jesus. So he believed, also, like the woman with the discharge of blood. He believed Jesus could heal his daughter. And so he came, imploring Jesus to come and lay hands on his daughter so that she might be healed.

C. **The divine interruption**

Jesus agreed to accompany Jairus to go to see his daughter. Jairus was probably desperate to get there as fast as possible. But then this great crowd of people were swarming around him, clamoring for his attention. Then his one woman caught Jesus' attention when when she had touched his garment in her faith that Jesus would heal her.

"Jesus, why do you have to stop and deal with this woman", he may have thought. My daughter is dying and the precious moments are flying by.

But then Jairus saw that the woman was healed. Instead of being upset about the delay he saw Jesus healing power at work – his faith was likely bolstered.

D. **The alarming report** – v. 35

People came from his home and said, "Your daughter is dead. Why (E)trouble (E)the Teacher any further?"

This is the thing Jairus so greatly feared – that his daughter would expire before Jesus could get there. Now it happened. It was too late. She was gone. He'd never see her again. His heart was torn apart.

But then we consider the second major part of this passage:

II. Jesus' Command Over the Situation – 36-43

Jesus had command...

A. Over Jairus' fear

³⁶ But overhearing^[a] what they said, Jesus said to ^(G)the ruler of the synagogue, "Do not fear, only believe."

Jesus understood the paralyzing fear that had gripped him. He understood what was happening in Jairus' mind and heart.

How could Jesus say this to Jairus? What right or authority did Jesus have to say this to Jairus? It was because of who Jesus was.

Yes, he was just a carpenter from a small, out of the way town in northern Galilee called Nazareth. But he was also from somewhere else:

He was from the very throne room of God. That's where he had been in all eternity past before his heavenly Father had sent him on a "divine rescue mission" to save a people for himself out of the whole sinful race of humanity. As the Nicene Creed says, "he was God from God, Light from Light, Very God of very God, of one being with the Father, from him all things were made..."

Who was this one telling Jairus not to fear? Listen how Colossians 1:15-20 describe him:

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶ For by^[a] him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. ¹⁹ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

This is the One who was telling Jairus not to fear: in Jesus Christ of Nazareth all the fullness of God dwelled. All that makes God to be God resided in Jesus Christ.

The eternal creator of heaven and earth was standing right there in front of Jairus and telling him, "Do not fear, only believe."

What was sickness and death before the presence of God almighty who had come to take upon himself human flesh, our human nature?

Listen to how John 1:1-4 describe him:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴ In him was life,^[a] and the life was the light of men.

Here again, the Creator of life and light was standing before Jairus and saying, “Do not fear, only believe.”

Jesus had command over Jairus’ fear because of who he was, because of the identify of his person. This was no mere man telling Jairus not to fear, yes, he was fully a man, but he was also fully God telling him this. God had become a man in Jesus Christ our Lord so he had the right and authority and power to say this to Jairus and the right and authority and power to back up what he said.

The death that had engulfed his daughter was terrible, the most fearful and horrible thing that could have happened to this girl, but it was not so great and terrible that it was too much for the Son of God to deal with.

Listen to what the scriptures say in 2 Tim. 1:10 - ¹⁰ and which now has ^(E)been manifested through ^(G)the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, ^(H)who abolished death and ^(L)brought life and ^(J)immortality to light through the gospel.

Did you hear that? Christ abolished death. He abolished out great and last enemy. You can fight death all your life and that is what we do, but in the end death wins. Death gets us every time. But death does not have the last word – Jesus Christ our Lord has the last word. Listen to 1 Cor. 15: 54-57:

^(H)“Death is swallowed up in victory.”

⁵⁵ ^(L)“O death, where is your victory?

O death, where is your sting?”

⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and ^(J)the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, ^(K)who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ

Something special was about to happen that day. Jesus was going to show to Jairus and his disciples and the mother of the girl and the girl herself that death was no match for Jesus Christ. Death had met its match in Jesus. Death faced a superior power. Death was an evil, destructive power. But Jesus was supreme Good and ruler over death and conqueror and Defeater of death. Jesus had knew he was going to answer Jairus’ desperate plea and heal and restore his daughter so he tells him not to fear but believe.

Believe what? That Jesus had the power and authority to take of the situation. To do whatever was necessary to heal and restore this girl to life.

So Jesus had command over Jairus' fear because of who he was. No one else on earth had the power and authority to remove the cause of Jairus' fear, but Jesus did, because of who he was: the eternal Son of the Father who was equal in power and glory and authority with the Father.

B. Jesus also had command over the wailing mourners

These probably included paid mourners and maybe some family and friends also. Verse 38-40 says, "**Jesus^[b] saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. ³⁹ And when he had entered, he said to them, "Why are you making a commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but sleeping." ⁴⁰ And they laughed at him. But he put them all outside and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him and went in where the child was.**

Jesus told them the child was sleeping. This is the same thing he had told the people when their friend Lazarus had died. He told the people gathered there: "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him."

As far as Jesus was concerned, from his perspective as God in the flesh, what had happened to the girl could be described as merely "sleep," not death, because he was going to awaken her, he was going to bring her back from death.

Jesus put the mourners out of the house. They were unbelievers – not like Jairus, who believed Jesus could heal his daughter by laying his hand on her. So only Jairus and his wife, and the 3 disciples, Peter, James, and John accompanied Jesus as he went in to where the girl lying on her bed.

Jesus had command over Jairus' fear, he had command over the mourners and mockers of his words, and now we see...

C. Jesus has command over the death of the girl.

⁴¹ Taking her by the hand he said to her, "Talitha cumi," which means, "Little girl, I say to you, arise." ⁴² And immediately the girl got up and began walking (for she was twelve years of age), and they were immediately overcome with amazement.

Death has seized the life of this girl and extinguished it. But then Jesus came on the scene and death's terrible destructive power was destroyed. Death had met its match in the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus was absolute conqueror of death, he was superior to it, he had the ability to reverse its effects, to destroy it, to remove it from this girl, and restore her life back to her.

Jesus demonstrated on that day what had always been true: God is greater than death and has power and authority over death. This was revealed in the OT.

We read in Isa. 25:8 –

**He will swallow up death forever;
and the LORD God will wipe away tears from all faces,**

and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the LORD has spoken. (Yahweh)

Death had been confronted before by the prophets of God and been defeated.

We read in 1 Kings 17:17-24 how **Elijah raised the**

²¹ (C) Then he stretched himself upon the child three times and cried to the Lord, “O Lord my God, let this child’s life^[a] come into him again.” ²² And the Lord listened to the voice of Elijah. And the life of the child came into him again, and ^(D) he revived

²⁴ And the woman said to Elijah, ^(E) “Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in your mouth is truth.”

And we read in 2 Kings 4:32-37 how Elisha raised the Shunammite woman’s child back to life.

³² When Elisha came into the house, he saw the child lying dead on his bed. ³³ So he went in and shut the door behind the two of them and prayed to the LORD. ³⁴ Then he went up and lay on the child, putting his mouth on his mouth, his eyes on his eyes, and his hands on his hands. And as he stretched himself upon him, the flesh of the child became warm. ³⁵ Then he got up again and walked once back and forth in the house, and went up and stretched himself upon him. The child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes. ³⁶ Then he summoned Gehazi and said, “Call this Shunammite.” So he called her. And when she came to him, he said, “Pick up your son.” ³⁷ She came and fell at his feet, bowing to the ground. Then she picked up her son and went out.

Notice that in both of these incidents, the prophets Elijah and Elisha prayed to Yahweh to heal the boys. It was not their power, they had none in the face of such a powerful enemy as death. But they knew Yahweh had power over death, power to restore these two precious boys to life, and so they called upon the only one who had power to defeat death and restore life – they called on Yahweh himself and he answered their prayer.

What we see happening in Jairus’ house was no less than the same Person and power who had brought back from death the **widow of Zarephath’s Son and the Shunammite woman’s child** – it was Yahweh himself.

But the difference was that Yahweh had entered Jairus’ house in the incarnate Son of God himself, in Jesus of Nazareth. Elijah and Elisha had called on Yahweh. Jesus, Yahweh incarnate, spoke and commanded on his own power as eternal Son of God, and the Spirit of God worked in the cold, limp body of Jairus’ daughter and she came alive again. She sat up. She stood up. She walked around the room. She was just a little weak from not having eaten for awhile. She was alive and well. We can imagine her parents falling to the floor with their hands raised to heaven thanking and praising God for bring their daughter back to the land of the living.

Jesus had command over the death of the girl and he conquered that death and cast it out and restored her life. Yahweh, the Creator of heaven and earth, the Creator of life, had entered that room. He took the girl by the hand and told her to “arise” and she arose. Death had met its Conqueror in Jesus Christ our Lord! Let me say it again, “Death had met its Conqueror in Jesus Christ our Lord!”

This was not the only time Jesus had raised someone from the dead in the gospel accounts. Jesus raised the widow's son at Nain (Luke 7:11-17),

¹⁴ Then he came up and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. **And he said, “Young man, I say to you, arise.”** ¹⁵ **And the dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus^[b] gave him to his mother.**

and he raised his friend Lazarus (John 11:1-44) four days after he'd been laid in the tomb. His sister was afraid he had begun to stink. Jesus cried out with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out.” and he came out, bound up by his grave clothes.

When John the Baptist send messengers to Jesus to ask him if he was the Messiah he answered (Luke 7:22) - “Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: ^(A)the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, ^(B)lepers^[a] are cleansed, and ^(C)the deaf hear, ^(D)the dead are raised up, ^(E)the poor have good news preached to them.

When Peter was preaching to the crowd in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost, he said this:

Acts 2: 22 - ²² “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, ^(Y)a man attested to you by God ^(Z)with ^(AA)mighty works and wonders and signs that ^(AB)God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know—

How did they know he was the Messiah? One of the chief ways was the mighty works and wonders and signs that Jesus did.

At the end of John's gospel, 20:30-31, we read: ³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Jesus raising Jairus' daughter was a great blessing to this family. But what it forecasts, what it prophesies is even greater. It is a picture of what will happen to all believers when Jesus returns.

1Cor. 15:51-58 - ⁵¹ Behold! I tell you a mystery. ^(C)We shall not all sleep, ^(D)but we shall all be changed, ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For ^(E)the trumpet will sound, and ^(E)the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and ^(G)this mortal body must put on immortality.

Hear again 2 Tim. 1:10 - ¹⁰ and which now has ^(E)been manifested through ^(G)the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, ^(H)who abolished death and ^(I)brought life and ^(J)immortality to light through the gospel.

Christ had abolished death for this girl. But of course she would live for more years, but then she would die and be finally laid in the grave.

This happened with all those who were brought back from death in the bible.

But there they await the resurrection. 1 Thess. 4:

⁶ For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.¹⁷ Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.

Dallas Holm:

Cause I'll rise, again
Ain't no power on earth can tie Me down
Yes, I'll rise, again
Death can't keep Me in the ground

Because he arose, we too shall arise

Heb. 6:19 - ¹⁹ We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, ²⁰ where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf,

Rev. 21:14 - ⁴ ^(A)He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and ^(B)death shall be no more. ^(C)neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

This is the great lesson here. The raising of Jairus' daughter is a picture of all our destiny. When Christ returns, we shall all arise to meet him in the air. And so we'll always be with the Lord.

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