

Jairus' Daughter: Fear Vs. Faith

The Power of the Word: Part 12

Mark 5:35-43 (Mt.9:18-26, Lk.8:40-56) 9/2/2018

Summary: Jairus never shows any sign of doubt even during the long delay. When he gets news his daughter died, there is a struggle between fear and faith. Jesus turns death into sleep. Trust not only in God's power but also his timing. Learn to read your circumstances like you read the Bible.

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Mark 5:22-43 Then one of the synagogue rulers, named Jairus, came there. Seeing Jesus, he fell at his feet **23** and pleaded earnestly with him, "My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live." **24** So Jesus went with him. A large crowd followed and pressed around him. **25** And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. **26** She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. **27** When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, **28** because she thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed." **29** Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering. **30** At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. he turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?" **31** "You see the people crowding against you," his disciples answered, "and yet you can ask, 'Who touched me?'" **32** But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. **33** Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. **34** he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering." **35** While Jesus was still speaking, some men came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue ruler. "Your daughter is dead," they said. "Why bother the teacher any more?" **36** Ignoring what they said, Jesus told the

synagogue ruler, "Don't be afraid; just believe." 37 he did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James and John the brother of James. 38 When they came to the home of the synagogue ruler, Jesus saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly. 39 he went in and said to them, "Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep." 40 But they laughed at him. After he put them all out, he took the child's father and mother and the disciples who were with him, and went in where the child was. 41 he took her by the hand and said to her, "*Talitha koum!*" (which means, "Little girl, I say to you, get up!"). 42 Immediately the girl stood up and walked around (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished. 43 he gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this, and told them to give her something to eat.

Introduction

This had to be the happiest day of her life. After 12 years of painful suffering and defiling uncleanness, this woman in Mark 5 is now healed and clean, and she walks away with Jesus' promise of peace and health and wellbeing. She is now a child of God, her sins are forgiven, she has peace with God, and Jesus Christ used the father of a dying 12-year-old as an object lesson to let everyone know the depths of his love for this woman. So we left off last week with a huge smile on this woman's face, and on Jesus' face—but not on Jairus' face. For him, the bottom is about to drop out of his world.

The News

Jesus stops to help this woman, and he keeps dragging it out. And then it happens. Jairus can see them coming from a couple blocks away—some of his friends. His heart sinks. He knows right away this can't be good. Sure enough.

Mark 5:35 While Jesus was still speaking, some men came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue ruler. "Your daughter is dead," they said.

And Jairus' whole world goes black.

And they try to get him to leave Jesus alone.

"Why bother the teacher any more?"

It's like in the movies when someone dies, and the loved one can't accept it so he just keeps doing CPR, and finally some friend has to pull him away and tell him, "That's enough—she's gone." That's what these friends are doing. "Your last-ditch effort—going to this...outlaw healer, it was understandable. You wanted to try everything. But now it's over—you need to come home. The funeral director is already at the house."

Mark 5 is often called "the chapter of hopeless causes." In that storm, the boat was already sinking—a hopeless situation. The maniac at Gadera—they had tried everything to restrain him with no success. Hopeless. The woman—she tried every doctor and spent every penny and only got worse. Hopeless. And now the most hopeless of all, the most irreversible disaster there is: "Sorry Jairus. Your daughter didn't make it."

Power over Death

Jesus has run into some big obstacles, but this is the biggest one yet. Death is the deep point of the curse. Remember the context. Jesus is doing a series of 4 miracles to prove he has the power to establish the kingdom of God.¹ "Hey Jesus, do you have the power to bring the creation under your control?" Jesus

¹ In the parables, he told us, "Just keep sowing his word," and it will grow like a mustard seed until it becomes the full, glorious, eternal kingdom of God. But for now, its secret and hidden, like a seed underground. So how can we be sure it really has that much power? Jesus performs 4 miracles to give us proof.

answers by calming the storm with a word. “Are you able to eliminate evil?” He defeats a legion of demons. “What about sickness and suffering?” He heals a woman with an incurable disease. But there is still one category left. If you’re going to be the Messiah there’s one more item that needs to be on your resume. You have to be able to handle not only disasters and demons and disease, but also ... death. That’s what Jesus is going to do today.

Faith vs Fear

Jesus overhears the friends telling Jairus that his daughter was dead and to leave Jesus alone, but he doesn’t say anything to them.

36 Ignoring² what they said, Jesus told the synagogue ruler, "Don't be afraid;³ just believe."

You might have noticed that fear has been an issue in each one of these four miracles. In the storm, Jesus rebukes the disciples for being cowards. After restoring the demoniac, the people were afraid of Jesus and wanted him to leave. The woman with the bleeding was afraid to face Jesus and was trembling in fear.⁴ And now Jairus has to deal with fear in v.36 where Jairus’ worst nightmare comes true. Each one of my kids—when they first got their driver’s license, every time my phone rang I was afraid to answer it. What if it’s that call that every parent dreads more than anything: “There was an accident. We’re sorry. We did everything we could.” I never got that call, but Jairus just did. Jairus came with faith, but Jesus knew this would be a blow. He knew this news would put Jairus at the crossroads of fear and faith, and so Jesus is right there to uphold him in his moment of need.⁵ **36 ... Don’t be afraid; only believe.** Don’t be afraid of what? He’s not saying, “Don’t be afraid of losing your child”—that’s already happened. He’s saying, “Now that she’s dead, don’t be afraid of what’s next. Don’t be afraid of life without your little girl.” When we suffer horrible losses, we are afraid of life itself. We’re afraid of tomorrow morning, because it feels like existence is going to be unbearable now.

² The word translated **ignoring** can mean either *to ignore* or *to overhear*. In the parallel passage in Luke 8:50 a different word is used. This word only means *to hear*. But whichever way the word is translated here, clearly Jesus was ignoring them and calling the man to ignore them.

Winning the battle against fear will often require you to ignore some people. Jesus doesn’t have much patience for people who use their influence to drag others away from faith. So as quickly as these words come out of their mouths Jesus opposes them. He ignores them and tells the man to ignore them too by telling him to do the opposite of what they say. The next time you get advice from someone who counsels you to operate only by sight and not faith, Jesus is ignoring that person and you would do well to do the same.

³ Jesus came not only to handle the problem of death, but also the problem of the fear of death. **Hebrews 2:14 [Jesus] shared in their humanity so that through his death he might ... 15 free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.**

⁴ There is also an important theme in these accounts regarding fear of Christ. In the first incident, the disciples were more afraid after the miracle than before it. And we learned that if you see Christ as he really is, you will fear him more than you fear anything in this world (Isaiah 51:12-13). Storms will still be scary; but if you fear Christ more than the storm, that will give you courage instead of cowardice. The disciples didn’t have that trust, so they became cowards. They accused Jesus of not even caring. That’s what cowardice does; it makes you question God’s love.

Then, when Jesus sent a legion of demons to the Abyss and restored the demoniac, the people feared Christ in a bad way. There is a good way and a bad way to fear God. The good kind makes you shy away from sin so you can draw near to God. The bad kind of fear of God makes you shy away from God. They ask Jesus to leave because of their fear. Any time your fear of God makes you want to keep your distance from him, that’s the wrong kind. **Exodus 20:19 ... But do not have God speak to us or we will die.** They were shying away from God, so that was the bad kind. **20 Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid. Don't have that kind of fear of God. 20 ... God has come to test you, so that the fear of God will be with you to keep you from sinning.** The good kind of fear of God keeps you from sinning; the bad kind keeps you from God.

The woman with the bleeding problem at first she shows signs of the bad kind of fear of Christ—she wants to be anonymous and doesn’t want to engage directly with Jesus, and when she can’t escape his notice she is trembling in fear. But on the other hand, she has enough faith that she responds to that fear with courage instead of cowardice. She tells Jesus the whole truth of her uncleanness right there in public.

⁵ Sometimes people are afraid to exhort people in the direction of faith when disaster hits. They think that it is insensitive to do anything but sympathize. But what people really need is encouragement to trust God.

Is Jesus saying, “You don’t have to be afraid because I’m going to raise her from the dead?” No, he hasn’t promised that. Jesus hasn’t given any indication of whether this will be a miracle. Jesus hasn’t said anything about what he’s going to do; he’s just saying that whatever it is, Jairus doesn’t have to be afraid of it.

If you know Jesus Christ, then you don’t have to be afraid of anything. Even if you have the most painful ordeal of your life right around the corner; you don’t have to be afraid of it. His grace is sufficient for you. Most of our fear has to do with thinking we won’t be able to be happy in the future. But if you know Christ, you’ll always have access to joy and peace and happiness, no matter how painful life gets.

The Woman’s Example

So Jesus steps in right at the moment this man needs help, and calls him to faith. And when he does that, he’s using the woman’s faith as an example for Jairus. I say that because he tells Jairus to believe immediately after he just talked about her faith. In v.34 he says to the woman, your faith has healed you, then right away in v.36 he uses the same word when he tells Jairus to have faith.⁶ So when Jairus was confronted with the horrible news and was tempted with fear, Jesus didn’t just tell him to trust. He pointed Jairus to a real-life example of trust. He pointed to the trust of that woman.

He had already used this woman to teach a lesson about his love. When Jesus called her **daughter** right in the moment when Jairus was beside himself about his own little daughter, it was like Jesus was taking Jairus’ face in both hands and forcing him to look at that woman so he would understand that Jesus feels for her with the same extremes of emotion that Jairus has for his daughter. And Jairus says, “Ok, ok—got it. You love her with that same intensity. I understand. Now can you come heal my daughter?” And just then the friends come and tell him the devastating news. And what does Jesus do? He points Jairus to the woman again—this time to her faith. It’s like Jesus takes Jairus’ face in his hands again and says, do you see her faith Jairus? Learn from her.” The big shot religious ruler has to sit at the feet of the despised, rejected woman and learn from her. And that’s exactly what Jairus does. His faith never wavers throughout this whole ordeal.⁷ This is yet another reason why Jesus wanted to make that woman’s faith public—so we can learn from her faith.

Coming to Christ

We could do a whole sermon just on how this woman is a model of how to come to Christ. If you want to know how to become a Christian and have all your sins forgiven, or if you’re already a Christian and you want to know how to draw near to Christ, it’s all right here. First, all her faith came from hearing about Christ (faith comes from hearing the gospel). Next, she comes to Jesus in lowliness and desperation. Then she trusts him completely. There is no doubt in her mind that he has absolutely everything she needs. Then she takes hold of him by faith, rather than just brushing up against him like the multitudes did. Millions of people brush up against Christ in church every week, but not many take hold of him by faith like this woman did. Like one person said, there’s a big difference between just wearing the jersey and actually being on the team. Then she confesses the whole truth about her uncleanness. That was hard for her to do, but when she did it, like millions before her, as soon as she confessed to the Lord, she found him gentle and kind. Then he sends her away with cleansing, wholeness, and promises of blessing. That’s the whole story of how to come to Christ right there in a nutshell. But that was last week; we need to get on with this week.

⁶ One is the noun form and the other is the verb form, but it’s the same word.

⁷ Matthew tells us that Jairus believed Jesus could raise his daughter from the dead (Matthew 9:18). Jairus isn’t like Martha. Martha was in a very similar situation. Her brother Lazarus was sick, they called Jesus to come heal him, and Jesus takes his time getting there, and in the meantime, Lazarus died. And when Jesus finally arrived she said, “If only you had been here sooner you could have done something.” But Jairus isn’t like that. He still wants Jesus to come.

Delay (Trust his Timing)

Jairus follows the woman's example and trusts Jesus, and then this:

37 he did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James and John the brother of James.

The crowd tries to follow Jesus, and he turns around and says, "No, you can't come." The crowd is stunned. They are left standing there as Jesus starts walking again, and only the 12 follow this time. And Jesus stops again and says, "No, not you either. Peter, James, John—you guys come with me. The rest of you stay here."

The Inner Three

This is the first time you see Jesus singling out the inner 3—Peter, James, and John. Jesus does this on rare occasions where there is an especially important event. One reason may be that these men would play particularly important roles among the Apostles, so they needed more training.⁸ Or it could be that they were the ones most in need of help. I'm not saying they were the worst of the 12; but they may have been in the bottom 4. James and John wanted to call down fire and incinerate an entire town for not welcoming them. Not exactly the vibe Jesus was going for in the work of the gospel. It was James and John who asked to be placed in the most honored positions in the kingdom. Peter rebuked Jesus for the whole cross idea and Jesus called him Satan. All three men had a massive pride problem. So maybe these three needed more training than the others. It was the bonehead discipleship class for dummies.

Anyway, when they get to the house, the place is a zoo.

38 When they came to the home of the synagogue ruler, Jesus saw a commotion with people crying and wailing loudly.

That's how they did funerals back then. In our funerals everything is quiet, but in that culture, it was just the opposite. They believed that the more loved the person was, the louder the wailing when he's gone, so they would make as much noise as they could. If it wasn't loud enough, that dishonored the person's memory. They even had a law that required that no matter how poor you were, you had to hire at least two flute players and one wailing woman if a family member died. The synagogue ruler wouldn't have been poor, so he would have a lot more than that. And the whole thing is already in full swing, which gives you an idea of how long the delay was with that woman.

Trusts Jesus' Timing

It must have been hours, and yet at no point do we ever hear this man complaining. He not only trusts Jesus' ability to raise the dead, but his faith extends all the way into trusting Jesus' timing. That's usually where we stumble in our faith, isn't it—with God's timing? So often we have confidence in Christ's power, but we're unwilling to trust his wisdom. We think his timing is off.

But God's delays are important, because not only do they place everything into the framework of his perfect plan, but also because it exposes areas of unbelief that would otherwise go undetected. And it gives time for the problem to get big enough so that God can really put his power on display. Sometimes Jesus has to kill enough time so that the sick person dies because he wants to do a resurrection, not just a healing. He did the same thing with Lazarus. Maybe that's why God is waiting so long to answer some of your prayers.

Story

⁸ Peter and John would be key leaders, and James would be the first martyr.

Jesus Dismisses the Crowd

Well, Jesus finally gets there, sees the commotion of the funeral and somehow gets everyone's attention. It probably wasn't easy, with all that noise. He must have really had to yell. "Hey! HEY! EVERYONE! 39 ... **"Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep."**

What is that? What does he mean, she's asleep? It's a parable. And what are parables for? To make us think deeply and look to Jesus for understanding. Is that what the people do? No.

40 they laughed at him.

Faith First

Now, I don't know about you, but if Jesus had asked my advice on how to go about this, I would have suggested a much different order of events. If you're going to break up a funeral, it seems to me step 1 should be raise the person from the dead, then step 2, say whatever it is you want to say. First get the person out of the casket and walking around, then make your speech. That way they won't laugh at you. But Jesus wants to speak first. Why? The order of events is important, because what is Jesus concerned about more than anything? Faith! And when is faith tested? *Before* the miracle.⁹ Before he brings deliverance. Before he solves your problem, when it still seems hopeless—that's when you find out whether you trust him or not.

So Jesus once again puts everything on the line, so that if the miracle doesn't work, he loses all credibility. Jesus is never afraid to do that.¹⁰

Laughing

So they mock Jesus with derisive, scornful laughter. Can you imagine? This man and his wife lost their only child, and these people are being paid to mourn, and instead they are laughing and mocking the man Jairus brought to come touch his daughter. If I were Jairus, I would demand a full refund.

When Jesus walked into the house there should have been a hushed silence, and they all should have fallen on the ground at Jesus' feet in worship like Jairus did. And if they said anything it should have been, "Master, explain to us what you mean when you say she's not dead but only asleep." But instead they laugh and mock and jeer.

Jesus Casts Them Out

40 ...he put them all out

That translation is a little mild. The word is *ekballo* – to cast out (same word used of casting out demons). *ek* – "out" *ballo* – "to throw" He threw them out. "All of you—out of the house. Now. Go!" I don't know if he was shoving them out, or just intimidated them with his commanding authority, but one way or another he gave them all the boot, so now it's just Jesus, three disciples, Jairus and Mrs. Jairus.

That crowd forfeits their chance to see the miracle. They aren't proper witnesses for something this wonderful, and so they don't get to see it. When people demand proof about Christianity, but then they turn around and mock and jeer, they lose their chance. Jesus is not desperate for followers and he doesn't cater to unbelief.

⁹ This is just like what he did on the lake. We looked at the account in Mark, where Jesus rebukes the Disciples after stilling the storm. But in Matthew we find that he also rebuked them before he stilled the storm. They woke him up, demonstrated their lack of faith, and Jesus sat there in a sinking boat in the middle of the chaos and said: **Matthew 8:26 "You of little faith, why are you so afraid?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm.** The test of faith is what goes on in your heart before deliverance comes.

¹⁰ Unlike Moses, who hedged his bets and struck the rock so that if it didn't work he wouldn't look like such a fool.

The Resurrection

So what did Jesus mean by the parable, when he said she wasn't dead but only asleep? The skeptics say he was speaking literally. Jesus was saying, "It's a misdiagnosis. She's just taking a nap." You would have to really have a desperate bias to believe something like that. I mean honestly—do we think the people were that stupid? Every night when your kids go to sleep you have a funeral, and then when they wake up the next morning, "Oops, Another false alarm"? Please. They knew the difference between sleep and death. Why would this be included in the gospel? "This is how Jesus proved his mighty power—he woke up a kid from a nap." (Now, if it had been a college student early on a Saturday morning, that would be more like a miracle.)

Also, if this was sleep, or she was in a coma, how would Jesus have known that? He hadn't even gone in the house yet—he just walked up. There's no question she was dead—the Bible says she was dead.¹¹

So then why did Jesus say she was asleep? Very often Jesus said things that could not be understood until they were clarified by his actions. So let's watch what he does next and then we can understand the meaning of what he said.

Jesus' Tender Power

40 After he put them all out, he took the child's father and mother and the disciples who were with him, and went in where the child was.

The 6 of them make their way down the hall, and Jesus leads them into the room where this girl's body is.¹² The body is cold by now. And as they step through the doorway you can just feel Jairus' throat tighten and the lump form, and a whole new fresh flow of tears begin streaming down their faces as they see her cold, lifeless, pale body lying on the bed. And what happens next is a shock.

41 he took her by the hand

Unclean

The #1 most defiling thing for a Jew was to touch a corpse—it was the only thing that was even more defiling than touching a leper. And a high priest could never touch a corpse for any reason. But when our Great High Priest touches a corpse it doesn't make him unclean, because the moment he touches it, it's no longer a corpse. Jesus is not capable of being defiled by death, because He's the Author of life.

This has been a theme in Mark, hasn't it—Jesus touching the unclean and making it clean.¹³

And he doesn't just touch her, but He, very tenderly, takes her little hand in his **41 ... and said to her, "Talitha koum!" (which means, "Little girl, I say to you, get up!")**.¹⁴

Talitha koum is Aramaic, the language of the Jews back then. Mark gives us the translation because he's writing to Gentiles. Probably everything Jesus said was in Aramaic, but the gospel writers translate it all into Greek so people around the world could understand it. So why leave these two words in Aramaic?

¹¹ Luke even says her spirit was gone.

¹² This is another indication of Jairus' wealth, as most homes were a single room. Disaster strikes the lowly (like the woman) and the rich just the same.

¹³ He did it with the leper, with tax collectors and sinners, the man with thousands of unclean spirits in an unclean land among unclean pigs, and the defiled, unclean woman. But now the greatest uncleanness of all—death.

¹⁴ The fact that Mark provides the translation shows that he's writing to Gentiles, as Jews would have known the meaning since they spoke Aramaic.

Remember, Mark got his information from Peter, and Peter was there in that room that day. Evidently, when Peter told Mark the story, when he gets to the part where Jesus spoke to this little girl, Peter says it in the language Jesus used. He wants to report the exact sounds that came out of Jesus' mouth because it was such a powerful and beautiful thing. The love and tenderness comingled with awesome resurrection power just lingered in Peter's soul over the years, so much so that he couldn't even think of it in Greek—but only in the voice of Jesus in his very words. ***Talitha koum!*** These are the words her mom would have used when getting her up in the morning. The literal translation would be “Get up, little lamb.” It's a term of endearment, kind of like today saying, “Come on sweetie, time to get up.” That's what Jesus said. He has just as much affection for this girl as he did for the unclean woman he healed.

Total, Instant Restoration

When Jesus begins speaking those words there are only 6 people in the room. A half-second later, when he finished saying those two words, there were 7 people in the room. Luke says her spirit returned. He said, ***Talitha koum*** and, *ahhh*, she took a breath. Her heart restarted, color came back into her skin. The brain damage from going without oxygen was repaired. And most miraculous of all, the girl's spirit returned to her body, and she opened her eyes.

And when she opened her eyes, what did she see? The kindest, most loving face she had ever seen looking down at her, no doubt smiling. The very first thing she notices is that her hand is in the strong, reassuring grip of his hand.

42 ...he took the girl by the hand, and she got up.

The Fountain of Life touched a dead, decaying, lifeless corpse and poured life into her and brought her back.¹⁵

42 the girl stood up and walked around.

She doesn't need a moment to get her bearings or to finish waking up. She doesn't feel sick. She is up and at 'em—walking around. This is how you can tell if a 12-year-old is back to normal—they will be moving. This girl is on the move. She doesn't feel like lying down. She doesn't need any rest. She has energy, and she has an appetite.

43 ... he told them to give her something to eat.

She probably hasn't had anything to eat for a while because you don't have an appetite when you're dying. And maybe being dead all afternoon makes you hungry, I don't know. But now she is completely, totally, instantly restored to life and health, her metabolism is firing on all cylinders, and she needs some food. And her parents are so dumbfounded that they momentarily become unfit parents. It doesn't even occur to them to feed their own daughter, and Jesus has to tell them, “Somebody get this girl a cookie.”

We Do Our Part

And it's significant that he had them get the food. He could have easily done it himself. I mean—if you have enough power to raise someone from the dead, can't you just throw in a slice of pizza while

¹⁵ This is a good reminder that there is never any place for envy in the Christian heart. Jairus didn't need to envy the attention and time Jesus was giving to the woman, as if that were costing Jairus something. Jesus' help to one never interferes with his help to another. There is never a reason to envy, because Christ's grace to someone else never comes out of the storehouse of his grace for you. It very often seems like the reason you don't have something is because someone else got it. But when someone else gets something you really want, you don't have to have any distress over them having it instead of you having it, because their having it isn't what prevents you from having it.

you're at it? Jesus can feed a multitude with a few loaves and fishes, why not make this the miracle of the resurrection and the cheeseburger?

He doesn't do that because Jesus' miracles are not all-inclusive. And the reason they aren't all-inclusive is so that we can be involved. He gives us the high privilege of participating.¹⁶ Jesus used miraculous power to do what men could never do, but the things we can do he leaves for us to do. So Jesus says, "Let's do this together. I'll raise her from the dead; you make up a pot of mac and cheese."

Death Turned to Sleep

So now we can understand Jesus' comment about sleep in v.39. What he's saying is, "For me, death is no different from sleep *because I can wake dead people up.*"¹⁷ Jesus can restore anyone from anything. He brought the disciples back to safety. He brought the demoniac back to sanity. He brought the woman back to community. He brought the little girl back to life. And it was all effortless—he just spoke the word and it happened. The greatest miracle workers in the OT were Elijah and Elisha. They both raised dead children, but for them it was a major ordeal with a lot of effort and crying out to God. For Jesus, he just says, "Get up" and it's done.

Wait for his Timing and Trust

Maybe you read this story and think "That's great for Jairus. But Jesus didn't bring my loved one back from the dead. He hasn't healed my 12-year disease." He will. When the final stage of the kingdom of God is established at Jesus' Second Coming, then there will be no more storms, no more evil, no more uncleanness, no more sickness or suffering, and no more death. The point of these miracles is not to say that we can have all that now in this life. It's simply to give us full confidence that when Jesus promises it in the future kingdom, we can know for sure that he has enough power to make it happen. We can look at the little mustard seed of the gospel and know that it's packed with that much power.

"But what about in the mean time? I know heaven will be wonderful, but what about now? How can I cope?" We cope the same way Jairus did prior to v.37, when he was just standing there helplessly watching Jesus attend to someone else. What did Jesus tell him? **Don't be afraid. Only believe.**

Learn to Appreciate Providence

As I was preparing this sermon, I was thinking about how much more exciting these stories would be if you didn't already know how they ended. None of you get alarmed or start ringing your hands in worry when you read that the girl dies. You're not full of anxiety about the disciples in the storm on the lake. Even if you haven't read that story in a while and you can't quite remember what happens—you still aren't worried. The only question is, "How is Jesus going to do it this time?"

Just think what a difference it would make in your heart if you could train yourself to read your own life the way you read the Gospels. The worse the storm gets, all it does is make you excited to see how Jesus is going to work it out this time. Nobody ever reads one of these gospel accounts and says, "What rotten luck that Jesus gets stuck in traffic on the way to Jairus' house." No one ever says, "Wow, what a coincidence that Jesus just happens to arrive back in the country right at the moment when Jairus needed him." No one ever says, "Of all the places Jesus' boat could have landed, it happens to be right there where that demoniac was, and there just happened to be 2000 pigs nearby, what are the odds?" The

¹⁶ This is just like when he raised Lazarus. He brings life into Lazarus' corpse and then tells the people standing there to cut the grave clothes off him.

¹⁷ The rest of the NT picks up on this way of speaking about death. For believers, death is referred to as sleep because, like sleep, it's temporary.

But that's not to say your soul sleeps in death. To be away from the body is to be present with the Lord in paradise—the very moment you die.

people back then might have thought that way. You can imagine Mr. and Mrs. Jairus getting into an argument after their daughter dies: “If only we would have gotten that house on the beach like I wanted, then it wouldn’t have taken you so long to get to Jesus and our daughter would be alive right now. But noooo, you had to get the house next to the synagogue...” They might have thought that way, but we don’t think that way when we read the NT. The things that happen in the Bible don’t strike us as bad luck, or flukey, or coincidental. They seem like things God is doing on purpose for a really good reason. When’s the last time you read a Bible story and said, “Man, if Jesus had just timed that a little better...”? We never say that. If only we could learn to read our own lives like we read the Bible.

Providence hasn’t changed since Bible times. The same God is in charge of all events today that was in charge of events back then. He’s just as good now as he was then, and his timing now is as impeccable as ever. When trouble comes, don’t be afraid; just believe.

Messianic Secret

43 he gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this.¹⁸

Preaching about Jesus is a special privilege that belongs to the church after the resurrection of Christ.¹⁹

Conclusion

Imagine this dear little 6th grader sitting in the kitchen enjoying her plate of cookies with a milk mustache - Jesus sitting across from her (maybe throwing back a lemonade himself), the ecstatic parents, and faith beginning to grow in Peter, James, and John. What a scene. We’ll let them enjoy that fellowship, and we’ll let the sounds of their happy conversation fade and close our time with our hearts warmed as we think about our future when we will someday sit at his table with resurrected bodies and fully restored health – freed forever from the threat of death on that Day when Jesus says to his Bride, *talitha koum*.

¹⁸ Fifteen times we read of Jesus prohibiting people from telling about who he was or what he had done. Those 15 come from 8 different events, including 5 healings (a leper, Jairus’ daughter, two blind men, a man with a withered hand, and a deaf mute), as well as at Peter’s confession, the Transfiguration, and one time he says it to some demons.

¹⁹ And very few people prior to that time were permitted to do it, because they would get it wrong (a non-suffering Messiah – Mk.8:32 and other misguided messianic ideas, such as politicizing it or confusing the events of the Second Coming with the first). So when Jesus did this, he was making it clear to everyone that the people who were going around preaching about him were not authorized to do so, and should not be taken seriously.

Additionally, allowing people to spread the news would hinder Jesus’ ministry. Every time Jesus tells someone to keep their mouth shut and they go off and speak about it anyway, nothing good ever comes of that (see Mk.1:45, 2:4, 4:1). Jesus’ time would be taken up by the shallow, unbelieving crowds who were only interested in seeing a show. It’s bad enough that he’s constantly being mobbed by people who want healing; can you imagine if everyone who wanted a dead loved one brought back came.

Finally, it would distract everyone from what he really wanted to do, which was to preach the gospel. These miracles are validations of Jesus’ teaching. So if all you hear is the miracle story but don’t get his teaching about the kingdom, you’ll miss the whole point.