

Study on Mark 5:21-43

***Jesus went back across to the other side of the lake. There at the lakeside a large crowd gather round him. Jairus, one of the synagogue rulers, arrived, and when he saw Jesus, he threw himself down at his feet, and begged him earnestly, “My little daughter is very ill (*Lit. “at the point of death”*). Please come and place your hands on her, so that she will get well and live!”. Then Jesus started off with him... (Mark 5:21-24a).**

***While Jesus was saying this, *namely “My daughter, your faith has made you well”*, some messengers came from Jairus’ house and told him, “Your daughter has died. Why bother the teacher any longer?”**

Jesus paid no attention to what they said, but told him, “Don’t be afraid, only believe”. Then he did not let anyone else go on with him except Peter and James and his brother John. They arrived at Jairus’ house, where Jesus saw the confusion and heard all the loud crying and wailing. He went in and said to them, “Why all this commotion? Why are you crying? The child is not dead -- she is only sleeping!”

They laughed at him, so he put them all out, took the child’s father and mother and his three disciples, and went into the room where the child was lying. He took her by the hand and said to her, “*Talitha koum*”, which means, “Little girl, I tell you to get up!”.

She got up at once and started walking around (She was twelve years old). When this happened, they were completely amazed. But Jesus gave them strict orders not to tell anyone, and he said, “Give her something to eat” (*Mark 5:35-43*).

Discussion Questions:

1) Most people have *no* framework in their thinking to deal with death, and so they come up with all sorts of wishy-washy, *some times half-true*, statements about death. What statements about “death” have you heard people say?

2) What is the focus of most people in our society? What do they think will make them “happy”? Does it?

3) Mark Sayers writes:

“We find that behind the buzz of contemporary life, we are in pain”, and that **“Our “consumer culture acts as a smokescreen, distracting us from the causes of our unhappiness”.**

Do you agree? Why, or why not?

How do most people in our society approach old age and death? Why do many fear death?

4) Why does Jairus place his hope in Jesus? How do you think Jairus felt when the messengers told him that his daughter had died? What does Jesus do?

5) What is our hope and our confidence in the face of death? What is our hope and our confidence based on?
Read 1 Cor. 15:20; 1 Thess. 4:13-18

Quotes:

The following are quotes from Sunday's message on the theme, "Facing death":

***Most people in society don't know what to think about death, and what happens after death. Most people have *no* framework in their thinking to deal with death, and so they come up with all sorts of wishy-washy, *some times half-true*, statements about death, such as:**

****"Grandpa is a star up in the sky now"**

****"He's 'passed on' to a much better place"**

****"She's in heaven with the rest of the family"**

***Mark Sayers in his book *The Trouble with Paris* points out that most people in the Western World believe the lie that things and experiences can make you happy. Most people believe that they'll be happy and that life will be wonderful if and when certain things or experiences happen. For example, they believe that:**

"I'll be happy and life will be wonderful when...

*** ...I get **more money**"**

*** ...I get the **latest computer or TV**"**

*** ...I have **better clothes**, and become more popular"**

*** ...I **move to a different place**"**

*** ...I **travel overseas**", *and so on.....***

***Furthermore, *and I guess that you noticed this*, our society is "youth focused". In films, TV series, advertisements, and so on, the young are focused on, and if the elderly are depicted, they are usually shown as "virile and active, such as the people we see in retirement fund advertising" (p. 86).**

Mark Sayers makes the following comments:

****"We do not like to see our elderly frail, weak, and pale, for they then become gasping, hobbling advertisements for death, reminding up that one day we will be in their place"**

****"As a culture, we shun the notion of death. We flee from it the way our great-grandparents blushed at the mention of sex".**

***The overwhelming reality in our society is that most people face death with fear in their hearts!!**

***When Jesus was present with people, though, that often wasn't the case. Take the way that Jairus, for example, responded to the prospect of his daughter dying. He was shattered and distraught, of course, but nevertheless he approached Jesus with some sort of hope in Jesus: hope that Jesus, who was reported to have healed 'heaps' of people, might prevent his daughter from dying.**

***How does Jesus respond to the messengers' news that his daughter has died? He tells Jairus, "Don't be afraid! Only believe!" In other words, he says, "Don't be overcome with fear because of the situation. Just trust in me as God's Son!"**

To Jairus, who would have been numb with grief and horror, this would no doubt have sounded mind-boggling. But somehow, he discovered a spark of faith within him, which enabled him to walk with Jesus, *and three of Jesus' disciples*, the short distance to his own door....

***Jairus' hope in Jesus, *a spark of which persisted even in the face of death*, was rewarded with the raising of his daughter from the dead. This miracle is recorded by Mark, because it points us to who Jesus is: God's promised King and God's Son become a human being.... (Mark 8:27-30; cf. Matt. 16:13-16). And it points us ahead to the healing that God will accomplish through Jesus' death and resurrection (cf. Colin Chapman's book, *"Making the most of the rest of your life"*).**

***Jesus said to Jairus' daughter, "Little girl, I tell you to get up!" One day, Jesus will say similar words to you and me, *when he comes again in glory at the Last Day*. Jesus will say: "I tell you, get up! And we will awaken from our sleep of death, just as that little girl did at Jesus' command...."**