

story, this girl is restored to life. But it is life as it was and one day she would die again. So is this resurrection? At *the* Resurrection, Jesus' body was transformed. He was not just restored to the life he had lived in Galilee and Judaea. What about those children who do not recover from major surgery or life-threatening illness? The mourners were scornful of Jesus because they did not believe the child had any future. Jesus knows differently. When he told the girl to **get up** he used the word **arise**. It is the same word that used of the Resurrection of Jesus. This story has a resurrection message for all of us. It tells us that Jesus cared for the little girl just as much, whether she returned to earthly life or passed to life after death with God. That is how Jesus loves us, our children, our families.

A true story is told about a distinguished man, the only white person buried in a Georgia cemetery reserved exclusively for blacks. He had lost his mother when he was just a baby. His father, who never married again, hired a black woman named Mandy to help raise his son. She was a Christian, and she took her task seriously. Seldom has a motherless boy received such warmhearted attention. One of his earliest memories was of Mandy bending tenderly over him in his bedroom each day and softly saying, "Wake up—God's mornin' is come."

As the years passed this devoted woman continued to serve as his surrogate mother. The young man went away to college, but when he would come home on holidays and in the summer she would still call him in the same loving way. One day after he had become a successful statesman, the sad message came: "Mandy is dead. Can you attend her funeral?" As he stood by her grave in the cemetery, he turned to his friends and said, "If I die before Jesus comes, I want to be buried here beside Mandy. I like to think that on Resurrection Day she'll speak to me again and say, 'Wake up, my boy, God's mornin' is come!'"

GREAT THINGS HE HAS TAUGHT US GREAT THINGS HE HAS DONE A Frantic Father and a Dead Daughter Mark 5:21-43

INTRODUCTION

A Baptist family had a death in the family while their minister was out of town. They asked a minister of another denomination to conduct the funeral service. He said he would have to check with the bishop, so he wired him, "Can I bury a Baptist?" The bishop wired back, "Sure, bury all the Baptists you can!"

As a young man, D.L. Moody was called upon suddenly to preach a funeral sermon. He hunted all through the Gospels trying to find one of Christ's funeral sermons, but searched in vain. He found that Christ broke up every funeral he ever attended.

SORROW BREAKS DOWN BARRIERS

The religious establishment was more than suspicious of Jesus. He had just crossed back over the lake from what was Gentile territory. There, Jesus had healed a demented man who lived in the tombs. The evil spirits had been sent into a herd of pigs. No self-respecting Jew, let alone one who claimed to be a teacher, would spend time in Gentile territory, go near tombs or be in the vicinity of pigs. Any one of these made a person unclean, but all three...! Back in Galilee, Jesus continues his teaching ministry. He is interrupted by a synagogue ruler, a man called Jairus, who comes, falls at Jesus feet and begs for help. A ruler of the synagogue was a prominent layman, usually wealthy, who was responsible for the administration of the synagogue, and the maintenance of the building. He was an important and respected person. For such a person to fall at the feet of Jesus and ask for his help was unthinkable. The barrier between them was too great.

The crust on the bread; the ice on the water; and the hard ground on the soil of the earth are all the same substance of that which it covers. Yet they imprison the substance. Each forms a barrier which resists outside influences. In the same way we create crusts of self-sufficiency, prestige, learning, respectability, barriers that prevent God's love from reaching us.

Mark 5:22 ²²Then one of the leaders of the synagogue named Jairus came and, when he saw him [Jesus], fell at his feet

Was it a last resort? Had he seen how Jesus had helped others, so he thought it was worth a try? He did not come to Jesus as someone in a superior position assuming a right to Jesus' help. Here was a

desperately sorrowing father. His little daughter was ill and he wanted her well again. That is all that mattered. Sorrow broke down any barriers that might have existed.

SYMPATHY BRINGS BLESSING

Jesus is sympathetic. He does not say anything but sets out to go with Jairus to his house. The whole crowd follows along. In that crowd is a woman as desperate as Jairus. Jairus has a twelve year old daughter. The woman has been ill for twelve years. She has spent all she had on doctors, but instead of getting better, got worse. Jairus had asked Jesus to go and lay his hands on his daughter to make her well. Similarly the woman thinks that if only she can touch Jesus, even his clothes, she will be made well. Her condition involved bleeding. Not only was she physically ill, she was ceremonially impure. Her impurity would contaminate anyone who touched her or anyone she touched. But a healer's touch was effective. Had not Jesus touched a leper? She struggles through the crowd and touches. At once, she is healed. She can disappear into the crowd and no-one but herself will know. Jesus knows. He stops and asks who touched him. What a question! All these people pressing in; it could have been anyone. But Jesus knows. And the woman knows he knows. She now falls at his feet and tells him the whole truth. The conversation shows there is nothing magical about Jesus' clothes. Nor does Jesus condemn her for the 'theft' of his power. Jesus does not have magical power. He brings God's saving presence and power. The woman believed in Jesus. That is what it is all about.

Mark 5:34 ³⁴He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease."

We do not know her name. She is referred to as *a woman*. Jesus addresses her as **daughter**. She now has a personal relationship with Jesus as one of his family.

But Jesus is on his way to where a little girl is at the point of death; a desperate need. The woman was also desperate. Jesus responds to that need and his sympathy brings blessing. God always has time for us. We are never a bother to him. Even in the midst of his sustaining the universe, he will still hear our prayers and meet our need.

Thy touch has still its ancient power.
No word from Thee can fruitless fall;
Hear, in this solemn evening hour,
And in Thy mercy heal us all. (*Henry Twells*)

SCORN HINDERS HEALING

Was Jairus frantic at this delay? Perhaps knowing how desperate he was, he could understand the woman's desperation. She needed Jesus' help as much as he did. Just as they are about to continue to Jairus' house a messenger came with the news Jairus dreaded most. **Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher any further?** Jesus has another message for Jairus. **Do not fear, only believe.** It was faith that had cured the woman. Now Jairus must have faith. Taking with him only Peter, James and John, Jesus goes with Jairus to his home. What a commotion is going on there when they arrive. The mourners are already there.

The Lord has dismissed one crowd only to find the house occupied by another. (Swete)

As Jairus was a prominent member of the community there would be a large number of professional mourners. They would engage in loud lamentations, songs of mourning, hand-clapping – altogether an appalling noise. Members of the household would join in making a great uproar. When Jesus tells them to be quiet as the little girl is only sleeping their lamentations turn to scornful denial. Of course she's dead. What did Jesus mean? Was this not a miracle of resurrection? Sleep was often used as a euphemism of death. When Lazarus died, Jesus said he was going to waken him. He was certainly dead and buried. Death meant finality and was financially profitable for the mourners. Jesus is the Lord of life and he will say when death occurs.

Mark 5:40 ⁴⁰And they laughed at him. Then 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.

SEEING IS BELIEVING

Going to where the body of girl lay, Jesus took her hand and told her to get up. We have the very words of Jesus in the language he spoke. **Talitha cum.** By the word of the Lord the universe was created. The Word of God accomplishes that which it intends. When God speaks even the dead must obey.

1 Thess 4:16 ¹⁶For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

Little girl, I say to you, arise. Immediately, she got up and began walking around. By telling the parents to give her something to eat, Jesus was showing that she really was alive. Ghosts and spirits do not need food. A healthy twelve year old does. Like the boy in the Elisha