

Christ Community Covenant Church
Jesus and the death of death - Mark 5:21-43
Pastor Dave Scherrer - January 11, 2015

This series within the series of Mark is about the **Power of Jesus**. Last week we saw the power of Jesus over the spiritual realm. Last week we saw a fascinating story of an exorcism where the demons cause the man they live in to run and to fall at the knees of Jesus. Mark is going to make sure we see **the power of Jesus** because he wants us to understand that Jesus is King of a heavenly Kingdom, that He has authority over all things temporary and eternal.

I want to make one editorial dip back into the subject material of last week. I shared with you that the intention of the evil one is to destroy you and those you love. He is a liar and a thief and murderer. A roaring lion. And while there are demons that can inhabit a person, there are also forces of evil that impact us moment by moment. In my recent research, I found that there has been an upswing in occult and spiritualism. Especially with the high school and college age youth. Videos and movies and books focus that, on the undead, place images and thoughts into the mind. The Ouija Board increased in sales 300% this year at Christmas on the back of a movie by the same name. I am not a prude and I do not look for Satan under every rock and in every vampire. But I also believe that the further we get away from the cross the more evil and darkness we will see and the more horrific and violent and obscene this evil will be. Mark my words on this. There is a very good reason that I asked you to be sober and watchful. Let 2015 be a year of victory for you. Decide today that you will not allow a foothold of deceit or envy or anger to grow or bear fruit. Confess it, apologize for it ASAP and put boundaries in place so that you do not repeat the same behavior.

Now the title of this sermon is **Jesus and the death of death**. We are going to see a wonderful account that seems to follow on the very same day as the one we just read. Mark is slowing down his fast paced account so that we can learn some important lessons.

There are two stories here where Jesus puts death to death, and not just death but all forms of death.

Two stories - One point: Jesus puts all forms of death to death!

You might be saying how many kinds of death are there. Because there is death and then there is living death. Let's let the story illustrate this for a minute. I want to read this account and teach a bit as I read.

Mark 5:21-43

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. And a great crowd followed him and thronged about him.

Philippians 2:9-11

Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

²⁵ And there was a woman who had had **a discharge of blood for twelve years**,²⁶ and who had suffered much under many physicians, and **had spent all that she had**, and was no better but rather grew worse.²⁷ She had heard the reports about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment.²⁸ For she said, **"If I touch even his garments, I will be made well."**²⁹ And immediately the flow of blood dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease.³⁰ And Jesus, perceiving in himself that **power** had gone out from him, immediately turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my garments?"³¹ And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing around you, and yet you say, 'Who touched me?'"³² And he looked around to see who had done it.³³ But the woman, knowing what

had happened to her, came in fear and trembling and ***fell down before him and told him the whole truth.***
³⁴ And he said to her, "Daughter, ***your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease.***"

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 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 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.***

Two kinds of death are presented here, physical death and there is the death of everything else:

There are a couple of lessons in this account that I don't want you to miss on the way to understanding the death of death. The first one is that the 'priorities' and 'timetables' of Jesus' ministry can be confusing.

The 'priorities' and 'timetables' of Jesus' ministry can be confusing.

Jarius vs the woman:

A man of religious power and position, perhaps even a friend VS an unknown woman,
A religiously important man VS someone who is unclean and superstitious and of no consequence,
Someone who has everything VS someone who is stone broke,
Immanent death VS long term illness.

With all this in mind the story takes a surprising turn. Jesus puts the powerful friend with the immanent death on hold so that he can address the needs of this social and religious outcast who has nothing to offer anyone.

Here is the reality that we have might have missed, the crisis is greater for the unclean woman than for the religious man. She is weighted down by a superstitious theology that, if she were to continue in it would lead to destruction. She was sneaking away believing that a robe had made her well. Not an unusually old wives tale of the time; 'just touch the holy man's clothes.' But Jesus wants the woman to know that it is faith in Jesus Christ that heals. He has to track her down and clear up that theology before she sneaks away. And imbedded in this episode is the flipping of value systems as Jesus puts the religious man on hold and deals with the social outcast. This King has different values and priorities than the world.

Matthew 20:16 - "So the last will be first, and the first last."

Matthew 23:11-12 - "The greatest among you shall be your servant. Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted."

1 Corinthians 1:26 - "For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth."

2 Corinthians 12:9 - "But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

Luke 9:48 – “Whoever receives this child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me. For he who is least among you all is the one who is great.”

Everything is topsy turvy: you have to be last to be first, a slave to be free, weak to be strong, you have to die to self to live abundantly. Everything is all mixed up and if you don't realize this then you may be disappointed with God. You will have a different agenda than God and He will not satisfy your prayers because you are not asking for what the Father wants to give you. As it turns out, you are not God and your agenda is not divine.

It turns out that not only are the values all messed up but these values mess up the timetables as well. Jarius thought there was a rush, hurry. Jesus had to get there to break her fever or she would die. Just imagine his angst. Only Jesus can help his daughter and Jesus has been distracted by some disobedient lowly person who is in no crisis of time. But you see Jesus is never in a hurry and His timetable is seldom our timetable. You see the woman is important to God. This lowly unclean outcast is important to God. I don't care if you have been on Hell's paid staff; God is on a love hunt for you. Don't keep saying “God can't love me, I can't do anything right.” Of course you can't, no one does! Only God is good and perfect. But He loves you because you are his and you have stepped away from Him. So he is after you like white on rice.

One last thing on this. If you have it in your heart that there is something massively wrong with God's timetable and his plan of redemptive action in your life, then there is something massively crucial that you do not know about the circumstances you are going through.

That is the problem with Jarius, he is living under the firm understanding based on all that he has seen so far in life, that when a person dies of fever then it's over. What Jarius does not know is that raising a child back to life from death is no harder than curing her fever. Jesus does not roll up his sleeves, or break a sweat. He is saying to Jarius, “Don't be afraid, I got this.”

Jesus is not saying, “I will not be hurried *in spite of my love*” he is saying “I will not be hurried *because of my love*.” Jesus is saying, “If you insist on working with your priorities and with your timetables you will be disappointed with God.” Jesus is saying to us in this story, “If you live this way and pray this way, you will never feel loved by me and it is largely your fault.” You see it is because of these so called delays that we learn so much about faith.

It is because of the delays that we learn so much about faith.

Timothy Keller, Redeemer Presbyterian

Because of these delays we are protected from bad values and from bad outcomes. When we give into God's values and timetables we always *give more than we think we will* and we *always get more than we think we will*.

Are you mad or disappointed?

Have you thought, “Why in the world hasn't God come through for me?”

Jesus has put all forms of death to death, if you will only believe it so. Death of hope, death of a dream, the death of love, the death of a relationship; all of these defeats have been defeated by the love and grace of God. It may not finish the way you think it should and in the timetable you think it should, but God is perfectly redeeming your life even as we speak. ***If you are mad it is most likely due to your own pride and arrogance in which you have said, I want what I want in this way by this time or you are not my God.*** Your disappointment is your creation, not God's.

The last of this story show us the death of death as he raises the little 12 year old girl. And Jesus does it not with a shout and thunderbolt, but with a whisper and a kiss.

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

There is the weeping and commotion of the paid mourners, who suddenly laugh at Jesus' statement that she is only asleep. Jesus tosses them out of the room and only those who are necessary remain with Jesus and the little girl. He tenderly comes to her side. There are no thunderclaps, no long exploring prayer of a mighty God who is somewhere else so you have to shout, there is no burning of incense or holding your tongue a certain way. Jesus simply whispers to her and she gets up.

Talitha cumi is a much more endearing phrase than what you may be thinking here. More like "Sweetheart, it's time to get up."

Then Jesus gives instructions to feed her as an act of mercy; who knows how long they might have treated her with suspicion or as a freak of nature. This little girl is not a ghost. Jesus took care of this detail too.

Are you trying to hurry Jesus? Are you trying to take *Him* by the hand and say "Do it this way and do it by this time?" If that is true then you are probably dying inside. You have perhaps come to the conclusion that God does not hear your prayer, or that your sadness and pain does not matter to him. You would be wrong. All these forms of death have been put away with by Christ. He says "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid." (John 14:27)

Why would you want to hurry someone like this: instead, let Him take you by the hand!

Why would you want to hurry someone like this: instead, let Him take you by the hand!

What does it mean to take Jesus by the hand? It is a simple prayer. Father I am dying inside, I can't make it on my own anymore. I see now that it is my sin and desire to be in control that is killing me. I am sorry for my sin. I want to be weak in you so that I can be strong. I want you to live inside me so that I can know that you are with me always. I believe in you and receive you in the name of Jesus Christ who rose from the dead to prove the death of death. Amen

'If I have you by the hand, do not fear. Even death itself is nothing but a good night's sleep.'

***Benediction verse
1 Corinthians 15:55-57***

Discussion Questions

God has put death to death by giving us life eternal in Jesus Christ. All that is well and very good, but if that is true why does death still hurt so bad?

Dave spoke of another kind of death besides physical death. Do you think it is possible to have such internal mental and emotional and spiritual pain that it is worse than physical death? Do you think that Jesus felt this kind of pain too? See Matthew 26:36 and following for one example. Can you think of others?

If you could have Jesus put one thing in your life to death what would it be? Do you think He wants to? What is holding him back?

What do you think of these characters Jarius and the bleeding woman? Do you identify with either of them for some reason?

Dave said that if Jesus has you by hand that "even death is just the end of a good night's sleep?" Another might say, "I think Jesus has me by the hand but life is not that easy for me? How do we bring those two sentiments into agreement or can we?"