

Perfecting an Imperfect Faith, Part 2

Luke 8:49-56

October 21, 2018

Well, for our time in God's Word, this morning, we hope to finish the account that we started last week. So please turn in your Bibles to Luke, chapter 8 and verse 40. Luke 8:40. We'll be going through that account to the end of the chapter, verse 56.

At the end of Luke, chapter 8, we are seeing Jesus demonstrating incredible power. It's divine power. It's, it's the power of God. He's commanding the forces of nature, he's commanding the forces of evil, and he's commanding the forces of sin and death through the curse. And there's nothing, whether it's nature, whether it's demons, whether it's sin, and death, and disease, and all that, there's nothing that is able to resist the will and the power of God working through Jesus Christ.

And as dramatic and as fantastic as these displays of divine power are, and they are amazing, as much as we are amazed, as much as we are assured in our confidence in God and his power, the power of Christ, in this last section, the power of Christ is not the main point in these final miracles of healing and resurrection.

They are dramatic displays of power, once again, but in this final account and in these final two miracles, we're seeing Jesus as the teacher. We're seeing him, here, instructing these believers and perfecting what is really an imperfect faith. He's a teacher. We don't see him ministering and teaching lessons by rote. But we do see him instructing in the way, in his providence, he has guided this whole section for the perfecting of an imperfect faith.

So Jesus is not only the merciful Savior who delivers his people by his power; he is also a masterful, masterful teacher. And when he teaches, he teaches with a heart of compassion for his people. He's concerned to instruct them. He's concerned to

disciple them, to strengthen them, and to mature them in a growing faith. Keep that in mind as we read through the text.

We're going to start and kind of start and stop as we do a little bit of review starting in Luke 8:40. And just notice, that the, all along the way as we go through this account, that suffering, and trial, and affliction, this is the classroom setting for the lessons in faith that Christ is teaching the believers in this, in this passage.

Let's start in Luke 8, verse 40. "When Jesus returned," that is, he's returning from the Gerasene region, returned in the boat, "the crowd welcomed him, for they were all waiting for him. Came a man named Jairus, who was a ruler of the synagogue. And falling at Jesus' feet, he implored him to come to his house, for he had an only daughter about 12 years of age, and she was dying. And as Jesus went, the people pressed around him."

We'll stop there for just a quick comment. This man Jairus, he came to Jesus. He didn't come, and he's the ruler of the

synagogue, he doesn't come as an opportunistic spectator, just curious. He doesn't come as a critical Jewish leader like some of the other leaders that Jesus has met, who's suspicious of Jesus and threatened by Jesus' power and authority.

Jairus comes as a grieving parent. He comes as a grieving parent in a, in a desperate, desperate time of need. He comes to Jesus not as a critic, not as a scoffer, but he comes as a humble believer, and we see that in his posture as he falls down at Jesus' feet. He's a worshiper.

In fact, over in Matthew's account, Matthew conveys, there, the gravity of Jairus' concern about his, his daughter's condition. He had basically given her up for dead. And with hope fading fast due to her rapidly declining health, Jairus, there in Matthew's account, he declared his faith in Christ. He said, "Come, lay your hand on her and she will live." He doesn't say, she might live, I hope she'll live. He doesn't say, she'll probably live, there's a really good possibility, good chance. He has full confidence in Jesus' healing touch. He has total faith as a believer.

It's a faith that's shared, interestingly, by another believer who emerged from the crowd that day, a suffering woman in verse 43. "As he went, the people pressed around him," and then this in verse 43, "There was a woman who had a discharge of blood for twelve years. And though she had spent all her living on physicians, she could not be healed by anyone. She came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment.

"Immediately her discharge of blood ceased. And Jesus said, 'Who was it that touched me?' When all denied it, Peter said, 'Master, the crowds surround you and are pressing in on you.' But Jesus said, 'Someone touched me. For I perceive that power has gone out from me.' When the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling and falling down before him, declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him and how she had been immediately healed. And he said to her, 'Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace.'"

That poor woman, suffering this chronic condition, twelve years of bleeding that rendered her physically weak, and because

of that, the nature of her illness, she was socially isolated from the Jewish community, being ceremonially unclean, and add to that she's financially bankrupted by this condition and she comes with a faith, with a confidence in Christ.

Her faith is imperfect and, and uninformed. It's mixed, as we see there, by a bit of superstition. She thinks that magic power will come out of the tassels of Jesus' garments, so she touches that. So it's imperfect faith, certainly.

It's also not a very clear and informed faith to understand that faith is meant to reconcile us to God by relationship. She kind of wants to remain anonymous. She doesn't want to face him from the front. She comes up behind him. She's reluctant to make herself known personally to Jesus Christ.

So her faith is weak. It's imperfect. It's uninformed. It's, you could say, ignorant. And still Jesus' power flows through the conduit of her faith. She's healed immediately. There's no lack of power in Christ, no lack of power of God for

those who believe. And Jesus' mercy and grace, it doesn't stop there. It doesn't merely deliver a healing to this dear woman.

His mercy and grace goes further still. He intends to see her mind instructed. He intends to see her faith strengthened; her faith matured. He wants her to rejoice in giving glory to God, not privately, but publicly to everybody for the healing that she has received. Her public testimony is going to go further than the physical healing to restore this woman to the community because they need to know ceremonially she's been made well. So this is a, has a social implication. She's going to be reintroduced to the community of believers, the family of the faithful from which she'd been estranged for these twelve long years.

Now, while Jesus took the time to minister to this dear woman, he's tender toward her, he's personally engaged with her, looking her in the eye. He's, he affectionately refers to her as daughter. While this is going on, as compassionate of a scene as this is, we the reader know. Wait a minute. What about Jairus's daughter?

Just a few verses earlier, Jairus had taken the posture of a praying saint, a worshipping believer. He's imploring Jesus to come and save his daughter. He's declared his faith in Christ, knowing that Jesus' touch is enough to deliver this daughter, his daughter, from certain death. And now in the case of this, this suffering woman, his faith is vindicated, validated big time. He's just watched the touch of this woman to Jesus Christ, and the power flows, and it immediately heals her. He knows the powers there. And now at this point in the narrative, we're going to see Jairus' faith is pushed to the brink with an incredible test.

As I read from Psalm 112 this morning, you heard from that psalm, "The righteous will never be moved. He is not afraid of bad news. His heart is firm, trusting in the Lord." Similar thought in Isaiah, "You will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you because he trusts in you."

So as we get into our outline this morning and finish this narrative, ask yourself a question. Think about this as we go

through it. How does one become this kind of a believer? One whose heart is never moved, one who is never afraid. Can you imagine that? Never afraid of anything. Someone who's always steadfast in believing, always trusting. How does one become like that? How does one so trust in God that his mind is firmly fixed on God, never wavering but always resting in perfect peace?

Answer: His faith must be tested in order that the weaknesses, and the imperfections, and the impurities in his faith may be exposed and dealt with, removed by the Lord. Jairus' faith, it's about to be tested. His trust in Christ, his confidence in Christ, is about to be put through the crucible of sorrow, a crucible of this incredible trial. Jesus intends to take Jairus beyond the limits of his own believing and stretch his faith further than he ever thought it could go.

It's not that Jairus' faith is too small, too insufficient. The problem is that his vision of God is too small. His faith needs testing so that he'll see that God is bigger than his faith. He needs to learn to take what he knows to be true about

the living God and then connect that, personally and practically, to his own life, to his walking through life.

Coming to see God for who he is, that's where all these lessons about the power of God in Christ that we've been learning in Luke 8, they all become personal to us, personal here to Jairus as we're going to see, but personal to us. When we see God for who he really is, and then we make the connection to how we actually live our lives, when that happens, our faith is going to mature, it's going to grow stronger. We will become that solid, steadfast believer.

This is 1 Peter 1:6-7, right? God afflicts his people, he puts them through various trials for a good and kind purpose, right, "that the tested genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold that perishes though it's tested by fire, may be found," to pr, "to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

So beloved, you need to know these lessons from this text. You need to understand this for yourself. As believers, the

strengthening of your faith, which means affliction, and trial, and persecution, and suffering, and hardship, that the strengthening of your faith is the continual intention of God and therefore the in, the continual work of Jesus Christ in your life. This is what he prays for. It's what he sends the Holy Spirit to do, all according to the will of the Father, who perfects and matures his children. He wants your faith strong. It's exactly what this text shows us as Jesus attends to the faith of his believing people, strengthening it during testing, upholding it during weakness, perfecting what's lacking, rewarding their faith with rest and peace in the end.

There is also, as we're going to see, a lesson in this text in what we're going to cover here at the end, a lesson in faith in this text for unbelievers, as well, which we'll get to in a moment.

As we get back to Jairus here, he's been waiting patiently for Jesus to finish his ministry to this woman, and from verses 49-56 the focus in the narrative shifts back and forth. The focus starts with the believing Jairus, and then shifts to the

unbelieving crowd, and then turns back to the believing disciples in this text.

So three sections there, where Jesus attends to believers, verses 49-50, he interacts with the unbelieving crowd, verses 51-53, and then he attends to believers again at the end of the text, verses 54-56. That's how we're going to move through this narrative, point by point. You've got the points all written there in your bulletin, I believe.

First point we're going to find: Jesus, here, encourages believers to trust in his power. Jesus encourages believers to trust in his power. And he encourages them to trust him in the face of incredible testing, where it seems, humanly speaking, it is impossible to trust, way beyond human ability.

And that's the point, isn't it? The interruption by the woman with the flow of blood must have been pretty stressful for Jairus. But notice we don't see in the record, Matthew, Mark or Luke, we don't see in the record one word of complaint voiced by Jairus. We understand, right, we would understand if he became

somewhat impatient. He's been standing by quietly as Jesus turns his attention here, rushing to his house, and then he stops, turns his attention to this woman. He ministers to her need. The woman, she'd received her healing in an instant.

But Jesus wants more from her. He wants to take more time. He takes time to look for her, to identify her, and Jairus is thinking, Will you just show yourself? He knows. Rather than pointing her out, he takes time to allow her to come forward on her own. He takes time to hear her voice her confession, takes time to hear her reason for touching Jesus' garment. He takes time to hear her public testimony of immediate healing.

And all the while, Jairus must have felt the clock ticking, each precious second passing by. He must've wondered about his home. What's going on there? Is his wife is with his daughter, and his wife, his daughter's life is hanging in the balance, but Jairus, nonetheless, he trusted. He waited. He calmly steadied himself. Surely, Jesus knows what he's doing.

What's his reward for waiting patiently? Look at verse 49. "While Jesus was still speaking, someone from the ruler's house came and said, 'Your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the teacher anymore.'" Now, does that seem a proper, fitting reward for such patient faith? All that waiting around, waiting for this woman to come forward, waiting for her to confess and testify and explain. She's already received her healing. He could have been back at his house, Jesus laying his healing hands on his little girl. Just one touch and she's up and playing with her friends in the afternoon.

How has his patient faith been rewarded? Instead of the good news from the messenger that he hoped for, the messenger instead adds sorrow upon sorrow. Jairus hears the dreaded news. The words that he feared have come to pass, "Your daughter is dead." This is, had to be the most horrible, gut-wrenching moment of his entire life.

You ever felt that way? Like you've done everything right. You've waited patiently on the Lord. You've been serving, you've been faithful, you've kept your cool, you've been calm, you've

done everything right. And then when you think you'll be rewarded with what you've hoped for, you find at the end of that, the goal that you get to and attain to, you find instead another trial. You find a new affliction. You find another severe test waiting for you. What is God doing in that moment?

Let's keep reading, find out what God had planned for Jairus and his family. News came, Luke tells us, "while Jesus was still speaking." Now that's important. It's important we remind ourselves, what had Jesus been saying? At that moment, what words were coming out of his mouth?

Look at the previous verse, verse 48. Jesus said to this woman, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace." Why is that important? Because that is exactly, oh yes, the woman needed to hear that, but that is exactly the message that Jairus needed to hear in that moment, in this very moment when the messenger from his house comes to deliver the worst news possible. Immediately before hearing from him, Jairus needed to hear the message of the Gospel. Faith leads to salvation, and salvation brings peace.

As Jairus is ripped with concern over his daughter, he hears Jesus say to a veritable stranger in the crowd, "Daughter, your faith has made you well." Jesus shows affection for believers, calling a stranger whom he did not know, calls her a daughter. Oh, she's known from before the foundation of the world to Jesus. She's in the family of faith.

So as Jairus is hearing that his own daughter has succumbed to her illness, he hears the assurance of Jesus to this woman, "Daughter, your faith has," saved, "made you well," or literally, your faith has saved you. It's the verb *sozo*. In this most profound, paralyzing sorrow, when it seemed like Jairus' whole world is in turmoil, completely crumbling and falling apart, Jairus needed to hear Jesus tell that woman, "Go in peace." Go in peace.

Jairus is, here, tempted to despair. But Jesus is able to help him, to lift him up from this pit of despair and tuck him safely away in the refuge and the strength of God. It reminds you of Psalm 46, "Though the mountains be shaken and they tumble

into the midst of the sea, the righteous will not be moved. They will trust. God is a refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

Look back at verse 49. This messenger delivered the bad news and he delivered it, if you notice, rather bluntly, didn't he? "Your daughter is dead. Don't trouble the teacher anymore." Just a tip. If you're ever that messenger, don't do it like that. Right? Clarity is good. It's nice to get to the point, but look, soften the blow. This is hard news. This is going to hurt.

But that messenger said something else, there, not just informing him of the facts, but he says something else. Gives an encouragement to Jairus. "Don't trouble the teacher anymore." Same thing in Mark's account, calls him the teacher. And Jesus is rightly identified as the teacher.

But we find here that this messenger is speaking better than he knew at this moment. Jesus, yes, he, he was at this moment teaching Jairus. He's the teacher, for sure, but the messenger is using that moniker teacher kind of as a reason not

to trouble Jesus any longer. The messenger is telling Jairus, look, the problem has now surpassed Jesus' ability. He's a teacher. He's not a miracle worker. Time to let Jesus get back to his business of teaching. He's a rabbi. Let him get back to it.

In one sense, we may understand the messenger's thinking here, but notice, this encouragement from the messenger not to trouble the teacher, you know what happened? It just dialed up the intensity of testing for Jairus' faith. It's subtle here, but Jairus is being tempted by this trusted messenger from his household. He's being tempted here to enter into this messenger's unbelief about Jesus Christ. He's being tempted here to doubt Jesus, the one before whom he had just bowed and prayed. Jairus is being tempted to think that his little girl's death is beyond Jesus' power because after all, Jesus is simply a teacher. It's not in his purview to handle things like death.

Further, the messenger tells Jairus, "Don't trouble the teacher anymore." That's a temptation to think the situation, here, is beyond Jesus' care, like he's going to be irritated.

That's the verb, there, don't trouble him. It's like, it's a, it's a verb that's actually, literally pictures the flaying of the skin. So it's, I mean, that sounds painful, but it's a, it's a, it's a picture of irritation, irritant. So, don't irritate the teacher. So he's tempted to think that this is beyond Jesus' concern. You really ought not to trouble Jesus with this problem that he can't possibly solve.

Again, it may seem subtle, but in this moment of a profound bad news, terrible sorrow of a parent in grief, Jairus is now being assaulted in that moment with fear and doubt in a very simple report. He's being tempted to fear and despair. He's being tempted to think Jesus lacks the power, and lacks the will, and lacks the compassion to deal with the gravity of this situation.

None of that is true. In Mark's account, we find out that the messenger didn't announce the news to the crowd, but rather he spoke to Jairus privately, kind of quietly whispering in his ear. That's how doubts creep in, don't they? They draw near as trusted friends. They whisper into our ears. They insinuate

thoughts into our minds. They're nothing but undiluted poison to kill us, kill our faith, subtle temptations to destroy faith, to create doubt and distrust and disbelief, and beloved, that is not healthy.

Well, Jesus, as he often does, he's aware. He overheard the messenger's news. And you know what he did? He intervened. He stepped in. When Jairus is at the brink of despair, he's close to giving in, crumbling before doubt and unbelief, Jesus steps into this moment of his weakness. He intercepted the doubt like a champion, like a hero. He commands strength in believing when Jairus is at his weakest, lowest point.

Look at verse 50. "While he was still speaking, someone from the ruler's house came and said, 'Your daughter's dead. Do not trouble the teacher anymore,' but," verse 50, "but Jesus on hearing this, answered him, 'Do not fear. Only believe, and she will be well.'" Two strengthening commands there, and one very precious promise.

Fears have flooded into his mind, overwhelmed his senses. He's feeling, he's numb to feeling. He's just, he's just, he's in shock, and to snap him out of that shock, there's this double command: "Do not fear, only believe." And then Jesus follows up with a promise, a reason for believing to encourage his faith: "She will be well."

First, Jesus dealt with the despair of doubt that crept into Jairus' mind, the paralyzing power of fearfulness, and Jesus simply commanded him, here, "Do not fear." The tense of the command indicates the Jairus had started to give way to fear. What parent wouldn't? This is dreadful news. The worst has happened. He is beyond his human limits, here. His little girl, she's beyond physician, a physician's skill. She's, she would be even if the master, if the teacher came and touched, for he, she'd be beyond being able to perceive the teacher's touch. She's a corpse.

So Jairus and his wife, they're facing life ahead of them, the future hobbled by grief, having been severely stung by death that snatched their daughter from them in the prime of her life.

Everything is ahead of her marriage and family and everything else. And Jairus' heart is about to give way to fear, which we'd understand, but which Jesus, praise God, will not allow. Fear is so destructive. Fear is spiritually crippling.

So Jesus prohibits Jairus from continuing in fear, and in so doing, make sure you get this. In so doing, Jesus made fearfulness a matter of morality. Fear and hope are moral issues. In other words, let me say it plainly, it is not okay to fear, even when you think that the circumstances seem to warrant it, fear is not okay, even in the face of death, because Jesus said in the face of death, death had happened, "Do not fear."

Because of who God is, we cannot fear. We must always trust, always hope, always believe. When we fear, you know what we're saying, if we're believers, that we fear? You know what we're saying? Our God isn't big enough to handle this. We're giving a lying testimony about the God that we say we trust in.

Look, I'm prone to the same weakness as you are. We understand this. We get this. Our faith is weak, needs to be

strengthened. How is it strengthened? By coming to understand more fully the God in whom we believe, the God with whom we have to do.

So first, Jesus begins with this arresting command to stop the crippling, paralyzing effect of fear on Jairus' faith. Second, though, Jesus strengthened Jairus' heart by simplifying the path of obedience. I love this. Jesus keeps it really, really simple here. Here's the way forward, Jairus. Two words: Only believe. Only believe. And the word, only, gets special emphasis in the text. It's put first before the verb. So basically, he's grabbing ahold of Jairus' terror-stricken heart, grabbing his mind as it were, and he commands him: Stop fearing; only believe. Just believe, that's all. That's the way forward.

When our children were younger, there were times, as it is, comes with little children, that they are overcome with distraction, whether it had to do with immaturity, whether it had to do with that, that microscopic attention span the kids have, or whether it had to do sometimes with fearfulness.

In any case, our kids would sometimes succumb to distraction, find it hard to listen to us, find it hard and difficult to hear our instruction in their weakness and their immaturity. And there were times that Melinda or I would take hold of their little heads, turning this way or that way. We'd take hold of their little heads and turn their little face toward ours and get them to look straight into our eyes. We simplified the field of vision for them, made it very narrow. Got close to them. Allowed us to speak directly into their hearts, giving them our word of loving instruction in the moment.

That's what Jesus does here for Jairus. He grabs hold of Jairus' little head and subdues his fearful heart, takes ahold of him, and he commands him, "Only believe." Only believe. In light of this overwhelming news, this terrifying distress, stop fearing. Only believe.

Notice, it's only after that Jesus prohibited fearfulness, it's only after Jesus has commanded faith, after getting Jairus' attention with those two immediate commands, only then does

Jesus encourage his heart with this promise of blessing: "and she will be well." Again, not might, might be well, not she's likely going to turn out okay, hoping the best. None of that. Quite literally again, it's the same word, *sozo*. She will be saved, she'll be rescued, she'll be delivered from death.

Jairus' faith here, and you understand this, put yourself in his shoes, it'd been stressed to the breaking point. When the messenger came to deliver this news, his feeble faith is absolutely exhausted. It's gone. Well, not gone. Jairus stood, stood there, looking down in a dark chasm of despair and hopelessness. Hey, his faith is hanging by a thread, there. And Jesus is there to lift him by that thread, to strengthen his failing faith.

That is, folks, that's our Savior. That's our Christ. He's unwilling to break a bruised reed or quench a faintly burning wick. He's unwilling to let even the smallest of us in our weakest moment, he will not let us go.

Having refocused Jairus, he turns toward Jairus' house, and here in the narrative, this is where the focus shifts again. We see Jesus interacting, here, with those who do not believe. Very different from Jairus. And for those who do not believe, this is point two in your outline, Jesus requires unbelievers to, well, believe his Word. You might expect that. Jesus requires unbelievers to believe his Word. That is where they start. There's no comfort, there's no hope, there's no peace, there's no joy, there's no satisfaction, there's no contentment without faith. They have to start by believing his Word.

Look at verse 51, "When Jesus came to the house, he allowed no one to enter with him except Peter and John and James and the father and the mother of the child. And all," that is, all others, "were weeping and mourning for her."

Now Luke gives the, this, this account in our English translation, gives us the impression that the entire crowd that was with Jesus at the healing of the woman, they'd all accompanied Jesus down to Jairus' house. Doesn't need to be read that way, but that is how it kind of can come across to us.

It's not how it happened. If we look at Mark 5:37, we get a little more detail as to how Jesus handled that entire crowd at the healing of the woman with the issue of blood. In Mark 5:37, we read that at that point "he allowed no one to follow him except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James." And then verse 38, that's when they came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue.

So get this. This is what Jesus is doing. He left the nine of his twelve Apostles behind along with the other disciples that followed in his retinue, the women believers at the beginning of chapter 8 and all the rest. He left those disciples at the scene, and some of those, probably the women believers, ministered to this woman who had, Jesus had just healed, surrounded her with love and care, welcome to the family, daughter of faith. And some of his disciples served as crowd control, allowing Jesus to slip away with Jairus and with Peter, John, and James.

So those five men, Jesus, Jairus, Peter, James, and John, they proceeded to Jairus' house, and they went alone, so that they could take care of Jairus' daughter without this crowd following after them. But then, having arrived at the house, they encounter another crowd of people, verse 52, all these people who are weeping and mourning.

Those verbs weeping and mourning, they, they picture the professional mourners, who were common in that culture. Both those verbs are in the imperfect tense, and it pictures the professional mourners doing their mourning work in full swing. The word, weeping, they are, it's, it's really the idea of wailing and loud lamentation, and the word, mourning, this is the word *kopto*. It's, the way it's used here in the Greek middle voice, it's, it refers to beating one's breasts in mourning. This is a dramatic display of grief, which is the point in that culture. It's expected. This is how you do funerals.

Jesus, here, Jairus, his inner circle of disciples, they had left one crowd behind to encounter another crowd, a crowd of rejoicing people to face a crowd of mourning people. A

second crowd assembled at Jairus' house. They were in the throes of this unbridled emotion, dramatic displays of grief over the death of the little girl. Can you imagine the kind of chaos that would have ensued had those two crowds met together at Jairus' house?

Now, as Jesus interacts with this unbelieving crowd, relatives, neighbors, friends gathered outside of the house to mourn, pay their respects, get ready for the funeral, there are three things, here, I want you to notice. We'll walk through them one by one. Three things to notice as Jesus deals with the unbelievers in this section.

First of all, notice that the gathered crowd there, they confirmed the death of the little girl with certainty, which, by the way, certifies the reality, the certainty of the resurrection that's to follow. Very important. The presence of the professional mourners tells us that the death of the little girl, for the whole crowd there, everybody around, it's a foregone conclusion.

First-century Palestine, absent modern medicine, death was very common. People were experts in identifying dead and alive, dead and alive. They knew when people passed away, that didn't stay private either. Death became a matter of public concern. So common people, experts at positively determining when someone had died, and they set everything in motion for a funeral.

Now, not everybody is going to be in the little girl's room at this moment. Her mother of, would have been there, probably attended by a close relative or two, maybe a sister or her mother. When this girl's soul departed from her body, they knew it. Others maybe entered the chamber to confirm the death. But then they would emerge from that little girl's room with their robes torn, universally recognized sign of mourning in that culture. When those waiting outside read the signals from the family and the close friends and those who went to confirm the death, they'd start the funeral preparations immediately.

Matthew 9:23 says, "The flute players also had arrived," which confirms they not only determined death, but funeral arrangements are underway. They're in full swing. Preparations

for burial involve loud, dramatic public displays of emotion, grieving, wailing, mourning over the death, all of it loud with cacophony.

It was intended, though, as a show of sympathy. The louder, the more respect you show, the more grievous, the more sorrowful it sounds, more respect for the family who's, lost, lost a loved one, there. It's a cultural requirement, actually, to hire mourners. As one rabbi said, even the poorest person in Israel should hire at least two flute players and one wailing woman. How would you like that to be your job, right? She's the wailing woman. Jairus and his family, they were not the poorest of Israel, in Israel. They were quite wealthy. They would have been able to hire many noisy flute players, many wailing women to provide the appropriate expressions of grief.

So not only do the professional mourners confirm the girl's death, along with the messenger's report which confirmed the girl's death. Notice that the scorn of the crowd, the scorn of the crowd, their laughter, reveals their certainty about her death. Look at how people react to Jesus' assurance in verse 52.

"All were weeping and mourning for her. But he said, 'Do not weep, for she is not dead, but sleeping.' And they laughed at him, knowing that she was dead."

Now notice, not supposing she was dead, not thinking she was dead. That'd be a different verb, verb *tacheo*. This is the verb *oida*, as in knowing facts, as in realizing, perceiving, comprehending. They knew she was dead, and any suggestion to the contrary elicited their immediate scorn even in the face of death. John Calvin noted that "he was ridiculed by thoughtless and ignorant people who were wholly engrossed with profane lamentation, and who did not comprehend his design, ought not to awaken surprise. And yet this very circumstance was an additional confirmation of the miracle that those persons entertained no doubt whatsoever as to her death." End quote.

First thing to notice, then, the independent verification of the little girl's death by the messenger, verse 49, the professional mourners who were already on scene in verse 52, and then their derisive, scornful laughter in verse 53. Why did they laugh? They knew she was dead.

Secondly, I want you to notice, here, in the midst of this, how, once again, Jesus cares for Jairus. In the middle of the commotion, in the chaos of emotional grieving, this mind-numbing noise of flutes, and wailing women, and drums, and all the rest, notice how, notice how, here, Jairus is just passive. I mean, he's the head of the house, but at this point he's on autopilot in the scene. He is unable, here, to take charge. He's unable to speak to, this is his house, but he's unable to, to speak to this crowd, to give any direction at all to demonstrate authority.

What does Jesus do? He steps in and gives the gift of his leadership. He takes over. Luke tells us in verse 51 that "Jesus allowed no one to enter the little girl's room with him except Peter and John and James," the, "and the father and mother of the child." But we read in Matthew 9:25 and Mark 5:40 that Jesus had to put the crowd outside.

That's not to say outside the little girl's room. They wouldn't have all been stuffed in there, but outside of the

house. Either move them into the courtyard area, you remember houses and especially wealthy houses in the Middle East and Palestine, they were shaped like, like a, like a U. And so the houses around here, and there's a courtyard in the middle, gate on the outside. So he could have pushed them into the courtyard, but probably this means he put them outside, meaning outside of the gates of the house.

Very hard to concentrate when you're surrounded by this cacophony of flute players and loud, wailing women. Edersheim says, "The father of the maiden," Jairus, here, "was stupefied, passive rather than active in the matter. The great fear which had come upon him when the messengers apprised him of his only child's death seemed still to numb his faith. He followed Christ without taking any part in what happened. He witnessed the pageantry of the approaching funeral without interfering. He heard the scorn which Christ's majestic declaration of the victory over death provoked without checking it. The first of his faith was that of dimly burning flax."

Look, Jesus is not going to quench the dimly burning flax. Instead, he stepped in to do what Jairus was unable to do. He led. He gave the gift of his leadership. He put the mourners outside the house. He exercised his authority for the care of Jairus and his wife, both of them grieving as they're looking down upon the lifeless body of their, their little girl, their 12-year-old daughter.

So these verses help us to see, first of all, the certainty of death, which then verifies the certainty, the, that verifies the resurrection just a few verses away. And they also help us see the Savior's care for Jairus in his hour of need.

Thirdly, notice how Jesus requires, here, unbelievers to believe his Word. We're back to our main point, here, the second point. Jesus requires unbelievers to believe in his Word. He puts them outside, and he will not allow them to witness the miracle. He puts them outside. He makes them wait and ponder his word to them in verse 52, "Do not weep, for she is not dead, but sleeping." Similar to what we read in John 11:11 when Jesus

raised his friend Lazarus from the dead, he told his disciples
"Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him."

So as believers, for us as believers, death is like a sleep from which Christ will awaken us. But prior to Christ's crucifixion, burial, resurrection from the dead, even Jesus' disciples were a bit puzzled by Jesus' euphemism, here, for death, which is sleep. So the disciples said to him after he said that about Lazarus, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he'll recover," like he'll, he'll wake up. It's okay. That Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought he meant, he meant taking rest in sleep. And Jesus then told them plainly, "Look, Lazarus has died."

Just as Jesus intended to awaken Lazarus from his sleep, that is, raise him from the dead, same sense here. Jesus knew what he'd do for Jairus by raising his daughter from the dead, and with that in mind, he gave the crowd, this unbelieving crowd, he gave them the test of his Word: "Do not weep, for she's not dead, but sleeping." Now, would they believe that word, or would they reject it? In the moment, notice that they

rejected it, right? So they're not going to have the privilege of witnessing the miracle of the girl's resurrection.

As Edersheim put it, "By their conduct they had proved themselves unfit to be witnesses of Christ's great manifestation." Why were they unfit? Because they were not believing. They, instead of believing him, they laughed at him, they scoffed at him, they scorned his word. Instead of considering it with humility and faith, they derided him in laughter. Look, if they're not going to take the Messiah at his word, they no longer belonged in this believing house.

Now we know what's going to happen. Jesus is, Jesus is going to raise this little girl from the dead. And in a very short while, this crowd gathered for mourning, preparing and getting ready for a funeral procession to lead to the outskirts of town, to the burial area, this crowd is going to find out funeral's been called off. How many times you hear that happening?

This deed is not going to remain hidden. They would see the result of the resurrection. They wouldn't witness this resurrection as it happened. And they would have to think back to what Jesus said. They would have to think back and consider his Word more carefully. Jesus said, "Do not weep, for she is not dead, but sleeping." And the initial reaction of the mourning crowd is to reject his word and refuse to believe him.

But after seeing the girl alive and well and walking around and playing with her friends again, to continue rejecting his word means they would be forced to deny what they knew to be true, namely that the girl had most certainly died. They would have to deny that fact, deny all their experience, deny their sense perception. Not only that, but they'd have to go back and admit, whoa, Jesus was right. She wasn't dead. She's, she's only sleeping.

The next test would be of their humility, that they would have to go back to Jesus and show remorse, repentance, ask his forgiveness for laughing him to scorn. Most reasonable course for them to take, here, knowing for certain that this little

girl had died, and then seeing the little girl alive and well, laughing and playing, the most reasonable, rational course of action would be to believe in Jesus Christ, to repent of their derision, and scorn, and all their sin, and to join Jairus in worship on their knees before Christ, confessing all their sins, asking for his forgiveness. That's reasonable, that's rational.

So in another demonstration of divine wisdom, here, Jesus has left these unbelievers in quite a bind. He's requiring them to consider his word. And as they see the evidence of his resurrection power, they've got to go back and reconsider their scornful laughter, their rejection of his word. They need to repent and believe. He will not show them the miracle. He requires them to take him at his word first, to believe his word first, to trust in him fully, and then he'll show him all his wonders.

Well, let's look at the final two verses as Jesus turns his attention to believers, caring for all those who believe in him. After the severe testing of faith, this is point three in the outline, our final point for today, Je, point three, Jesus

teaches believers to rest in his care. Jesus teaches believers to rest in his care.

Again, Jesus had put the unbelieving crowd outside of the house, which had to bring the noise level down quite a bit. As verse 51 says, "He allowed no one to enter with him except Peter and John and James, the father and mother of the child." This one is just for the believers, just for the members of his family, the family of faith. And this is an intimate time, when Jesus is going to bring resolution to the tension of the test of faith that these dear folks had been enduring.

Here's where the relief comes. Look at verse 54, "But taking her by the hand, he called saying, 'Child arise.'" It's a translation of what Jesus said. Mark gives us the Aramaic words that Jesus actually spoke in Mark 5:41, "Taking her by the hand, he said, 'Talitha cumi,' which means 'Little girl, I say to you, arise.'" So Mark translates it into the Greek for his Greek readers. "Talitha cumi," so tender. He spoke to her, there, in her native tongue. He used probably the same words that her own mother had used every morning to awaken her from her sleep.

I like, here, that the ESV translators retained the emphasis on, calling. "Jesus took her by the hand, and then," *ephonesen*, "he called," "he called." Clearly an effectual call, isn't it? Because as soon as Jesus called to her, when he spoke those words in verse 55, her spirit returned. In other words, the girl was not sleeping in a literal, wooden, literal sense. Her spirit had left her body, and her spirit had to return to her body.

But notice that her spirit, wherever it was, obeyed the call of Christ. This is an effectual call, like the call of salvation for his people. The body, the corpse, is lying there, unable to hear a thing. Auditer, auditory nerves are not working, brain's not processing, nothing's working. The spirit has left, the body is dead. He's not trying to animate a body. He's calling to a spirit.

This is the call of salvation for his people. Calvin provides a viewpoint we need to see here. He says, "Naturally, this cry was of no avail for recalling the senses", of the, "of

the deceased young woman, yet Christ intended to give a magnificent display of the power of his voice, that he might more fully accustom men to listen to his doctrine."

That's an important note. If Jesus says it, if God says it, we need to listen. Why? Because his word, his voice, has power. Calvin continues, "It is easy to learn from this the great efficacy of the voice of Christ, which reaches even to the dead and exerts a quickening influence on death itself."

Same thing happened, by the way, when Christ called Lazarus out of the tomb. He'd been in the dead, in the tomb four days. And in that case, Jesus also called out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out." Lazarus came out. His hands and feet were bound with linen strips, his face is wrapped with a cloth, and Jesus says, "Unbind him and let him go." The quickening power of the effectual call of Jesus Christ. He commands the spirit to return. The spirit returns. He gives life to the dead.

Take another look at verse 55. "Her spirit returned. She got up at once, and he directed that something should be given

her to eat. These parents were amazed, but he charged them to tell no one what had happened." The departure, here, of the little girl's spirit, it was obvious to everyone. All of Jairus' friends, and family, and all the crowd around, it was obvious. Their physicians declared her dead. Everybody knew she was dead. They're preparing the funeral.

Now that her spirit has returned to the body, something equally as obvious, by the way, she got up at once. The Great, the Great Physician, here, declares her to be living. "Child, arise." And notice, Jesus immediately attends to the little girl's health and well-being. He ministers health and well-being, not just the little girl, but to all the believers in the room that day. So we might call him, as the Great Physician, he's not only a general practitioner; he's a specialist in all areas of medicine.

Notice the several marks of the tender, loving care that Jesus lavishes on these believers. They've just endured a severe test of faith. Their faith has been further strengthened, further perfected by Christ. Jesus, here, isolates them from the

unbelieving crowd so he could care for them in very special, very particular ways. He's teaching them, here, to rest in his care, that believing in him is worth it, that their faith is rewarded with peace and rest.

First, you can write these down. I got, like, six of these, six of these, I believe. First, Jesus teaches them to rest in his care by ignoring the impurity in the room. Notice he doesn't treat the girl like a defiling corpse. He doesn't keep his distance to protect his own ceremonial ritual purity. He reaches out, and he touches the dead girl as if he's awakening a sleeping daughter, because he is. So Jesus is not concerned about becoming ritually defiled by touching a corpse according to the law. The power of God flows through him, verse 46. He makes the impure pure. He makes the unclean clean.

Listen, that tells us something, beloved. Before God, in our sin we are all unclean, the lot of us. We're all sinners, having fallen short of the glory of God. But we can rest in his care, knowing that he is not averse to reaching out and touching us. You know, as promised, Isaiah 1:18, "Though your sins are

like scarlet, they shall be white as snow, though they're red like crimson, they shall become like white wool." Look, we can rest in his care, that he will reach out and touch us in our uncleanness, in our defilement, and he will purify us and make us whole and clean again.

If you're here and you're not a believer, please let that sink deep within your heart, to know that there is nothing, as Cory ten Boom, said, I believe it was her, said, "There is no pit so deep that God is not deeper still." He will care for you. He did not come to call the righteous, but he came to call sinners to repentance. He didn't come for the healthy; he came for the sick. He came to raise the dead, like you and me.

Second thing, second point. Jesus teaches them to rest. He teaches them to rest in his care by hastening to help them, hastening to help them. All the delay, after all that delay, now there's no delay. Jesus raised this girl, and he did it immediately. Her spirit returned. She got up at once. No hesitation, no delay. Even when there seems to be a delay, like needing to care for a woman afflicted with this mysterious

condition for twelve years, that only gives us an opportunity to see God care for us more powerfully. When God wants to act, he'll do it immediately. There will be no delay. He'll hasten to help when it's his time to help.

Third thing, Jesus teaches them to rest in his care by confirming their faith, by confirming their faith. Note, the Great Physician verifies the miraculous healing by having the little girl eat some food. What does that tell us? Well, it tells us she's not a ghost. She's not an apparition. She's, this is not some vision they're having. She is the same flesh-and-blood daughter with the same appetite. She's eating a bit of food, just like she'd done before the illness struck. So he teaches, he teaches them to rest in his care by confirming their faith.

And then, fourth, Jesus teaches them to rest in his care by providing for physical needs. This is of special interest to root, Luke, the writer of this Gospel. He's the beloved physician, and he admires, here, the care of a fellow physician. Frederick Godet says, "He acts like a physician who's just felt

the pulse of his patient and gives instructions respecting his diet for the day." This little girl had long been without sustenance due to her illness. She just needs a little nourishment, little snack. He's calm, he's in total control. He cares for the physical needs. He knows our needs, too, takes care of them.

Fifth thing, Jesus teaches them to rest in his care by helping them return to normal life. Granted, it's normal with a qualification, here, that their little girl's just been raised from the dead. That's not normal, okay? But they have grown stronger in believing, and they need to return to a life of normalcy.

How does he do this? Again, having her eat something, having her, then get her something to eat. This is getting back to some semblance of normalcy. No more routine thing than feeding and nourishing our bodies, right? Not only that, but he helps them as parents get back into their role as parents, not to be overwhelmed with the amazement of the miracle here, but to get them back to their parents.

Jairus earlier, remember, he's just, he's on autopilot. He's flowing through the narrative, numb. Now he brings them back to their senses, hey, by the way, she might need a little food. And they come, snap back into their role as parents and get back to normal, caring for her physical needs.

And then to help them get back to normalcy, he provides them with a little space to get back to normal. He commands them in verse 56, he charged them to tell no one what had happened. What's that about? As we said, word's going to get out. The funeral is going to be called off. But in obedience to Jesus, the command that he just gave them allowed them some breathing room as a family.

He charged them this so that they wouldn't become overwhelmed by all those who were curious, who wanted them to rehearse this miracle. They would not be allowed to become distracted by the many who would want to hear the story again and again. They would have to resume life as usual, silenced, not talking about the miracle.

So Jesus teaches Jairus to rest in his care by ignoring the impurity, hastening to help, confirming his faith, providing for physical needs, helping his family return to normal life.

Let me give you one more, okay? This is the most joyful mark of his care. Sixth thing, Jesus teaches them to rest in his care by giving them cause to worship, to worship. Her spirit returned, she got up at once, give her a snack, and then this, verse 56, "and her parents were amazed." They're amazed. They are overwhelmed here, utterly astounded. They are forever inclined, now, to give thanks to God, to praise his name, and to worship in joy and gratitude at this personal expression of power in their family.

Look, Jesus delights to amaze us with his power, overwhelm us with his care, fulfill our every desire in believing that we can give glory to God in joy and gratitude. And we didn't just get raised from physical death; we got raised from spiritual death. We have new life in Christ. That's the greatest miracle of all. Amen? Bow with me in a word of prayer.

Heavenly Father, we do want to thank you as we come to the end of this fantastic chapter of Scripture. We want to thank you that you have shown us the care of Jesus Christ for his believers, for his faithful. We thank you that you have made us believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, that you've granted us the gift of faith, that we would repent of our sins and believe, and now we come before your table to fellowship together, to express our joy and our gratitude, confess our sins, if necessary, but to have a clear conscience and a heart full of worship for you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.