

Stop Weeping, Stop!

Ps. Craig Mobey

Scripture: Matthew 9:18 & 25 (NIV)

18 “While he was saying this, a synagogue leader came and knelt before him and said, ‘My daughter has just died. But come and put your hand on her, and she will live.’”

25 “After the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took the girl by the hand, and she got up.”

Introduction

Your daughter is dead. Don't bother the teacher anymore. In other words, the One at whose feet you fell, the One in which you placed your hopes for life and healing, the One for whom you, as a synagogue leader, broke protocol ... leave Him alone! Your daughter has died.

And Jesus said, “Don't be afraid; just believe.”

Jesus did not say, “If you believe she will be made well.” Nor did He say, “If you are not afraid then...”

The Funeral is Over

Our funerals are quiet and planned to be about 5 days after death. Our funerals are solemn, dressed in your best clothing, everybody whispering, sitting, waiting with soft organ music in the background. Then the pallbearers bring the coffin in, we stand up and notice the soft weeping around us.

Totally the opposite of a Jewish funeral in Jesus' time! By comparison, the Jewish funeral was what I can describe as noisy chaos!

A Jewish funeral started immediately. The mourners would have been on notice that the girl was approaching death. At death, there was screaming, wailing, flutes playing *and* the tearing of garments according to their 39 set rules. I imagine that when you went to a Jewish funeral, you did not wear your best clothes

Jesus brought a whole new perspective to funerals, forever. Let me explain.

After entering Jairus house, he firmly sent the crowds away, and the crowds laughed – scorned – at Him when He told them that she is not dead, only asleep (Matthew 9:24). The scornors had no real sorrow and perhaps not real confidence in Jesus. It reminds me of those laughing at Jesus when He was on the cross.

Telling people to go away from a funeral was telling them that the funeral is over. It's not needed anymore because she is not dead. We don't hold funerals for the living. We are done here!

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This Girl is Asleep

When Jesus said that she is asleep, He correctly defines death as temporary. This is the true, biblical perspective of death. Although bodies might be in the grave, the spirit, which is in the next life, is alive! Bodies of believers will one day be raised to a resurrection into eternal life. Unbelievers will be raised and brought before the Great Throne of Judgment.

It is obvious that the belief of the messenger and the scornors in Jesus were *not* at an all-time high. The dead girl – and Lazarus for this matter – while dead, had no belief. Jairus had belief, "...come and put your hand on her, and she will live." It was not Jairus' belief that raised his daughter, it was Jesus in whom Jairus placed his belief.

Jesus did not resort to the cause and effect we sometimes hear about from false teachers. He did not say, "If you believe she will be made well." Jesus has healed many people who did not believe. He healed many faith-less people. It's not about cause and effect, it's about Jesus! And therefore we need not fear death.

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The Compassionate Jesus

With Jesus was Peter the leader, John the lover, James, the first martyr, Jairus the one who said, "put your hand on her, and she will live" and the child's mother.

Two Sundays ago we defined compassion as, "Compassion is not only recognizing another's distress but a willingness to do something about it."

There was a mixture of faith and fear present just after Jairus got the news that His daughter was dead. Let's recall 3 things that a compassionate Jesus said:

1. Do not fear.

Jairus was a leader of the synagogue at Capernaum, where Jesus had been doing miracles for some time. Even if Jairus had not seen a resurrection yet, he would have heard about them because he believed that Jesus had the power to raise the dead.

Jesus has power over life and death and He has "got" this situation in hand. Not fearing means that you are open to believing.

2. Believe.

Since fear is put out of the way by Jesus, Jairus could trust that what Jesus was about to do is true and accurate. Why trust? Because trust differs from faith in that trust is based on evidence. And Jairus knew about Jesus' miracles.

3. "Little girl, I say to you, get up!" And immediately, she got up and people were astonished. She was, after all, just sleeping (Mark 5:39).

Here we see Jesus recognising another's distress and doing something about it.

But Jesus's compassion continued, He said, "give her something to eat" and not to tell anyone what happened.

Give her something to eat. On the one hand, dead people do not eat and on the other hand, Jesus' compassion is tender. She may not have eaten for a while or eaten little when she was so sick. In her case, following both death and resurrection, life must continue.

Don't tell anyone. Jairus and his wife were amazed. People were "outside" of themselves with astonishment. Jesus says to keep it quiet. Yet news of the miracle spread through the region (Matthew 9:26). A resurrection is newsworthy. What if, Jesus by saying not to tell anyone, meant you don't need to tell anyone because they have enough evidence to believe? Think once again about it. Logically. Firstly the funeral is cancelled and secondly, everyone will see that the girl is alive and has eaten. What is there to tell when there is to see?

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Lord Jesus, I Need You

You may be desperate to see life return to a hopeless situation. Maybe you are grieving a loved one or something different. You have heard about Jesus' miracles and have reached the point where you are crying out to Jesus, "Come and put your hands on my life or this situation."

Jesus is compassionately still saying the same now as he did 2000 years ago, "Don't be afraid; just believe." "I say to you, get up!"

The funeral is over. As long as Jesus is involved, there is always life. Jesus will touch you in His compassion. Life will continue. What is there to tell about the results when the results are obvious to all?

Stop weeping, stop! Take off your funeral clothing and get dressed for worship!

Lord Jesus, I need you.

Amen.