

Session 4

Restores

Jesus' miracles remind us that He has power over all things, even death.

Mark 5:21-24,35-43



Which well-known figures of today do you consider to be great? What are the marks of true greatness? Who have you known who was really great?

What makes someone great? We might think of someone's skill. We might consider their influence for good: statesman, pastor, or teacher. What about integrity and character as marks of greatness? Perhaps greatness refers to the power that someone wields—what he or she has achieved, or how many people are under the person's authority.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

As the crowds around Him grew, Jesus shifted His teaching method. He began telling parables—stories about real-life things that taught spiritual truths. Some in the crowds got what He was saying; others didn't. But He always shared the meaning with His disciples so they could understand His heart and the substance of His message.

Jesus didn't just demonstrate His power through the words He spoke or the stories He told—as marvelous as they were. He reminded His disciples that He was more than just a great teacher. He was God in the flesh. In the latter verses of Mark 4, readers see that He could control nature with His spoken word (4:35-41).

Once they reached Gerasene territory, Jesus again displayed His power (5:1-20). After confronting a demoniac, He rebuked the evil spirits in the man and sent them into a herd of nearby pigs. The pigs ran off a cliff and were drowned in the water below, causing an uproar in the region. Between the incident with the pigs and the exorcism of the demons, fear overwhelmed the Gerasenes, and they demanded Jesus leave their country.

Returning to Jewish soil, Jesus encountered one more opportunity to demonstrate His awesome power. The daughter of a local synagogue leader named Jairus was on the brink of death. In fact, she died before Jesus could get to Jairus's house. The One who had conquered nature and the demonic world proved that even death was no match for Him.

After taking a few minutes to heal a woman with a blood ailment, Jesus continued toward Jairus's home. He raised Jairus's little girl from the dead and provided a glimpse of His own resurrection as hope for eternal life.

MARK 5:21-24,35-43

21 When Jesus had **crossed over again** **A** by boat to the other side, a large crowd gathered around him while he was by the sea. **22** One of the synagogue leaders, named Jairus, came, and when he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet **23** and begged him earnestly, “My little daughter is dying. Come and lay your hands on her so that she can get well and live.”

24 So Jesus went with him, and a large crowd was following and pressing against him. ... **35** While he was still speaking, people came from the synagogue leader’s house and said, “Your daughter is dead.

Why bother the teacher anymore?” **36** When Jesus overheard what was said, he told the synagogue leader, “Don’t be afraid. Only believe.” **37** He did not let anyone accompany him except Peter, James, and John, James’s brother. **38** They came to the leader’s house, and he saw a commotion—people **weeping**

and wailing loudly **B**. **39** He went in and said to them, “Why are you making a commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but **asleep** **C**.”

40 They laughed at him, but he put them all outside. He took the child’s father, mother, and those who were with him, and entered the place where the child was. **41** Then he took the child by the hand and said to her, “Talitha koum” (which is translated, “Little girl, I say to you, get up”). **42** Immediately the girl got up and began to walk. (She was twelve years old.) At this they were utterly astounded.

43 Then he gave them strict orders that no one should know about this and told them to give her something to **eat** **D**.

Passage Outline

Willing (Mark 5:21-24)

Undeterred (Mark 5:35-40)

Able (Mark 5:41-43)

Keywords

- a. Jesus had been in the region of the Gerasenes on the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee (see Mark 5:1-20). After being rejected by them, He crossed back over to the western shore.
- b. Mourning publicly due to a death having occurred
- c. In 1 Thessalonians 4:14,16 we learn that one day “through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep ... and the dead in Christ will rise first.”
- d. Jesus showed practical concern for the little girl’s physical well-being. His order also served as a demonstration to Jairus that his daughter was actually alive. Jesus also ate in the presence of the apostles as proof of His physical resurrection (Luke 24:43; Acts 10:41).

EXPLORE THE TEXT

Jairus's request was based on his belief in Jesus' ability to perform a miracle rather than Jesus' position as God's Son. Yet the passage still hints at the promise of spiritual transformation. Jesus acknowledged Jairus's needs and went with him. As usual, a large crowd surrounded Jesus and followed Him.

How would you describe Jairus's level of confidence in bringing his need to Jesus? What might hold a person back from confidently approaching Jesus?

Sometime during his initial encounter with Jesus, servants gave Jairus a devastating report. His daughter had died. These messengers could have originally discouraged Jairus from coming to Jesus in the first place, but Jesus is never bothered by our requests. Jairus had a choice: trust Jesus and keep moving or call the whole thing off and walk away. Whatever his questions—and his grief—he decided to move forward with Jesus.

In what situations today might Jesus challenge a person to continue to believe? What roadblocks might a person face that could cause him or her to doubt or give up?

Some have suggested that Jesus' words "the child is not dead but asleep" implied a literal sleep or coma. However, the family's reaction does not suggest she was living. The response of the crowd was harsh. Their laughter did not indicate amusement, but scorn. They believed Jesus was, at best, uninformed or, at worst, insane.

BIBLE SKILL: Identify the imagery in a verse or passage and discover what it communicates. – In Mark 5:39, Jesus referred to death as sleep. Consider the following verses as well: John 11:11-14 (Lazarus); Acts 7:60 (Stephen); 1 Cor. 15:6,18; 1 Thess. 4:13-15 (Christians). What does the use of sleep as a metaphor for death communicate about the nature of death for a follower of Jesus? How is the imagery of sleep like and unlike bodily death?

The emphasis here is on the authority of Jesus' words. He told the girl to get up because His word was enough to make it happen. Jesus spoke life back into a lifeless body. The effect was immediate. As soon as Jesus gave the command, the girl got up and began to walk.

How might Jesus' walking with us through a dark time impact our relationship with Him?

Jesus directed the family to tell no one about this miracle. Mark was not specific about why the girl needed something to eat. However, giving her something to eat would demonstrate beyond doubt that she really was alive and not dead.

How does Jesus bring life to His creation? What can be pointed to as proof that Jesus gives life today?

APPLY THE TEXT

- We can approach Jesus with confidence, knowing that He will help those who seek Him.
- Jesus is not deterred nor bound by any unbelief He may encounter.
- Jesus is able to restore life to His creation.

Identify things that keep you from approaching Jesus with your needs. What needs to change in your life for you to approach Him more frequently?

In what areas of your life do you experience doubts? Ask God to give you confidence in these areas.

With your Bible study group, identify places where “death” is at work in our world. What can the group do to bring life to those situations for God’s glory?

Prayer Requests



DAILY EXPLORATION

Day 1: We can approach Jesus with confidence.

Read Mark 5:21-24, noting Jairus's posture toward Jesus.

Little is known about Jairus except that he was one of the synagogue leaders. Though not a priest or rabbi, synagogue leaders were highly respected. He also would have had a great deal of influence, which makes his approach more impressive. Unlike other religious leaders, Jairus came to Jesus with humility.

Jairus was desperate for Jesus' help. In other passages, people came to Jesus with similar feelings. For example, Mark interrupts the Jairus narrative with the account of the woman who had a bleeding disorder. She had seen numerous doctors and had spent everything she had—to no avail (vv. 25-26). Jesus was her last and only hope. Jairus was likely in the same situation, and his request tugs at the heart of any parent. His daughter wasn't just sick. She was dying.

Jairus's request also reveals a measure of faith. He believed Jesus could save his daughter. Jairus's request provides a great pattern for coming to Jesus. The writer of Hebrews pointed out that we can approach Him with confidence (Heb. 4:16).

What might hold you back from confidently approaching Jesus?

Day 2: Jesus' timing is always perfect.

Read Mark 5:35-38, considering the faith Jairus had in Jesus.

Jesus gave Jairus two commands: "Don't be afraid, and only believe." The Greek wording indicates that Jesus was not focusing on a one-time faith. Instead, He urged Jairus to have an ongoing trust in Him. The challenge was to believe Jesus even when the circumstances did not support such faith.

Out of respect for the grieving family, Jesus selected only Peter, James, and John to accompany Him. These disciples were privileged to experience other significant events. They were with Him on the Mount of Transfiguration (Mark 9:2-9) and in the garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:31-32).

The fact that the girl had died did not deter Jesus from His plan. If anything, it provided an opportunity for an even greater work. Often, Jesus' timetable is different from our timetable. In those instances, we must be the ones who adjust. His timing and purpose are always perfect.

In what situations today might Jesus challenge you to continue to believe?

What roadblocks might you face that could cause you to doubt or give up?

Day 3: Jesus cares for us.

Read Mark 5:39-40, identifying Jesus' priority.

The response of the crowd was harsh. Their laughter did not indicate amusement, but scorn. They believed Jesus was, at best, uninformed or, at worst, insane. It also reveals a genuine lack of concern for the grief of Jairus's family. If they had really cared about what the family was going through, they would have displayed a moral outrage at Jesus' words—even if that outrage were based on misunderstanding. Instead, they mocked Jesus and His claims.

In another display of powerful authority, Jesus cleared the room. The mockers were removed because they lacked the faith that Jairus had displayed in Jesus. With the skeptics now on the outside, Jesus focused on the task at hand.

While we likely would not openly mock Jesus with our words, our lack of faith may keep us from seeing God's work. We need to make sure we are not relegated to the outside looking in.

How does Jesus' walking with you through a dark time impact your relationship with Him?

Day 4: Jesus has authority over death.

Read Mark 5:41-42, highlighting the miracle Jesus performed.

Jesus often ministered by touch. He healed a blind man by smearing mud on his eyes and a deaf man by putting His fingers in his ears. He even touched lepers. All of these acts—including the act of touching a dead girl's body—were considered to result in ceremonial uncleanness. But Jesus never let ceremony stand in the way of bringing glory to God.

The emphasis here is on the authority of Jesus' words. He told the girl to get up because His word was enough to make it happen. Jesus spoke life back into a lifeless body.

The effect was immediate. As soon as Jesus gave the command, the girl got up and began to walk. It is not clear to whom Mark was referring when he wrote "they were utterly astounded." It could have been the parents and the disciples, or it could have been the skeptics who had been driven from the room. In all likelihood, he was referring to everyone.

Jesus still has authority over illness and death. This does not mean that He will heal every disease, but we should not hesitate to pray for those who are hurting and ill. We also need to remember that He overcame the grave on our behalf. Death has lost its sting.

**How did Jesus give the girl life besides bringing her back from death?
How has Jesus provided this same life for you?**

Day 5: Jesus brings life.

Read Mark 5:43, considering Jesus' orders.

Over the course of a few chapters, Mark systematically demonstrated Jesus' authority over the things people fear the most. Jesus taught with unquestionable authority (Mark 4:1-34). He is Lord over nature (4:35-41), demonic forces (5:1-20), and incurable illness (5:25-34). Now, Mark demonstrated Jesus' mastery over death itself. Death has been called the greatest enemy, but even it has lost its sting in light of His power (1 Cor. 15:53-57).

On more than one occasion, Jesus instructed individuals to avoid telling anyone about who He was and what He did. Jesus knew many people wanted to force Him into a Messianic role that fit their own interpretation, not God's plan. He sought to avoid that kind of attention so He could focus on what really mattered.

KEY DOCTRINE: God the Son – Christ is fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man (Gal. 4:4-5).

What can be pointed to as proof that Jesus gives life today?

TALK IT OUT

Reflect on the truths found in Mark 5, sharing with two other members of your Bible study group.

Why do you suppose each of Jesus' healings had unique factors?

Read the previous healing story in Mark 5:25-29. How is her story like and unlike the healing of Jairus's daughter?

How can we work hand-in-hand with Jesus to give life?



For additional context, read "Death, A First-Century Understanding," available digitally in the Spring 2019 *Biblical Illustrator* for *Explore the Bible* at LifeWay.com/BiblicalIllustrator.