

# Beautiful Majesty for the Desperate

Mark 5:21-43

*Halifax: 11 August 2019*

## Introduction

Today we will continue in Mark's Gospel.

- You can turn to Mark 5:21-43 in your Bible if you want to follow along.

For the past several weeks, we have been looking at the majesty of Christ, as it is especially the focus of this part of Mark.

- At the end of chapter 4, we saw how He completely silenced a storm with a mere word from His lips.
- In chapter 5, verses 1-20, we saw how He drove out a whole legion of demons that nobody could control, and had everyone begging Him for something... the demons for mercy, the people who lived in the area that Jesus would depart, and the man who had had the demons that he might go with Jesus.
- And then last week in Mark 5:25-34, we saw how Jesus transformed a woman who was a wretched outcast (because of a twelve-year flow of blood that made her unclean) into a dear daughter in His very own house.

You may remember that this woman actually had interrupted Jesus as He was on his way to the house of a man named Jairus to heal his daughter who was on the brink of death.

- We shall see in our reading today that in the minds of all but Jesus, the interruption had been fatal for the daughter of Jairus.
  - No sooner did Jesus finish dealing with the woman to assure her that she was a daughter to Him than the servants of Jairus arrived with the news that his daughter had died. They concluded that it was too late for Jesus to help.
- But this in fact served only as an opportunity for Jesus to yet again display His beautiful majesty, both to Jairus and to us, in raising the little girl from the dead.

Listen as I read this passage to you, beginning in Mark 5:21.

- This is the word of God, so please pay careful attention.

**Mark 5:21-34:** Now when Jesus had crossed over again by boat to the other side, a great multitude gathered to Him; and He was by the sea. <sup>22</sup> And behold, one of the rulers of the synagogue came, Jairus by name. And when he saw Him, he fell at His feet <sup>23</sup> and begged Him earnestly, saying, "My little daughter lies at the point of death. Come and lay Your hands on her, that she may be healed, and she will live." <sup>24</sup> So Jesus went with him, and a great multitude followed Him and thronged Him. <sup>25</sup> Now a certain woman had a flow of blood for twelve years, <sup>26</sup> and had suffered many things from many physicians. She had spent all that she had and was no better, but rather grew worse. <sup>27</sup>

When she heard about Jesus, she came behind *Him* in the crowd and touched His garment. <sup>28</sup> For she said, "If only I may touch His clothes, I shall be made well." <sup>29</sup> Immediately the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in *her* body that she was healed of the affliction. <sup>30</sup> And Jesus, immediately knowing in Himself that power had gone out of Him, turned around in the crowd and said, "Who touched My clothes?" <sup>31</sup> But His disciples said to Him, "You see the multitude thronging You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?'" <sup>32</sup> And He looked around to see her who had done this thing. <sup>33</sup> But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came

and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth. <sup>34</sup> And He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction.” <sup>35</sup> While He was still speaking, *some* came from the ruler of the synagogue’s *house* who said, “Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?” <sup>36</sup> As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, He said to the ruler of the synagogue, “Do not be afraid; only believe.” <sup>37</sup> And He permitted no one to follow Him except Peter, James, and John the brother of James. <sup>38</sup> Then He came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and saw a tumult and those who wept and wailed

loudly. <sup>39</sup> When He came in, He said to them, “Why make this commotion and weep? The child is not dead, but sleeping.” <sup>40</sup> And they ridiculed Him. But when He had put them all outside, He took the father and the mother of the child, and those *who were* with Him, and entered where the child was lying. <sup>41</sup> Then He took the child by the hand, and said to her, “Talitha, cumi,” which is translated, “Little girl, I say to you, arise.” <sup>42</sup> Immediately the girl arose and walked, for she was twelve years *of age*. And they were overcome with great amazement. <sup>43</sup> But He commanded them strictly that no one should know it, and said that *something* should be given her to eat.

May the LORD add His blessing to the reading and the preaching of His holy word.

As I already indicated, we will be focusing on the part about Jairus and about Jesus raising the daughter of Jairus from the dead rather than the part about the woman with the flow of blood which we looked at last week.

- You may have noticed my title for this sermon today... **Beautiful Majesty for the Desperate.**
  - The truth is, that would have been a suitable title for all the passages we have looked at in this part of Mark...
    - The desperate disciples in the storm saw the beautiful majesty that calmed the storm.
    - The desperate demoniac saw the beautiful majesty that cast the demons out of him.
    - The desperate woman with the flow of blood looked to the beautiful majesty that healed her and took her into His house.
  - But I thought this title was especially appropriate for the story of Jairus because in this account above all the rest,
    - the desperation of this particular man is noteworthy and wonderful...
    - and beauty of the majesty of Christ is especially displayed as we shall see.

**I. Please consider with me in the first place how the Lord can graciously make the self-sufficient desperate.**

A. This is the wonderful thing that the Lord, in His providence, did for Jairus.

1. Look at him, falling before the Lord Jesus Christ and begging!
  - **Mark 5:22-23: And behold, one of the rulers of the synagogue came, Jairus by name. And when he saw Him, he fell at His feet <sup>23</sup> and begged Him earnestly, saying, “My little daughter lies at the point of death. Come and lay Your hands on her, that she may be healed, and she will live.”**
  - This is certainly a picture of a desperate man. And it is unexpected.

2. I want you to think about this man.
  - a. He was in an exalted position in society.
    - He is a successful, well respected man, he was a ruling elder in the synagogue—and not in a culture like ours where the church is not held in much esteem.
    - The synagogue was held in the highest esteem, so a man that held the position of a ruling elder was one to whom the whole community looked to for guidance and example—and one to whom they came for help.
  - b. We don't know for sure about this particular man prior to this encounter with Jesus, but we know something about the synagogue leaders in general in Capernaum—
    - They are the ones who had objected to Jesus for healing the man with the withered hand on the Sabbath Day.
    - They had been so inhospitable to Jesus that He had withdrawn from the synagogue to preach beside the sea.
  - c. Whether Jairus was among the grumblers or not, it is a remarkable thing to see a synagogue leader, bowing before Jesus, and pleading with Him to put His hands on his daughter who is about to die so that she will be made well.
    - This is not a man you would ever have expected to prostrate Himself before Jesus!
    - The crisis had driven him to this.

B. Isn't it marvellous how God's providence can change people?

1. Many of you can tell of how the Lord first got your attention through trials.
  - You were gliding along through life with little recognition of how much you needed the Lord.
  - You didn't realise that you needed Him for your next breath, for your daily bread, for safety and protection from illness and harm.
  - But then something came into your life that was too much for you—something that you could not handle.
    - It may have been a lot of things, it may have been gradual or it may have rather suddenly as it appears to have been with Jairus.
    - But God brought that about in His grace because you were appointed for salvation.
    - He made it known to you that you are in desperate need of His daily mercy... of His constant care... or you would die.
2. Understand that God made us to be dependent creatures who receive all that we have consciously from His hand.
  - Whether you recognise it or not, you could not go on if He did not sustain you.
  - When we fell, we lost our sense of our need of Him, so He took away many of our comforts and sent His curse—to help us clue in that we need Him.
  - Like many, Jairus was getting on just fine until affliction came—then he became desperate—so desperate that he ran to the Lord.
    - Yes, he was a religious man, but religious men are some of the worst.

- They often see themselves as doing things for God and think little of looking to God to enable them.
  - But now he knew that he needed the Lord, so you see him on his face begging for help.
3. This passage is very encouraging because there are people in our lives that we are praying for who have no sense of their need of God.
- They seem so unreachable.
    - They are getting along fine. They are confident and they are successful. They seem to have full control of their lives.
    - And you think, “They will never see their need of Christ.” They have no interest in hearing about Him.
  - But this passage teaches you to not be so sure about that.
    - Pray for them.
    - One day, that neighbour or that relative may come to you broken.
      - It is a judgment from God that many in our society have been blinded so that they cannot see their need of Him, but the Lord is able to break the proudest soul and bring them to their knees as a desperate beggar.
      - I have had some very successful men come weeping in desperation.
    - Never give up in your prayers for the many people around you who see no need of the Lord.
      - Our gracious Lord can easily change that.

TRANS> And what about you?

C. Do you realise how much you need Christ?

1. I know I didn't until I was in university.
- Growing up, I went to church, and I had lived in a way that pretty much pleased my mother. Things were going well for me.
    - But then the Lord began to show me that I didn't know God.
      - I began to see that life had no meaning or purpose apart from God our Maker.
      - I began to wonder what the use was of getting a good job, getting married, raising a family, and then dying. There had to be more.
  - I then began to read the Bible, something I had done before, except now it was with hunger to know God.
    - And He began to show me what a sinner I was, which brought me to cry out to Him for help.
  - He had mercy on me, and the way He did it was by first showing my need of Him—that I was a sinner who needed forgiveness... and then by showing me that Christ was the only one who could meet that need.
    - In a way I knew that already as a fact, but He brought me to truly see my need and cry out to Him for mercy.
    - I even knew that Jesus was punished in the place of guilty sinners and that it was by believing in Him that we could be forgiven...

- but now it was different—I was looking to Him to restore me to God from whom I had been estranged by sin... not just to pardon me so I could go to heaven, but to bring me the Father so I could serve Him.
2. So I wonder, have you seen your need for Christ?
    - Have you seen that He is the only one who can bring you to the Father?
    - Have you seen that you are a sinner who needs to be cleansed by His death?
    - If you haven't this passage teaches me not to give up on you because God can open your eyes.
  3. And as this passage is about a man praying for his daughter, let me ask you as well: *Do you know how much your children need Christ?*
    - There is a lot of parenting advice that I might give you—indeed there is much in God's word about parenting.
      - But the most important thing I think I could tell you is to pray earnestly that they will see Christ and how they need Him.
      - When you see them slipping, losing their focus on Christ, drying up in their soul, lured away by the world,
        - fall on your face before the Lord Jesus and beg Him to give and sustain life in them—to not let them perish.
    - You should beg more for that than you would beg if you they were on their death bed like the daughter of Jairus was.
      - How I wish that parents would take this more seriously.
      - Do not take no for an answer... if it is physical life, you might say, "if it be your will," but for spiritual life, plead as Moses did when God was ready to snuff out Israel and raise up another nation.
        - Plead as Jacob did when his name was changed to Israel—saying, "I will not let you go unless you bless me."
        - Or the way the Syro-Phoenician woman prayed when Jesus told her He had come for the Jews and could not give the children's bread to the dogs and she said, "But even the little dogs eat the crumbs that fall from the master's table."
          - That is the kind of prayer for our children's souls that He delights in.
          - That is the only kind of prayer that is appropriate.
      - Nothing is more urgent, and we have a promise that He will bless our children.

TRANS> Promises are obtained by earnest prayer; not by detached indifference.

- Beg the way Jairus begged.
  - The LORD had given him a heart of faith in his time of need.
- But that is not all that the Lord did.

## **II. I want you to see secondly that the Lord also knows how to increase our faith.**

A. He turns what seems desperate into what seems impossible.

1. Here Jairus was, heading down the road with Jesus to heal his dying daughter.
  - How glad he must have been when he saw that Jesus was willing to go with him.
  - But how his heart must have sank when his friends came from his house and said (vs. 35): "**Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?**"

2. What horrible words, but what rational and reasonable words.
  - They concluded that it was too late. The girl was dead and nothing could be done now—of course. It was over. Hope was lost.
  - Might as well let Jesus go on His way.
    - This is beyond His ability to rectify.
3. It is clear that they did not yet know who Jesus was!
  - They did not know how capable He was.
  - They were sure that this was too much for Him.
  - The situation had gone from desperate to impossible.
    - It is easy to think such things.

B. And I tell you that Lord often operates in this way to stretch our faith.

1. Do you remember what happened when Moses went to Egypt at the command of the Lord to request that Pharaoh would release Israel to worship God?
  - At first Israel believed that the Lord would deliver them according to the ancient promise.
  - But then instead of obtaining relief, Pharaoh was angered and made their work twice as hard, demanding that they make the same number of bricks as before, only that they must also now provide the straw themselves.
    - So much for God's deliverance!
    - The situation had gone from desperate to impossible.
  - But this was no time to be content with the status quo.
    - God had promised to deliver them.
    - If He had not promised, it would have been their duty to be content, but when there is a promise, it was their duty to continue to pray.
2. What about you?
  - How many of you set out to follow Christ, but then, as you were on your way with Jesus, something happened to set you back.
    - Maybe something to expose the sinfulness in your heart.
    - You knew you needed Him, but now you discovered such selfishness, such pride, such bondage to sin that it seems you were beyond help.
    - Maybe you have thought that for a long time.
      - You have concluded that you don't have what it takes.
      - Maybe you have fallen into adultery, maybe pornography, maybe you have cursed God or your parents and you feel beyond repair.
        - Your case is impossible.
    - Well I am here to tell you that you are even worse than you think you are,
      - but I am also here to tell you that Jesus is a much better Saviour than you think He is.
  - 3. Do you know who designed those circumstances that brought you so low?
    - It was the LORD of glory.
      - He designed them so that you could see how great His salvation is.

- He is the one that brings things about in our lives so that we will see how desperately we need Him and how impossible our situation really is.
  - Yes, He did that to Jairus when his daughter was sick—but now that Jairus came for help, he has learned that his daughter is actually dead.
  - The Lord does this to strengthen your faith!
    - He makes your desperate case impossible to strengthen your faith in Him and in what He can do!

C. Look at how Jesus handles the news of the death of Jairus' daughter.

1. He doesn't even give Jairus a chance to respond.
  - He overhears the conversation and He speaks before Jairus has a chance to.
  - We don't know what Jairus thought for sure, but my guess is that he agreed with his friends that at this point it was hopeless.
    - But that doesn't matter.
      - Israel thought their condition in Egypt was hopeless when things went from desperate to impossible, but the LORD still delivered them anyway.
2. Look at the wonderful words that Jesus speaks in this moment when the desperate crisis has become a seemingly impossible crisis.
  - He turns to Jairus and He says, (vs 36), **“Do not be afraid; only believe.”**
    - The grammar experts tell us that “Do not be afraid” implies “Stop being afraid.”
      - In other words, Jesus was not concerned that Jairus would become fearful, by He recognised that he was already fearful.
      - He is telling him to stop being afraid when fear had already entered his heart.
    - “Only believe” is in the present tense in Greek, so it is continuous.
      - Jesus is telling him to be believing—to continue believing. If I could put it in southern language, He was telling him to *be a'believin'*.
3. Those are just the words you need to hear when you hit the wall of the impossible in the things that God has promised you.
  - “Stop being afraid—only believe.”
    - I'm not talking about the crazy prosperity gospel where you claim that you can be the best ball player, or that you can make your business profitable that has utterly failed.
  - I'm talking about going on with Christ in service to Him according to His promise.
    - I'm talking about continuing to trust Him when you have blown it and it seems like everything has gone wrong.
    - I'm talking about continuing to go on with Him to pray to Him when it seems like it is time to give up.
      - “Don't be afraid, only believe!”

TRANS> The Lord brought all of this about to deepen the faith of Jairus, and it is written to help us deepen our faith.

### III. See in the third place how Jesus reveals His beautiful divine majesty.

A. First, we see that He declares that before Him, death is merely sleep.

1. As He approaches the house, He sees the mourners.
  - Vs 38 says: **“Then He came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and saw a tumult and those who wept and wailed loudly.”**
  - It was the prevailing custom to hire professional mourners to wail and to play a dirge on the pipe when someone died.
    - Great noise was made so that the family could let out their grief.
  - There was some value in this perhaps, but it is easy for us to see the flaws because of the insincerity of the mourners...
    - And also because as believers, we are not to sorrow as those who have no hope.
    - We believe, as the Jews also believed, in the resurrection.
  - In any case, it is clear that Jesus is not impressed with this company of mourners.
2. Jesus speaks with majesty, verse 39: **When He [Jesus] came in, He said to them, “Why make this commotion and weep? The child is not dead, but sleeping.”**
  - a. It is called *sleep* because it is not a permanent condition.
    - It is something that she will wake out of.
    - This is true especially for God’s people because of the resurrection.
      - In the Old Testament, we have the example of Daniel who speaks of those who sleep in the dust waking.
      - In the New Testament, we have the example of Paul who speaks of those who have fallen asleep in Jesus.
  - b. What makes these words (the child is not dead, but sleeping) all the more impressive is that the One who speaks them is the very One who has the authority and power to wake up the dead.
    - All of them are sleeping until He wakes them up.
    - Nobody can wake them up but Him.
    - The reason that death is called sleep is only because of Him.
      - Just think—this holy majestic one was at the house of Jairus!
3. When Jesus spoke these words, the mourners should have respected Him.
  - Surely they knew who He was—Jairus had gone to get Him and they surely knew that.
    - He had worked many miracles and cast out many demons in their village and He had taught with authority, not as the scribes.
      - This called for respect and sobriety before Him.
      - If they did not understand His words, they should have waited for clarification—they should have waited to see what He would do.
  - But instead they act as fools and disqualify themselves from any further revelation.



- What they do is really quite horrifying.
    - Look at verse 40: **And they ridiculed Him!**
    - The old version translates this, “They laughed Him to scorn.”
  - Jesus does to them the worst thing that could be done to them.
    - He drives them all out of the house.
      - **vs. 40: But when He had put them all outside...**
      - By this action, He deprived them of the privilege of seeing what He was about to do!
        - Those who scoff at God’s revelation deprive themselves of any further revelation.
  - Let the world deride and mock...
    - Let them joke of the resurrection, of the Day of Judgment.
    - Let them do it before the face of Him who will one day wake them up and bring them to judgment for despising His gracious call to be reconciled to God by Him.
      - There will be no ridicule then—no mocking—only terror before His holy majesty, the Judge of all the earth who has dragged them from their graves.
- B. Take a look here at the ease with which the majestic Son of God raises up this little girl.
1. The majesty is seen in the simplicity.
    - a. There are no theatrics.
      - There is no ostentation, no whiffle dust, no spells, no prayers, no stretching Himself over the body like the prophets did, no incantations...
      - The majesty is seen in the absence of all of these things.
      - It is seen in the utter simplicity with which He acts.
    - b. He has brought into the room the dear heartbroken parents.
      - He has brought in His closest disciples, Peter, James, and John.
      - The little girl lies on her bed in the cold silence of death.
    - c. Hear now the word of God from verse 41:
      - **“Then He took the child by the hand, and said to her, “Talitha, cumi,” which is translated, “Little girl, I say to you, arise.”**
      - *Talitha cumi* is the Aramaic, the language of the people in Israel.
        - Peter (who instructed Mark) remembers these words because of their ordinary simplicity.
          - These are the words that one might use when waking up any child who had been sleeping...
          - Perhaps these were the words that her mother used in the morning, “Little girl, arise.” “Little girl, get up.”
  2. And look at the marvellous result.
    - a. Verse 42 says: **Immediately the girl arose and walked, for she was twelve years of age.**

- Raising this little girl from the dead was as easy for Jesus as waking up a well-rested child in the morning.
    - There is no sneezing, no sluggishness, no confusion or outcries... She simply gets up and begins to walk.
      - What majesty was in the house of Jairus this day!
      - To Jesus, it is as if nothing special has been done—He is poised...
  - b. But look at the reaction of the parents and the three disciples.
    - **And they were overcome with great amazement.**
    - The reaction is similar to other miracles of Jesus.
      - Here is One like no other in their midst—
        - The One with power over death is here before them and He is here revealed to all of you.
          - Let your hearts swell with joy.
          - Majestic sweetness has come to save us from our sins.
          - He has come to raise us from spiritual death in trespasses and sins, and He will raise our bodies at the last day.
3. Two things complete the account.
- a. First, Jesus commands them strictly that no one should know it.
    - Here is majestic poise.
    - He had no interest in running out to show the mockers what He has done.
      - They have disqualified themselves.
      - He has no need of an audience, no desire to entertain idle curiosity.
        - He has not come to be an entertainment gig.
        - He has come to seek and to save that which is lost.
        - He has come to give life to the dead.
          - The mockers have seen all the signs they need to see.
  - b. The second thing Jesus does is tell them give the girl something to eat.
    - Such poise!
      - They are all caught up in the moment... overcome with astonishment.
    - But Jesus has done nothing more complicated than awaken a little sleeping girl and He sees that she is hungry.
      - Here is the highest majesty... majesty so great that He is not distracted by His own greatness!
      - He is not aloof of detached—but tender and thoughtful of this child's need.

**Conclusion:** Let this marvellous account do its work in you.

- Here is the One who changes the self-sufficient into beggars before Him...
  - Do you see your desperate need of Him? Have you ever begged Him for help?
  - Are you praying for those who have not seen their need of Him?
- Here is the One who takes believers and breaks them to increase their faith...
  - Perhaps He is stretching some of you now. Do not fear, only believe.
- Here is the One for whom raising the dead is as easy as waking up a well-rested child.
  - Do you see His majesty? His glory? His grace?
  - Worship Him and trust wholly in His word.