



They Met Jesus ... and They Laughed! Mark 5:21-43

I know - I say it often, but this is one of my favorite stories from Jesus' life! A synagogue official named Jairus comes to ask Jesus to heal his daughter who is ill. Before Jesus gets back to the house, someone meets them with bad news: the little girl has died.

When Jesus arrives at the house, he asks the crowd that has gathered, *“Why are you making a commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but sleeping.”* All three synoptic gospels report the response of the people, *“And they laughed at him.”*

They met Jesus – and they laughed at him! Luke explains why they laughed: they knew she was dead (Lk 8:43).

I can imagine their thoughts, *“This rabbi might know about religion, but he obviously didn’t take any science classes. He doesn’t know enough to recognize that a dead person is dead!”* They laughed at Jesus!

But as Paul Harvey used to say, *“And now... the rest of the story.”* Jesus takes the dead girl by the hand and commands her to arise. *“And immediately the girl got up and began walking.”* The “sleeping child” is awake.

As I read this story last week, I began to laugh at the laugh-ers. They are in the presence of the Creator - and they have no clue about his power. They are standing in the company of the ultimate Source of Life - and they are quite sure that he knows nothing about death and resurrection. They cannot fathom that Jesus can do what He promises. They laughed because they “knew” that death is stronger than the Giver of Life. I laughed at their disbelief, but then I asked, *“Do I do the same thing?”*

The same Jesus who said, *“I can give life to your daughter”* says, *“I can give you a life of victory over sin.”* And we laugh, because we “know” that the chains of sin are stronger than the transforming power of the one who freed Mary Magdalene from seven demons.

This same Jesus says to couples, *“I can heal your marriage and bring peace to the division that has separated you.”* And we laugh, because we “know” that our conflicts are much greater than the peace-giving power of the one who has healed marriages throughout history.

This same Jesus says to us, *“I can bring peace in the storm of your life.”* And we laugh at Him, because we “know” that our storms are more powerful than the calming power of the one who subdued the storm with a word.

Over and over this verse can be repeated, “And we laughed at him...” Of course, we don't laugh aloud! We are much too polite for that. Instead, we quietly say, “Amen” – and then live as if he never said a word. We don't laugh at him; we just ignore him.

Maybe you aren't actually laughing, but are you living as if Jesus' promises do not matter? Does your life demonstrate your disbelief? If so, read Mark 5 and replace “they laughed” with “I laughed.” “And Jesus said, ‘You can be free of...’ And I laughed at Him.”