The Gospel of Mark, Teacher's Guide

Week 7: Faith in the Middle of Desperation

Mark 5:21–43

Teaching Aim (Teacher Orientation)

Mark 5:21–43 is one of the great "sandwich" passages of the Gospel. Mark intentionally interrupts the story of Jairus with the story of the woman who had been bleeding for twelve years, and the two narratives are meant to be read together. The number twelve binds them. The desperation binds them. The journey to Jesus binds them. And the deeper question of what saving faith looks like in the middle of desperation runs through both. Doctrinally, this lesson will need to handle the nature of saving faith, the personal and relational character of Christ's response, the kingdom's welcome to the marginalized, the authority of Christ over disease and death, the Christian doctrine of bodily resurrection, and the difference between superstitious religion and genuine faith in Christ.

Formationally, this passage may be one of the most tender in the whole Gospel of Mark. Jesus does not hurry. He does not triage. He stops in the middle of an urgent journey to give His full attention to one woman in a crowd. He hears the bad news about Jairus' daughter and turns to a grieving father with the words, "Do not fear, only believe." He clears the wailing crowd out of the room and takes a little girl by the hand. Every one of these gestures is doing something for the soul of the disciple as well as for the bodies of those healed. Help your students see that Jesus has not changed. He still stops in crowds. He still calls quiet faith out into the open. He still says, "Do not fear, only believe," when the news is worse than the disciple thought it would be.

Finally, do not miss the resurrection note that closes the chapter. The raising of Jairus' daughter is not the resurrection in the full New Testament sense. She is restored to mortal life and will eventually die again. But the act foreshadows the great resurrection that Christ Himself will accomplish at the empty tomb, and the final resurrection of all who belong to Him at His coming. Use this question to ground your students in the Christian hope. We do not grieve as those who have no hope (1 Thessalonians 4:13). The Christ who took a little girl by the hand and called her up out of death is the same Christ who has won the victory over death itself, and He calls us into that victory through faith, repentance, confession, and baptism into His death and resurrection (Romans 6:3–5).

Question 1

Student Question:

Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, comes to Jesus, falls at His feet, and begs Him to come heal his daughter (5:22–23). Considering Jairus' social and religious standing, what does this posture

teach about what genuine faith does to our pride, and how is this the same posture in which any person must come to Christ for salvation (compare Romans 10:9–10; Philippians 2:9–11)?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Jairus is a synagogue ruler. In any other moment in his life, his role is to be the man at the front of the room. He is the keeper of the building, the leader of worship, the chair of the elders, the public face of the local community of faith. He is the sort of person other people fall at the feet of. And yet, here in Mark 5:22, he is on his face at the feet of Jesus, pleading for his daughter's life. Mark does not waste a single detail. The posture matters.

For Jairus to approach Jesus this way required setting aside something his world cared about a great deal. Many of his peers had been openly opposed to Jesus since Mark 3. To kneel publicly at Jesus' feet would have cost him reputation, status, and the comfortable assumption that his religious credentials were enough. He came anyway. Desperation does that. So does honest faith.

This is the same posture in which any human being must come to Christ for salvation. Romans 10:9–10 describes confession of Jesus as Lord. Philippians 2:9–11 declares that every knee will eventually bow, willingly or not, and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. There is no version of the gospel that allows us to remain on our feet. Christ saves those who come to Him as they are, on their faces, with empty hands and full need.

For students this matters because pride is the great enemy of saving faith. We tell ourselves that we will come to Christ once we have a few things figured out, once we have cleaned ourselves up, once we have built up enough religious credit to come on our own terms. Jairus had more religious credit than most of us will ever accumulate, and he came on his face. The gospel asks the same of every person, whether successful or struggling, religious or irreligious. There is no other way to come.

Help students see that this is also true for ongoing discipleship, not just initial conversion. Every prayer is an act of falling at Jesus' feet. Every confession of sin is an act of falling at Jesus' feet. Every honest cry for help is an act of falling at Jesus' feet. The faith that begins in dependence continues in dependence.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Saving faith as confession of Jesus as Lord and surrender to Him (Romans 10:9–10; Philippians 2:9–11)
- The universal need to come to Christ on His terms, regardless of social or religious standing
- Pride as the great enemy of repentance and saving faith (James 4:6–10)
- Dependence on Christ as the abiding posture of the disciple, not only at conversion (John 15:5; 2 Corinthians 12:9)

- The New Testament plan of salvation: hearing, believing, repenting, confessing, and being baptized into Christ (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Romans 6:3–4; Romans 10:9–10)
- Ongoing prayer and confession as the continuing posture of life at Christ's feet

Discussion Prompts

- What does it cost a person of Jairus' standing to come to Jesus this way? What is the parallel cost for us today?
- How is the posture of saving faith different from the posture of religious self-confidence?
- Where in your life have you been standing upright in front of Jesus when He is asking you to kneel?

Question 2

Student Question:

Most of us have something in our lives we still try to handle on our own before we will fall at Jesus' feet about it. What specific situation are you carrying right now that you have been trying to fix without bringing it openly and fully to Christ, and what would actually putting that situation in His hands look like this week?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Almost every student in the room is carrying something they have not yet fully entrusted to Christ. Sometimes it is a private struggle they have decided is too small or too embarrassing to pray about. Sometimes it is a long-running pain they have given up bringing to God because they have grown tired of hearing themselves ask for the same thing. Sometimes it is a fear they cannot quite name but cannot quite shake. The list is different for each person, but the pattern is the same. We try to manage it ourselves, and we keep Christ at a respectful distance from the actual problem.

This question is an invitation to identify one such situation specifically. Be honest. The point is not to add another item to a vague prayer list. The point is to bring the actual matter to Jesus the way Jairus brought his daughter. To say it out loud. To kneel under the weight of it. To ask Him to come to that exact place in your life.

Help students think through what bringing it openly to Christ would actually involve. It might mean a sustained season of prayer over the specific situation, not just a thirty-second mention. It might mean asking the elders or a small group of trusted believers to pray with you (James 5:13–16). It might mean confessing a related sin that has been hiding in the situation. It might mean obeying a specific command that has been disobeyed for too long. Faith is rarely abstract. It almost always shows up as a concrete next step.

There is also a particular kind of relief that comes from this. Christians can carry burdens for years that lighten the moment they are actually placed at the Lord's feet. Not because the

circumstance changes immediately, but because the bearer is no longer trying to be God in that situation. The yoke shifts. The shoulders relax. The Lord starts doing what only He can do.

Close this question by giving students some genuine quiet to think and pray. Then move on. Do not rush. Some of the most important moments of the lesson will happen in that silence.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The privilege of bringing every concern to Christ in prayer (Philippians 4:6–7; 1 Peter 5:7)
- The role of the local congregation in carrying burdens together (Galatians 6:2; James 5:13–16)
- The connection between specific confession and genuine surrender (1 John 1:9; James 5:16)
- The end of self-reliance as a healthy and recurring step in the Christian life
- Faith expressed in concrete obedience and not merely vague trust (James 2:14–26)

Discussion Prompts

- What situation have you been trying to fix on your own that you need to lay at Christ's feet this week?
- What concrete step would actually count as bringing it openly to Him?
- Who in this group could pray with you about it?

Question 3

Student Question:

The woman believed that if she could just touch Jesus' clothes she would be healed (5:27–28). The healing happened the moment she touched Him, but Jesus refused to let her slip back into the crowd. He stopped, He searched the crowd, He drew her out into public testimony, and only then did He say to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well" (5:34). What is the difference between superstitious touching and saving faith, and why does Jesus insist on a personal encounter rather than an anonymous one?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The woman's approach is striking. She has heard about Jesus (5:27). She believes that if she can simply touch His clothes, she will be healed (5:28). She works her way through the crowd from behind, reaches out, touches the edge of His outer robe, and the bleeding stops at once. The healing happens. But Jesus does not let it end there.

He stops. He asks, "Who touched my garments?" The disciples find the question impossible. The crowd is pressing on Jesus from every side. People have been bumping into Him for hours. But Jesus knows the difference between a touch of curiosity and a touch of faith. He insists on finding her, and she eventually falls before Him, terrified, and tells Him the whole truth (5:33).

Why does Jesus do this? Why not let her slip away with her healing? The reason is theological as much as it is tender. Jesus refuses to let the encounter be reduced to magic or superstition. He is not a relic to be touched. He is the Lord to be confessed. A faith that takes from Him without ever facing Him would be a kind of half-faith. The kind of faith that saves us is one in which we meet Christ personally, with all the truth about ourselves, and receive what He gives in the open.

This is the same difference at work in much religious thought today. Many people want a Jesus who can be used. They want Him to bless their plans, fix their problems, calm their anxieties, and otherwise leave them alone. They want His benefits without His Lordship. Mark 5 quietly disallows this. Christ stops the woman in the crowd and draws her into the open. He still does that today.

This is also why baptism, public confession, and ongoing life in the church matter so much. The New Testament pattern of salvation is not a secret transaction. It is hearing the gospel, believing in Jesus as Lord and Christ, repenting, confessing Him before others, and being baptized into Him in front of witnesses (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Romans 10:9–10; Galatians 3:27). And the disciple's ongoing life is not anonymous either. It is lived in the open, in a congregation, with brothers and sisters who know us.

For students, this protects against a private, sentimental, magical view of faith. The Christ who could not be hidden in a crowd does not want to be hidden in our hearts either.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The difference between saving faith and superstitious or magical religion
- Christ insists on a personal, confessing encounter, not anonymous benefit
- Public confession of Christ as part of the New Testament pattern of salvation (Romans 10:9–10; 1 Timothy 6:12)
- Baptism as the public, confessing entry into Christ and into His body (Acts 2:38; Galatians 3:27)
- The ongoing public character of Christian life in the assembly of the saints (Hebrews 10:24–25)
- Christ as Lord to be confessed, not merely a power to be tapped

Discussion Prompts

- What is the difference between using Jesus and confessing Jesus?
- How does this passage challenge a privatized or sentimental faith?
- Why does the public character of confession, baptism, and church life matter so much for genuine discipleship?

Question 4

Student Question:

Many of us prefer an anonymous relationship with Jesus to a public, confessional one. We will pray privately, read Scripture privately, struggle privately, but we resist actually being known by Christ in front of others. Where in your own walk are you tempted to reach for Jesus on the sly when He is calling you to a fuller, more openly confessing relationship with Him in His church?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

There is something in most disciples that prefers an anonymous Jesus. We are happy to pray privately. We will read the Bible privately. We will struggle privately, repent privately, and even worship privately if the situation allows. What we resist is being known by Christ in front of others. Confession in the assembly. Open accountability with brothers and sisters. The kind of relationship where our lives are visible to the body and to the elders.

This passage works against that instinct. Jesus deliberately draws the woman out of hiding. He calls her into a face-to-face conversation. He speaks her new identity over her in the hearing of the crowd. "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease" (5:34). What she received in private is now confessed in public, and the public confession is part of the gift.

For students today, this should produce honest reflection. Where are we still treating discipleship as a private religious hobby? Where have we resisted the public, confessing, accountable rhythms of life in the church? Where have we wanted Christ's benefits without His body? Where have we been satisfied to attend without ever really being known? These are not minor questions. They are essential to the kind of life Christ formed His disciples to live.

There are several specific applications. Active participation in the assembly of the saints (Hebrews 10:24–25), not as a consumer but as a member. Honest involvement in a class, small group, or close friendship where genuine accountability is possible. Willingness to confess sin and ask for prayer (James 5:16). Willingness to receive correction from elders and brothers (Galatians 6:1–2). Public testimony, even in small ways, about what the Lord has done for us.

Help students recognize this is not optional spiritual extras. It is part of what saving faith always becomes. The woman in the crowd needed Jesus to call her out. Most disciples need the same call from time to time. Hidden faith is incomplete faith. Christ wants His daughters and His sons known and named.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The public, confessing character of biblical Christianity
- Membership in the local congregation as the ordinary context of discipleship (Acts 2:42–47)
- Confession of sin and faithful accountability as means of grace (James 5:16; Galatians 6:1–2)
- The danger of a private religion that never becomes lived obedience in community
- The role of elders and brothers and sisters in calling believers out of hiding

- The witness of the church to the world as the demonstration that Christ is real and at work

Discussion Prompts

- Where in your discipleship are you still hiding in the crowd?
- What does Christ-called-into-the-open faith look like, practically, in our congregation?
- Who knows you well enough right now to call you out when you need to be called out?

Question 5

Student Question:

Jesus calls this woman "Daughter" (5:34). It is the only time in the Gospels He calls a woman by that name. After twelve years of being seen as unclean, unwelcome, and unwanted, she is welcomed into His family with one word. What does this teach about the relational nature of saving faith and about the new identity Christ gives to those who come to Him in faith and obedience (compare John 1:12–13; Galatians 3:26–27; 1 John 3:1)?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The single word "Daughter" in Mark 5:34 is one of the most quietly beautiful in the Gospels. For twelve years this woman had been ceremonially unclean (Leviticus 15:25–27). She had been cut off from worship, from social contact, from the comforts of family life, from the dignity of being treated as a normal member of God's people. In one word, Jesus folds her into His family.

This is the heart of saving faith. It is not just deliverance from disease or guilt. It is reception into a new identity as a child of God. "But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12). "For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:26–27). "See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are" (1 John 3:1).

For students, the relational nature of saving faith is essential. Salvation is not primarily a legal transaction in which our balance is corrected. It is the adoption of those who were strangers into the family of the Living God. Forgiveness, justification, reconciliation, regeneration, adoption, sanctification, the Lord's Supper, the brotherhood and sisterhood of the church (all of these are relational pictures of what Christ does for the one who comes to Him in faith and obedience).

This also explains why Christ is not satisfied with anonymous touching. He wants daughters and sons, not consumers. He wants to know His own and to be known by them. The woman who came in fear left with a Father, a Lord, a new identity, and a new family. So does every person who comes to Christ on His terms.

For students, the formational question is whether we are receiving and walking in this new identity. The world will keep speaking old names over us (failure, sinner, broken, unwanted, alone). The work of the Word and the Spirit is to retrain our hearts to hear what Christ actually says.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Salvation as adoption into the family of God (John 1:12–13; Romans 8:14–17; Galatians 4:4–7)
- The relational nature of saving faith, not merely a legal transaction
- Baptism into Christ as the moment of putting on Christ and being clothed with new identity (Galatians 3:26–27)
- The believer's new name and new family in the church (1 Peter 2:9–10; Hebrews 2:11–13)
- The old identity (unclean, condemned, alienated) replaced by the new identity in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17)
- The Spirit's ongoing witness to the believer that they are a child of God (Romans 8:16)

Discussion Prompts

- Which of the names Christ gives His people (daughter, son, beloved, forgiven, holy) is hardest for you to actually receive?
- What old name is still trying to define you in its place?
- How does the new identity Christ gives change the way we live each day?

Question 6

Student Question:

Christ gives every disciple a new name and a new identity in Him: child, beloved, forgiven, holy one, brother or sister of Christ. Which of those identities is hardest for you to actually receive at the heart level, and what old name are you still allowing to define you in its place?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

It is one thing to learn the doctrine of our new identity in Christ. It is another to actually live as if it were true. Most disciples can tell you that Christ calls them sons or daughters, beloved, holy, and forgiven. Most of us do not, in our actual inner narration, live as if those words were the ones that describe us. We live by the old names. "Failure." "Hypocrite." "Disappointment." "Worthless." "Alone."

This question is meant to bring that inner conflict out into the open. Help students name the identity Christ has actually given them in the New Testament and the identity they have been believing about themselves in private. The gap is usually obvious once the student is willing to look.

The corrective is not positive self-talk. The corrective is the steady renewal of the mind by the Word (Romans 12:1–2). When Christ says “Daughter” or “Son,” that is the word that defines us. When the Father has said in baptism into Christ, “This one belongs to me,” that is the truth that overrides any old voice. Sanctification involves a slow, deliberate listening to the new voice until the old voice loses its authority.

This is not denial of past sin, struggle, or weakness. The woman in the crowd was honest about her twelve years of suffering. Jairus was honest about his daughter’s desperate condition. Honesty is part of how we come to Christ. But honesty about our weakness is not the same as letting our weakness write our identity. Christ does that now.

For practical formation, encourage students to choose one new identity Christ gives them (perhaps “forgiven” or “beloved” or “adopted”) and to make it part of their daily Scripture reading and prayer this week. The goal is not slogans. The goal is letting the Word actually retrain the inner narration of the soul.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The renewing of the mind through Scripture as central to sanctification (Romans 12:1–2; Ephesians 4:22–24)
- The believer’s new identity as the truer self in Christ (Colossians 3:1–4; 2 Corinthians 5:17)
- The Spirit’s testimony to the believer’s identity as a child of God (Romans 8:16)
- The danger of letting old voices, accusations, or shame write our identity
- The role of the Word, prayer, the Lord’s Supper, and the congregation in steadying our identity in Christ

Discussion Prompts

- What identity Christ gives you is the hardest for you to hear?
- What old name has been writing your story when it should not be?
- What single Scripture could you meditate on this week to let Christ retrain your inner voice?

Question 7

Student Question:

While Jesus is still speaking with the woman, messengers arrive with the worst possible news. “Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?” Jesus overhears them and says to Jairus, “Do not fear, only believe” (5:35–36). What is Jesus teaching about the relationship between fear, faith, and bad news, and how does this command shape the way a Christian faces moments when the news has just gotten worse?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This is one of the most striking moments in Mark. While Jesus is still speaking with the woman, messengers from Jairus' household arrive. The news is the worst possible. "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?" (5:35). The implication is final. There is nothing more to be done. Go home.

Notice what Jesus does. The text says He overheard the message (literally, He "paid no attention to" or "ignored" what they were saying), and He turns to Jairus with one of the most steadying commands in Scripture: "Do not fear, only believe" (5:36). The news is real. The death is real. The grief is about to crash over Jairus like a wave. And Jesus says, in essence, do not let the bad news be the louder voice in your soul right now. Believe me, instead.

This is the call that meets every disciple in the seasons when the news has just gotten worse. The diagnosis is back. The job is gone. The marriage is collapsing. The child has walked away. The friend has betrayed. The bank account is empty. The crisis is here. In that moment, Jesus does not promise that the felt difficulty will evaporate. He invites the believer to keep believing in the middle of it.

It is essential to understand what Jesus is not saying. He is not saying that fear is sinful in itself, or that grief is a failure of faith, or that the believer must pretend the news is not real. The Christian life is honest. Jesus Himself wept at Lazarus' tomb (John 11:35) and agonized in Gethsemane (Mark 14:33–36). What He is saying is that fear must not become the master of the heart in place of faith. Faith continues to walk with Christ even when the news is dark.

For students, this is one of the most useful texts in Scripture for the actual conditions of life. Worse news comes. Often. Christians get cancer. Christians lose jobs. Christians bury parents and even children. The question is not whether bad news will come. It is whether, when it comes, we will let it shut down our faith or take Jesus by the hand and keep walking. "Do not fear, only believe."

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Faith as the disciple's steady orientation toward Christ in the middle of bad news, not the denial of bad news
- Christ's ongoing presence and authority even when circumstances are deteriorating (Hebrews 13:5–6; Romans 8:31–39)
- The honest acknowledgment of grief and pain in Christian life (John 11:35; 2 Corinthians 1:8–9)
- The danger of letting fear and despair displace faith in the heart of the disciple
- The means by which faith is sustained: the Word, prayer, the assembly, the Lord's Supper, brothers and sisters who hold us up
- Christ as the one who walks all the way through bad news with His people (Psalm 23:4; Matthew 28:20)

Discussion Prompts

- What does “do not fear, only believe” look like in a real situation where the news has actually gotten worse?
- What is the difference between honest grief and faith-displacing fear?
- How has Christ walked with you through bad news in the past, and what did you learn about Him there?

Question 8

Student Question:

Where in your life has bad news threatened to outweigh the word of Christ in your heart, and what does it look like, practically, to “not fear, only believe” in that specific situation, without pretending the news is not real?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This question is meant to land specifically. Most students in the room have a situation they can name. The job loss that came right before the holidays. The medical report that did not say what they hoped. The phone call that changed how a family is shaped. The slow erosion of a friendship or a marriage. The decline of a parent. The wandering of a child. Bad news has weight, and most of us know what it is to feel it pressing down on faith.

Help students separate two things. First, the situation itself, which is real and which God Himself does not ask us to minimize. Second, the inner story we are telling about the situation, which often grows louder than the word of Christ in our hearts. The work of faith in that moment is not to deny the first; it is to refuse to let the second master us.

Practically, this often looks like a deliberate, repeated turning. Each day, sometimes each hour, the disciple turns from the louder voice of the bad news back to the word of Christ. “I do not see how this will be all right, but Christ has not let go of me.” “This is the worst grief I have ever known, and Jesus is still in the boat.” “I do not know how my child will be reached, but the One who raised Jairus’ daughter is on the throne.” That kind of language is not denial. It is the language of faith refusing to be silenced by sight.

There are also practical companions for this kind of walking. The faithful prayer of brothers and sisters who carry us when we cannot carry ourselves. The Word soaked into the soul long before the bad news came, so it is available when needed. The Lord’s Supper as a recurring reminder that the worst news (the death of the Lord) was followed by the best news (His resurrection), and that we are bound up with Him in both. The assembly of the saints, where the song and prayer of the church carries the believer who cannot yet sing for themselves.

Encourage students not to walk this kind of season alone. “Do not fear, only believe” was spoken to Jairus while Jesus was right there with him, while the disciples were on the way, while the news was still in the air. The believer was never meant to face the worst news in isolation.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The believer's walk by faith and not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 11:1)
- The honest acknowledgment of grief, struggle, and lament in Christian life (Psalm 13; Psalm 88)
- The community of saints as the body that carries the wounded believer (Galatians 6:2; James 5:13–16)
- The Lord's Supper as a sustaining means of grace in seasons of trial (1 Corinthians 11:23–26)
- The Word and prayer as the daily anchor when circumstances are not steady
- The promise that Christ will not let go of His own (Romans 8:31–39; John 10:27–29)

Discussion Prompts

- What bad news in your life has threatened to become louder than the voice of Christ?
- What is one specific practice that helps you keep turning back to Jesus when sight is harder than faith?
- Who in this group could carry that situation with you in prayer this week?

Question 9

Student Question:

When Jesus reaches Jairus' house, the mourners are already wailing. Jesus says, "The child is not dead but sleeping" (5:39), takes her by the hand, and says, "Talitha cumi" (5:41), and she rises. Connecting this scene with John 11:25–26, 1 Corinthians 15:20–26, and 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18, what does Mark teach us about the authority of Christ over death, the Christian view of physical death, and the believer's hope of resurrection through Christ?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

When Jesus arrives at Jairus' house, the wailing mourners are already in full grief (5:38). The girl is dead. The funeral has begun. The hope of medicine has run out. The hope of religion has run out. The hope of strong men with strong arms has run out. Jesus quietly clears the noisy room, takes the child's parents and three of His disciples with Him, walks to the bedside, takes her by the hand, and says, "Talitha cumi." Mark himself translates the Aramaic: "Little girl, I say to you, arise" (5:41). She gets up. She walks. She is twelve years old. She is alive again.

It is important to be clear about what this miracle is and what it is not. This is not the resurrection in the full New Testament sense. The girl is restored to mortal life. She will grow up, marry perhaps, age, and eventually die again. She is not raised to glorified, immortal life. That kind of resurrection is reserved for Christ Himself, who is the "firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Corinthians 15:20), and for all His people at His coming (1 Corinthians 15:22–23; 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18).

But this resurrection is a real and powerful foreshadowing of what Christ has come to do. “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die” (John 11:25–26). The same hands that took a little girl by the hand and called her up from death will be nailed to a cross, will be laid in a tomb, will burst from that tomb on the third day, and will one day raise everyone who is in Him.

The Christian view of physical death is shaped by this reality. Death is real. It is grievous. It is the wages of sin (Romans 6:23) and the last enemy to be destroyed (1 Corinthians 15:26). But death is no longer the final word for the believer. “O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” (1 Corinthians 15:55). Christians grieve, but “not as others do who have no hope” (1 Thessalonians 4:13).

The Christian’s hope is grounded in the death and resurrection of Christ and is received by union with Him through faith and obedient response to the gospel. “Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his” (Romans 6:3–5). Baptism into Christ is the moment we are joined to His death and His resurrection. From that point on, our future is no longer in doubt.

For the student facing the death of a believing loved one, or facing their own mortality, this scene at Jairus’ bedside should be a deep comfort. The same Christ is on the throne. The same authority is His. The same compassion is in His heart. The same word will be spoken one day over every believer in their grave. “Arise.” And they will.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Christ’s authority over death (John 11:25–26; Hebrews 2:14–15)
- The Christian hope of bodily resurrection at Christ’s return (1 Corinthians 15; 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18)
- Christ as the firstfruits of the resurrection, the guarantee of ours (1 Corinthians 15:20–23)
- Baptism into Christ as union with His death and resurrection (Romans 6:3–5; Colossians 2:12)
- Death as a real enemy, not denied, but defeated in Christ (1 Corinthians 15:26, 54–57)
- Christian grief as honest but not without hope (1 Thessalonians 4:13)
- The intermediate state of believers as “with the Lord” until the resurrection (2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23)

Discussion Prompts

- How would you explain the Christian hope of resurrection to a friend who has just lost someone they love?

- What is the difference between this miracle and the final resurrection believers are waiting for?
- How does union with Christ's death and resurrection in baptism shape the way a Christian faces their own mortality?

Question 10

Student Question:

Jesus took the dead girl by the hand and spoke a personal, intimate word that brought her back to life. As you finish this passage, what "dead thing" in you (a dead hope, a dead relationship, a dead area of faith, a dead obedience) most needs Jesus to take it by the hand and speak life into it, and what is one step of faith you could take this week to put yourself in front of Him to receive it?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The final words of the passage are quietly intimate. Jesus takes the little girl's hand. He speaks to her by name (in essence): "Little girl, I say to you, arise." He gets her up, He has her walk, and He tells the parents to give her something to eat (5:43). Even after the miracle, He is thinking about her dinner. That is the Christ we serve.

This question is the capstone of the lesson. It asks students to identify the place in their own lives where Christ's "Talitha cumi" is most needed. Most students can name something. A long-dead hope that they have stopped praying about. A relationship they had given up on. An area of their walk with Christ that feels stale or lifeless. A dream they buried years ago. A sin that has kept them from any sense of life with God.

Help students see that Christ is not in the habit of leaving His people in the room with the mourners. He still clears the noise out, walks to the bedside, takes us by the hand, and speaks life. Sometimes the miracle is immediate. More often, it is a slow, daily restoration that we recognize only after a long time. But He does this work in the lives of His people. He is doing it right now.

Help them also see that they must put themselves in the room with Him. Jairus had to come to Jesus. The disciples had to walk with Him. The woman had to reach through the crowd. We have our own ways of doing this. Honest, unhurried time in the Word. Steady prayer, even when prayer feels mechanical. Faithful presence in the assembly of the saints and at the Lord's table. Confession of sin. Asking for help from elders or trusted brothers and sisters. Obedience to the next step Christ has put in front of us.

Close the lesson by inviting silent prayer in which each student names the dead thing in their life that needs Christ's touch and offers themselves to be in the room with Him this week. Then invite one specific next step. A conversation. A confession. A return to a practice that has lapsed. A new commitment to the assembly. A renewed surrender. The chapter does not end with a

dead girl. It ends with a living one having dinner with her parents. The lesson should end with people willing to live.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Christ as the Resurrection and the Life in present, ongoing experience (John 11:25–26)
- The continuing, restorative work of Christ in the daily life of the disciple (Philippians 1:6)
- The means by which we put ourselves in Christ's presence: Word, prayer, the assembly, the Lord's Supper, confession, and obedience
- Faith as both rest and pursuit, both surrender and movement toward Him
- Sanctification as the slow restoration of every area of life under Christ's lordship

Discussion Prompts

- What dead thing in your life most needs Christ's "Talitha cumi"?
- How are you putting yourself in the room with Him so He can do that work?
- What single step of faith could you take this week to receive what He is ready to give?