



Talith Cum: Little Girl, Get Up - Mark 5:21-43

Fifth Sunday after Pentecost
June 27, 2021

Ascension Lutheran Church
Pastor Chris

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus, the Christ.
Amen.

It is a story we never tire of hearing. The living dead brought back to life. It is a story the words of Scripture tell us again and again. The gift of life given without payment. Life. New life breathed into flesh that is worn and pained. New life breathed into lifeless eyes and lungs filled not simply with breath alone but with the very power of God—come to renew and refresh and return that which is dead or almost dead back to life. It is an old story and yet it is a story that fills us with hope each and every time we hear this good news.

“Do you believe in life after death?” the boss asked one of his employees. “Yes sir,” the new employee replied. “Well, then, that makes everything just fine,” the boss went on. “After you left early yesterday to go to your grandmother’s funeral, your grandmother stopped in to see you!”

It is almost what we should expect! Life after death. The empty tomb, the cross, the crown of thorns stand in testament to this expectation. The joy of God found in the power and promise of Jesus. This is what the synagogue leader Jairus longs for when he comes to find Jesus this day. The power and promise of God in Jesus. Even though there is no cross—no empty tomb, no crown of thorns yet—Jairus comes. His daughter is home at the point of death. And Jairus has no need for the care of status or image—he comes to Jesus out of his need—begging for his daughter’s life. It does not matter what will await Jairus after he has shared his faith in Jesus by begging Jesus to come—the only thing that matters is the life of his daughter. And Jesus, seeing his need goes with Jairus. But before we see the power of God in the life of this little girl—God has something else in mind.

In the midst of the crowd that follows Jesus to Jairus’ house—there is another woman. This one comes out of her need—herself. And where Jairus has no care of who sees him beg this Jesus to come—this woman who has been alone much of her life and looked over most of her life—comes in the midst of the crowd. Anonymity is her friend. She comes to touch the cloak of Jesus believing that even the hem of his garment will heal her of her suffering. Something inside of her cries out in faith and hope that this Jesus may just be the One, the one others have said he is—the Son of God—the Messiah—teacher, master, and healer. And so she comes—quietly but desperately to the edge of his tunic- to the edge of his presence. Jairus comes for his daughter—the woman comes for herself—they both come out of desperation—out of their helplessness—out of their hunger for their brokenness to be made whole. Jesus please come. If only I can touch them. And so they come and neither will be disappointed. The author and river of life has come, and these two souls need little encouragement to come and see and believe in the power of God. Which is exactly what Jesus promises each of us when we let our lives be wrapped up in the love and forgiveness of God.



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For the woman who touches Jesus' cloak there is new life—instantly. Jesus feels the power leave him and the woman feels the power rush through her making her whole once again. He knows this has happened and stops the procession to find out who has touched his cloak. And when the woman comes to the feet of Jesus she is filled with fear and apprehension, expecting to be treated with the disdain she has come to expect in the world—to be so close and to lose everything—she must be thinking—only Jesus does not disappoint. "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace and be healed of your disease." It is the dead finding new life. It is Jesus healing one of God's children. It is God alive and moving in the world. And no sooner does Jesus finish his sentence to this daughter of God when the servants of Jairus come to him to tell him his daughter has died. There is no doubt in my mind that Jairus looks at this now healed woman with contempt that in waiting for Jesus to heal her—he has lost his own daughter to death.

But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the leader of the synagogue, "Do not fear, only believe." And so Jairus looks to his future—so quiet so empty without his daughter to bring him joy. But Jesus continues the procession to the house where the little girl has died. And Scriptures tell us this morning that... When they came to the house of the leader of the synagogue, he saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. When he had entered, he said to them, "Why do you make a commotion and weep? The child is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him. Then he put them all outside and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him, and went in where the child was. He took her by the hand and said to her, "Talitha cum," which means, "Little girl, get up!" And immediately the girl got up and began to walk about. Talitha cum. God in Jesus Christ looks at each of us and speaks those words... Talitha cum. Little girl—little child get up.

As if to say—arise my child—wake up—live this life God has given to you. Do not let the days pass you by in sleep or in death—let the power of God move through you—let yourself be broken open by the power of the Holy Spirit that God may do a new thing in you. It is what God wants to do with each of us. A new thing in each of us. In faith, in hope, in truth—God already has begun a new thing in each of us—it is the promise to each child of God, to each of us at our baptism and to Wesley and to Camden this day at their baptisms and to every person in the world who calls on the name of Jesus Christ.

God's promise that in Jesus we will have new life—that God has begun a new thing in each of us—that God will break open our hearts and let God's love and light shine out to the world. It is my prayer for Wesley and for Camden, and for each of us, that we will be reminded daily of God's great love for us—every step, every breath, every beat of hearts measured and counted and tended by our God. Thanks be to God. Amen.