

I.N.I.

Third Sunday after Pentecost
June 10, 2018
Mark 5:21-24; 35-43

In Christ Jesus, Who has conquered death and the grave by His own resurrection from the dead, Dear Fellow Redeemed,

One of the saddest, yet most certain events in life, is death! Sad because it is so final, the irrevocable separation of loved ones. Certain because unless we live till the judgment every one of us will die—just like the past generations. Yes, death is inevitable and death is sad!

And one of the saddest deaths is that of a young child. One who is cut short of living in one's youth. One who never will get to experience adulthood or achieve the dreams and desires of childhood.

One such sad lesson we hear today in our sermon text, yet because of Jesus, this sad lesson has become one of tremendous joy and rejoicing and for us today it is a lesson of great comfort and peace.

DEATH STRIKES AGAIN!

I: With Death Comes Mourning.

II: But with Jesus, Comes Hope.

What an emotional lesson we have laid before us this morning. Jesus has crossed over the Sea of Galilee, is walking through the city and is surrounded by people. Suddenly one of the rulers of the synagogue, a man named Jairus, comes up to Jesus and throws himself on the ground at Jesus' feet and begs earnestly: **"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."**

What a heart-wrenching scene! A father, a prominent, honored man, on his knees before Jesus begging for his daughter's life. We can see Jairus' love both in his words and in his actions. He calls her: **MY LITTLE DAUGHTER**, a term of endearment. She is her father's little girl!

This is also a bit shocking. Most synagogue rulers were opposed to Jesus, they did not believe in Him as the Messiah, but looked on Him as a trouble maker, a rebel, a threat. But not Jairus. Jesus had healed the centurion's servant and the nobleman's son in this same area and had also spent some time in the synagogue preaching, so Jairus perhaps had heard Jesus speak and maybe heard of those miracles He had performed. Faith and a confident trust in Jesus' power over illness filled his heart.

Why Jairus waited until his daughter was so close to death, we do not know. Perhaps Jesus had not been in the area for some time; perhaps Jairus had just been led to believe in Jesus as the Messiah who had the power to save, maybe his daughter's illness came on suddenly. Jairus did know and believe that Jesus could help. Again he said: **"COME AND LAY YOUR HANDS ON HER, THAT SHE MAY BE HEALED, AND SHE WILL LIVE."**

But she didn't live! While Jairus was speaking to Jesus, some friends came with the dreadful news, **"YOUR DAUGHTER IS DEAD."**

DEATH STRIKES AGAIN!

No doubt that little girl was one of perhaps thousands to die on that day around the world. Statistics today tell us that on average 151,600 people die in the world every day. That's almost 105 people every minute. That's a lot of people. But that is little comfort to a grieving father who has just lost his little daughter.

Death, that final stage of this life we know so well, has just taken another victim. Why? Because of sin! **THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH. DEATH HAS COME UPON ALL MEN BECAUSE ALL HAVE SINNED AND FALL SHORT OF THE GLORY OF GOD.** The top three causes of death are heart disease, cancer and stroke, but in reality all of those deaths were due to one thing, **SIN!**

Death strikes every second, of every minute, of every hour, of every day. And what is man's response? The same as we see in our text—weeping and wailing, tears and grief! We read vs. 38: **THEN HE CAME TO THE HOUSE OF THE RULER OF THE SYNAGOGUE, AND SAW A TUMULT AND THOSE WHO WEPT AND WAILED LOUDLY.** The word "tumult" can also mean "a loud noise" or "uproar." What a scene! A little 12 year old girl lay dead and there was a

great noise of people wailing loudly. No doubt some of them were family members and close friends; others were the professional mourners that were hired, especially by those of high rank in office. In Matthew we are told that flute players were there and in Luke we are told that the people not only wailed loudly but beat their breasts as a sign of extreme mourning and sadness.

We too mourn, we too cry, we too weep, we too feel a loss in the face of death. This mourning and grieving helps us accept the tragedy, helps us emotionally get through the suffering and sorrow but it does not take it away or remove it. All the mourning and crying and wailing in this world cannot change the situation or remove the loss. Only Jesus can!

The friends had said, **"WHY TROUBLE THE TEACHER ANY FURTHER?"** They thought the little girl was beyond help. She was dead! But Jesus had said to Jairus: **"DO NOT BE AFRAID; ONLY BELIEVE."** In other words don't let your eyes rule your heart. Don't let their words crush your faith. He turned to the mourning crowd and said, **"WHY MAKE THIS COMMOTION AND WEEP? THE CHILD IS NOT DEAD, BUT SLEEPING."** The skeptics in the crowd ridiculed Jesus.

But to Jesus who is the ruler of life and death; who has all power in heaven and earth, death is but a sleep from which He can awaken a person as easily as we wake up our children from their sleep. Jesus showed to Jairus why his trust in Him was well founded. He put out all of the people who had scornfully laughed at Him for what they thought was a foolish statement. We are not told that He politely asked them to leave, but He put them out. He would not let them interfere a moment longer with the growing faith of His friend Jairus.

He took Jairus and his wife, three of His disciples and went into the child's room. He took her by the hand, this dead lifeless body, and spoke to it and said: **"TALITHA, CUMI,"** which is Aramaic for **"LITTLE GIRL, I SAY TO YOU, ARISE."**

Immediately her spirit, her soul entered her and she arose and she began to walk. Jesus' powerful words destroyed death and the disease that had brought it about. She was alive and healthy once again. The parents were so overcome with amazement and ecstatic joy that Jesus had to remind them to give the girl something to eat.

There are several points we would like to apply to ourselves this morning. The first is this. Death has already struck every living soul. We are all born spiritually dead in sins, enemies of God, spiritually blind, children of Satan and slaves to sin. And all of the mourning, weeping, wailing and tears of repentance in the world cannot remove the tragedy. Only God's Word can do that. Only the Gospel message of full and free forgiveness and life through Jesus Christ can call us out of the darkness of spiritual death to life; can impart a new spiritual life in us. Only through the power of the Good News of Jesus' life, death and resurrection can the Holy Spirit cause us to be born again, quickened and regenerated.

But even those of us who are spiritually alive in Christ will still have to face death. Death will strike us some day. And again all the mourning, weeping and wailing will not remove the tragedy of our passing. But Christ has! He who died and was laid in the grave on Good Friday came alive and conquered and destroyed death's hold over all people on Easter Sunday.

Yes, death is the end of this life which we know so well and are accustomed to, but death is not the ultimate end. In fact for the believer, death is really just the beginning, the beginning of real life; life the way God created it to be in the Garden of Eden—perfect and forever!

That is why Jesus does the same for us as He did for Jairus and his wife. He puts out the skeptics of this world, the doubters and those who question the Bible's promise of a resurrection and comes to us in His powerful Word and reassures us over and over again: **"I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE. HE WHO BELIEVES IN ME, THOUGH HE MAY DIE, HE SHALL LIVE. ...BECAUSE I LIVE, YOU WILL LIVE ALSO!"**

When the worldly skeptics tear at our hearts of faith with their lies and deceit, Jesus throws them out of our hearts and says to us: **"DO NOT BE AFRAID; ONLY BELIEVE."**

Jesus paid the price for our sins and has promised to raise us up again on the last day. Our death to Him is but a sleep, just like Jairus' daughter, from which He will awaken us with loving words, with powerful words, and we will rise and live forever with Him.

Three miracles over death are mentioned performed by Jesus in the Bible. This one in which the girl

had just died. The raising of the youth of Nain who had been dead for at least a day, for the funeral procession was on its way to the cemetery; and the raising of Lazarus who had been dead for 4 days. Jesus' power over death knows no time limit. Those who have died 2,000 or 4,000 or 6,000 years ago will be raised to life—all because of the greatest resurrection miracle of all time: Jesus raising from the dead and having paid for the guilt and punishment for all people.

Yes, tears of sadness still will flow at the funerals of our loved ones, but because of Jesus they will not be tears of hopelessness or weeping and wailing of despair. The Apostle Paul wrote: **BUT I DO NOT WANT YOU TO BE IGNORANT, BRETHREN, CONCERNING THOSE WHO HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP, LEST YOU SORROW AS OTHERS WHO HAVE NO HOPE. FOR IF WE BELIEVE THAT JESUS DIED AND ROSE AGAIN, EVEN SO GOD WILL BRING WITH HIM THOSE WHO SLEEP IN JESUS. FOR THIS WE SAY TO YOU BY THE WORD OF THE LORD, THAT WE WHO ARE ALIVE AND REMAIN UNTIL THE COMING OF THE LORD WILL BY NO MEANS PRECEDE THOSE WHO ARE ASLEEP. FOR THE LORD HIMSELF WILL DESCEND FROM HEAVEN WITH A SHOUT, WITH THE VOICE OF AN ARCHANGEL, AND WITH THE TRUMPET OF GOD. AND THE DEAD IN CHRIST WILL RISE FIRST. THEN WE WHO ARE ALIVE AND REMAIN SHALL BE CAUGHT UP TOGETHER WITH THEM IN THE CLOUDS TO MEET THE LORD IN THE AIR. AND THUS WE SHALL ALWAYS BE WITH THE LORD. THEREFORE COMFORT ONE ANOTHER WITH THESE WORDS.**

Amen.