

**Mark 5:35-43**

35 While he was still speaking, some people came from the leader's house to say, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher any further?" 36 But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the leader of the synagogue, "Do not fear, only believe." 37 He allowed no one to follow him except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James. 38 When they came to the house of the leader of the synagogue, he saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. 39 When he had entered, he said to them, "Why do you make a commotion and weep? The child is not dead but sleeping." 40 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. 41 He took her by the hand and said to her, "Talitha cum," which means, "Little girl, get up!" 42 And immediately the girl got up and began to walk about (she was twelve years of age). At this they were overcome with amazement. 43 He strictly ordered them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.

Jesus was on a preaching tour in Galilee which was very necessary and important because the religious establishment of the day was off track from the will of God and was headed further in the wrong direction. They were pulling further and further away from the will of God because the powerful elite were self serving. Jesus was focused on teaching because he had to counter the misguided teaching that taught human precepts as doctrine. Jesus taught the will of God, the love of God, and the kingdom of God while the religious establishment was teaching rules and regulations that neglected the underprivileged. Jesus could be known as a reformer because when the religious community gets off track theologically it needs reformation and he reformed it. However, while it is a very important aspect as to who he is, we do not tend to think of Jesus as a reformer because we identify Jesus as the Son of God. During New Testament times the identity of Jesus was questioned and challenged quite frequently. It was crucial for them and it is crucial for us today to understand who he is.

In the Gospel of Mark Jesus is identified as the Son of God from the very beginning of the gospel (Mark 1:11). He is also known as a teacher that is much better than any other, a great miracle worker, and the Messiah. However, being known as the Messiah presents a problem for him. It creates tension with those in power. The religious community was controlled by the powerful elite and they rejected Jesus, his status, and his identity. They did everything they could to stop him and their methods escalated in severity as time moved forward.

The Scripture takes place in the middle of a story. Jesus was teaching in Galilee and went across the lake to escape the crowds and to take the Word of God to the Gentiles. When Jesus and the disciples came back to Galilee large crowds flocked to him once again. A synagogue leader named Jairus came to Jesus, fell at his feet and begged him to heal his daughter. Jesus agreed to help him and a large crowd followed Jesus to the house of Jairus. However, this trip was interrupted by a woman with a bleeding problem. She was instantly healed simply by touching his cloak. The Scripture takes place while Jesus is speaking to her. Some people came to Jairus with the devastating news that his daughter had died.

Let's look at Jesus identity as it is known to the various characters within the story. To the crowd Jesus was a teacher. In verse 35 it is stated "Why trouble the teacher any further?" However, we also know that large crowds were following Jesus because of his healing and the excitement of witnessing miracles. So, the crowd knows Jesus as a teacher and also as a great miracle worker. We know that Jairus identified Jesus as a great miracle worker because he came to Jesus in hopes of a miracle to save his daughter's life. When Jesus brought the girl back to life, he commanded the witnesses to keep silent about it. I think it is important to notice the wording. He strictly ordered them, he was firm, he was adamant, that no one should know about this. The significant reason for this is due to his identity and mob mentality.

The prevailing thought of the day was that the Messiah would be a great miracle worker like the prophet Elijah and that he also would be a great warrior king like King David. The people hoped that Jesus was the Messiah and that he would defeat the Romans. The identity of the Messiah was significantly misunderstood because what they wanted and hoped for was not in line with the character of God. Here lies a very big problem. It is the same big problem that has always been here from day one. The conflict is between the human will and the will of God. The religious establishment had fallen off track from the will of God and, as a consequence, instead of leading people to the will of God, they lead the population off track from the will of God. At this specific time in the ministry of Jesus, he cannot have the mob mentality to grow out of control. When in Gentile country, on the other side of the lake where pigs were raised, there was no threat from his identity. He commissioned a man that he healed to go and tell what the Lord has done for him.

We know who Jesus is. We know Jesus is the Son of God. The contemporary lesson for us is to see how the scriptures fit into our daily lives. It is one thing to know the story but it is another thing altogether to see how you fit within the story. The miracle story shows something significant that we don't notice unless we take the time to reflect upon it. Faith is the precondition for the miracle. Faith is the most important factor. The miracle itself does not generate faith in the deuteragonists. Their faith had to be present for the miracle to occur. The crowd that was following Jesus did not have faith; they were following due to excitement. The crowd follows the mob mentality; they do not follow the character of Jesus. This goes on within the realm of contemporary society to where the whole of society does not follow the character of Jesus. The majority profess to be Christian in name only. What is needed in us is faith, not to be just one in the crowd, but to be one that is willing step out of crowd for the love of God, the word of God, and the Son of God.