

Jesus Christ Has Authority Over Death

by Geoff Thomas

This sermon delves into the powerful accounts in Mark's Gospel, focusing on Jesus' authority over creation, demons, disease, and death. It emphasizes the significance of Jesus' miracles as signs pointing to His ultimate victory over death and the promise of resurrection. The narrative of Jairus' daughter being raised from the dead serves as a foretaste of the future resurrection for believers, highlighting the hope and assurance found in Jesus Christ.

Scripture: Mark 5:21, John 6:40, Revelation 1:17, Isaiah 26:19, Luke 7:11

Topics: "Authority of Jesus", "Hope in Resurrection"

Description

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Transcript

It's a great joy to be here again. Let me read to you from the Word of God. Let's turn to Mark's Gospel.

Chapter 5. Let's read from verse 21. Mark's Gospel. Chapter 5. Verse 21.

Hear the Word of God. When Jesus had again crossed over by boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around Him while He was by the lake. Then one of the synagogue rulers named Jairus came there.

Seeing Jesus, he fell at His feet and pleaded earnestly with Him. My little daughter is dying. Please come and put Your hands on her so that she will be healed and live.

So Jesus went with Him. A large crowd followed and pressed around Him. And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years.

She'd suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better, she grew worse. When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind Him in the crowd and touched His cloak because she thought, if I just touch His clothes, I will be healed. Immediately, her bleeding stopped.

And she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering. At once, Jesus realized that power had gone out from Him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, Who touched My clothes? You see the people crowding against you, the disciples answered, and yet you can ask, Who touched Me? But Jesus kept looking around to see who'd done it.

Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at His feet and trembling with fear, told Him the whole truth. He said to her, Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering.

While Jesus was still speaking, some men came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue ruler. Your daughter's dead, they said. Why bother the teacher anymore? Ignoring what they said, Jesus told the synagogue ruler, Don't be afraid.

Just believe. He didn't let anyone follow Him except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James. When they came to the home of the synagogue ruler, Jesus saw a commotion with people crying, wailing loudly.

He went in and said to them, Why all this commotion and wailing? The child isn't dead, but asleep. But they laughed at Him. After He put them all out, He took the child's father and mother and the disciples who were with Him and went in where the child was.

He took her by the hand and said to her, Talitha koumi, which means, little girl, I say to you, get up. Immediately the girl stood up and walked around. She was 12 years old.

At this, they were completely astonished. He gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this and told them, give her something to eat. Let's put this passage then in the context where we find it.

It's in the Bible. Okay, so I've not come with you with a new message or with something from the UK. But it's here in the Bible.

And the Bible was written by ordinary folk like us. They weren't in some great conspiracy that they wanted to spread a lie around the world. A terrible lie.

So, it's in the Bible. And then it's in Mark's Gospel. And Mark's Gospel, you know, begins the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

And everything that follows in the next 16 chapters are His vindication of that claim He's made. He wants to show us. He wants to prove to us that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

And then the immediate context then is chapter 4 and verse 35 where the power of Jesus is shown in four different ways. Firstly, there's His power over creation. He's in a storm in the boat and the disciples who were fishermen were terrified at such a storm.

And Jesus speaks and the winds and waves obey Him. And there's a great calm. He has power over creation.

And then it goes on and there He meets the worst case of demon possession that the world has ever seen or ever will see. A man from Gadara who could just snap chains and tear all his clothes off and live amongst the tombs and howl. And no one could help him.

And Jesus just comes to him and delivers him. He doesn't dance or scream or shout or do tricks with candles or anything. He just heals the man.

The man wants to give up everything and follow Him. You go home and tell your family, He says. Jesus has power over Satan at His strongest.

He's nothing compared to the power of Christ. And then thirdly, there's His power over disease. His sovereignty over disease.

The woman, twelve years she's tried the best, spent all her money, and gone to one doctor after another, and they can't stop her bleeding. And He doesn't do anything. She comes and touches Him.

And immediately, she is healed. His power over disease. There's no failures in any of Jesus' miracles of healing.

Those in the last stages of very serious disease are healed. And fourthly, this incident that I've just read to you then, His power over death. And we're told about it in lovely detail.

We're told how the boat with Jesus on it grates to the shore, and He stands in the prow of the boat, and everyone hears, do you know Jesus is here? Do you know Jesus is here? And the women stop their chores, and the men stop their work, and the children stop their schooling, and everyone comes. Jesus has come to this insignificant spot, and He starts to teach them. And there's a man, one of the leaders of the community, and his name is Jairus.

He's one of the rulers, the top man in the village. And one day, his 12-year-old daughter is sick. She doesn't get any better.

They go to the medicine woman up the street, and she comes with some herbs, and she can't do anything. The girl gets sicker. And the parents call their children in, and the street is very quiet, and everyone is very sober.

They all love a 12-year-old pretty little girl who's dying. And her mother is tearing her hair. And she's saying, Jairus, you're a man of God.

You trust in God. You do something. You help her now.

Now, Jairus had heard of Jesus. Everyone had heard of Jesus. The women at their washing.

The men at the city gates. Do you know what He said last night? Do you know what He did? You know, my uncle's brother. Do you know? He was dying, and Jesus has healed him.

And they all talked. The country buzzed with this news. But Jairus knew that in synagogues, He could be a handful.

He could say things and boy, there'd be a riot. And so, Jairus wondered, I wonder what will happen if He comes to my synagogue. But of course, we're back and beyond here.

He'd never come to our synagogue. And so, he didn't worry too much about that at all. But he wondered what He would do.

He wondered, you know, was there something in it? And that day came. Never to be forgotten day in their lives. And she's ill.

And he looks at her. She's sweating. She's unconscious.

And the man comes running up. He says, sir, Jesus is here. He's at the shore.

He's preaching to the people. And now Jairus must come off the fence. And Jesus is here.

And it's an ungainly posture of yours to be still sitting on a fence. And now he doesn't care what the next gathering of the synagogue rulers' annual assembly is going to say. His daughter's sick and Jesus is here.

His daughter's dying and Jesus is here. And nobody can help and Jesus is here. And off he goes with as much dignity through the empty streets down to the lakeside.

The crowd parts before Jairus. And he falls at Jesus' feet. His nose in the sand.

And he asks Jesus for help. There are two different groups, I suppose, that came to Jesus. There were the cunning haters of all He said and all He stood for.

And they devised questions that whatever answer He gave, He'd be in trouble. And they went up to Him and they talked about a woman who had been married seven times to seven brothers. They talked about a coin with Caesar's symbol.

Do we proud Jews give tax to Caesar? What do you say? What do you say? Questions like that. And He answered with such sweetness and wisdom and shut their mouths up and they went away with their tails between their legs. Just as they'd come.

But others came. Came with such concern for sick children. Sent messages about a brother who was dying and they came to Jesus.

They came longing for help. How have you come here this morning? Have you come to examine us? Just we are ordinary people doing a job, having a marriage, courting, praying about the future. We trust in this Jesus.

We come to Him. We can't answer all your questions, but we know He can answer your questions. And so He goes there and He says, my little girl is dying.

But you see, He says more than that. Have you noticed what He does? He doesn't say, my daughter's at the point of death. Please help me.

But there's a course of action that He believes Jesus must take. Jesus has to take if His daughter's to get well. Put your hands on her.

Come. Come with me. Put your hands on her so that she will be healed and lived.

He'd come to Jesus with certain ideas about Him like some of you have come here. You have a certain background and traditions and ideas. You've come here and you've brought those with you this morning.

And Jairus' ideas of Jesus were rather unworthy. And only when he has to abandon them and then just see and listen to the claims and the life of Jesus that things then fall into place in his life. And we're like

Jesus.

We tell Jesus what precise ways, what we are expecting from this service today, from this preacher today, from the friendships that we've made and the worship here. And we know that Jesus didn't need to go to the house of Jairus. There was once a Centurion, a Roman Italian officer in the army.

He had a batman, a servant, and they were the closest two men you'd ever meet. He cooked for him and repaired his armor and looked after him when he was sick and discussed strategy the night before the battle and bound up his wounds and discussed the victory afterwards. And they were inseparable.

One day he said, boss, I'm just not well. I'm sorry, I can't help you. I'm so sick.

And he watched him grow more and more ill. He sent for the legionnaire's doctor to come and look at him. He could do nothing.

So he went and told Jesus. He was the wise man. And Jesus said, oh, I'll come straight away.

Oh, he said, no need for you to come. You just determine it. You just will it.

And My servant will live. Jesus marveled at his faith. He just nodded.

The man went back home and there was his servant. Sorry, boss, about that, he said. I'm feeling much better.

It was at that time that he was talking to Jesus that the healing took place. He didn't need to go. He didn't need to touch Him.

We say, it only takes a flush of the will that can and the dead erased. But what are we told? Verse 24, so Jesus went with him. That's grace, isn't it? Let me just tell you now, Jairus.

I don't need to come, you know. I can heal him from here. You must have a bigger view of me.

There's no little lesson for a man worried to death about his daughter from our compassionate Lord. You know, there can be an awful lot of muddling or praying. We're so glad when you come to our prayer meetings.

So glad when you pray for the first time. I don't care at all when you're muddled in your praying and muddle up the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. We're just so delighted that you're there.

We'll back you and support you. Pray for you all your life. There can be an awful lot of confusion in our praying, and God hears us.

Okay, children, there's a little girl and Mommy's going out to the supermarket. And so she goes into the garden. Daddy says, where are you going? I'm going to pick some flowers for Mommy.

Mommy, she says. So she goes out and she brings them in. And Daddy says, can I see them? And Daddy picks up the flowers and there's poison ivy there.

And weeds and dead stalks. Here you are, he says. And the door opens and Mommy comes in.

She runs up to Mommy. She gives Mommy her flowers. Oh, you're a good little girl, she says.

And she gives her a kiss and she puts them in a bowl of water. When we pray to God, none of us has ever prayed a sinless prayer. But we pray to God in the name of Jesus Christ.

We have a mediator. We have an advocate with God. We pray all these things in Jesus' name.

And Jesus descends our prayers. And He offers to God a prayer that's a fragrant offering in God's sight. That's wonderfully acceptable.

And God hears and answers our prayers because we go through Jesus. Do you go? How do you go? How do you pray? Do you pray in Jesus' name? Do you plead the merits of Jesus? What He's done for you? His righteousness? His blood? Your only hope is Jesus? Do you tell God these things? So, Jesus went with him. So, I suppose Jairus is as polite as he can be and the disciples and the crowd are all following Jesus behind.

He's hurrying them along on the bend. And walking towards Him come two men. Men He knows.

These men who work for Him and they look so sober. And He's saying in His heart, oh, please, God, no, don't let it be. No, Lord, no.

No, not that. And they come to Him. And the terrible news, they say, your daughter's dead.

Oh, I hope they didn't say it like that. I hope they just hung around Him and hugged Him and wept and said, not good news, boss. I hope they said that and whispered awfully sorry.

It doesn't read like that, though, does it? It's so blunt. Isn't it awful? Your daughter's dead, and then they say, so you needn't bother to hurry home with Jesus? What killing, unkind words. No bedside manner there.

Jairus has just heard Jesus say to the woman, daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace. Isn't he a man of faith? Doesn't he run the synagogue? Doesn't he know the Old Testament Scriptures? And this has happened to him now.

He's served God all his life and this news, this awful barb, don't bother pinning your hopes on Jesus. She's dead. Okay? That's it.

No use bringing him a step further. He's as helpless before the grave as anybody. No one can do anything now.

They assume that for some things, religion's okay, you know, for taking weddings and for singing some songs together and meeting your friends on a Sunday and hearing some inspiring words. That's fine. It's fine for you.

We're glad you enjoy it. People think like that. But when it comes to death, men are helpless.

That's the assumption that people have, isn't it? In San Antonio. You know, a little Jesus. Maybe you thought like that, that no one can cope with the grave.

But Jesus just dismisses them. He says, don't be afraid. Don't be afraid.

Fear not. Don't be afraid. Don't be afraid.

Just believe. He says, go on believing. Believing the Word is in the present tense.

What does it mean? You came to Me when there was a time in your life when you were longing for something more than you lived by until then, that I could inject into your life at a certain time of your life something that was missing, something that you needed. It comes to us, doesn't it, when we are no longer in control, when we're out of our comfort zone, and we need heaven's power. We need supernatural.

We need God. You came to Me. You've come to Jesus this day, this morning.

Don't stop. Don't come just for the reason you've come, but keep coming. Come into Him.

Come in and in and in and in. Come now to God. You are God.

Come to Him for help at every area of your life. Not just this providence that's brought you to us this morning. Don't let your fears win.

Don't listen when they say, but then, death always has the last word. She's dead. Jesus is helpless.

Don't let those fears stop you from coming and coming and reading and listening and having a mind. Don't leave your mind behind. You think now.

Please, use your mind to think about what I'm saying to you. It's from the Bible. It's from Mark's Gospel.

It's this extraordinary man of such power over creation, over demons, over disease, over death. Don't you need someone? Have you got a secret? You're going to avoid death. So, Jesus brushes them aside, doesn't He? These Jeremiads.

He brushes them aside. And He keeps walking. What does it tell us about Jesus? Jesus Himself still believes.

He's the author and finisher of our faith and He believes. He goes on. He hears the men and He goes on.

He enters into the situation. He doesn't shake Jairus by the hand and say, sorry, old man, I'm so, so sorry. Come to me a little earlier next time and we'll see what we can do.

Now, I've got a crowd. I'm a preacher. They're all waiting for me by the lakes.

But anyway, God bless you. He goes on. He comes with Him.

He comes with us in the darkest days when our heart is breaking, when all disappointment seems to crush us, and He's there. He's there with us. And He keeps going.

He, our Savior, is with us. Don't be afraid. Keep trusting, He says.

Campbell Morgan was the minister in Westminster Chapel with Dr. Lloyd-Jones when he started. He's got a book called The Great Physician. And he's got a sermon on this passage.

And he says, I can hardly speak about this passage without being personal. I remember a time 40 years ago when my own first lassie, she lay at the point of death. I called for Jesus then and He came.

He surely said to our troubled hearts, don't be afraid, only believe. He didn't say, she shall be made whole. She wasn't made whole.

On the earthly plane, she passed away to the life beyond. He did say to her, Talitha Kumi, little lamb, arise. But in her case, He didn't mean stay on the earth level.

He meant He needed her. He took her to Himself. He has been with her all these years as we mentioned time.

And I've missed her every day. His word, don't be afraid, just believe, has been the strength of all my passing years. Jesus says to us, you think I can help you sometimes.

Sometimes you go along to a church. You go along to a service sometimes because you're under some pressure and you think I can help. But then, something big comes.

Something scary. Something soul-destroying comes. Keep coming.

You keep coming. Keep coming to Jesus. Don't be afraid.

Just believe. If I'm adequate to heal when you're sick, if I can heal the sick, I can raise the dead. So we go on and we see how Jesus veils His glory.

They come to the house. There it is. And you can tell the house because of the noise that's coming from it.

He doesn't let anyone come. He says to you stately fellows, Peter, James, and John, you come with Me now. A restricted audience.

When did this happen? Before? Two occasions it happened before. It happens on the Mount of Transfiguration. He takes these same three guys with Him when Elijah and Moses are there.

The Father says, this is My beloved Son. And what's the other occasion? Gethsemane. He takes them, doesn't He? And they hear Him pray.

So, transfiguration, intercession, resurrection. What is Mark doing? Mark is saying, this is very important. This is up there with the transfiguration.

This is up there with Gethsemane. Who are you dealing with? Who is this Jesus? You know, everything He does is very important. But there are other occasions where He prefaces what He has to say with, verily, verily, I say unto you, surely, amen, amen, I'm saying something that's really prick up your ears.

And listen to this. So He takes the three with Him because of the Deuteronomic requirement. Chapter 19, verse 15, a matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.

This guy, John Mark, a young man, leaves his cloak when he flees in the garden when they come with swords and staves and torches to arrest Jesus. And he's there and he sees Him alive. He's there with the 500 on the hill.

And he writes then one day. He writes this Gospel and Peter's there. Now, so what happened? So you arrived at the house of Jairus there.

You see, these aren't cunningly devised fables that we're following. These were men who were eyewitnesses of the majesty of Jesus Christ, of His power, of His glory. They saw it.

And the crowd are mad. These are the whalers. The Talmud said even the poor man must have one whaler and the flautist.

And the biggest group in that world was the Jerusalem women. That's what they were called. And then they acted.

There was one old woman. She was the head of them. Take your apron off and line up the women.

The boys come down the street. Some mother's sons carrying crosses. They're going to be killed, tortured to death.

And they start to wail. And they wail and wail. They ululate.

And when Jesus comes, He silences them. He doesn't want their pity. You've got a lot to be concerned about, He says.

There'll be a day when you'll be weeping for yourselves and for your children. Wish you had none. There'll be the terrible destruction of Jerusalem that no city has ever been destroyed like this city.

I don't want your pity. You think of yourself. And so Jesus goes into the din.

And there they are. They are all the local people. They're all coming for their shackles afterwards rewarded for wailing.

And He silences them. He says, the child isn't dead. She's asleep.

And these broken-hearted people immediately start laughing. The laughter of scorn and the tears of greed side by side. She sleeps.

Well, you know they had seen sleeping children all their lives. They'd been sleeping children and they knew the difference between a sleeping child and a dead child. They knew, what's this guy? Let him stick to his teaching.

It can be inspiring, but he doesn't know anything about dead children. And He threw them out. Out! There'll be a day when there'll be a great separation, won't there? Like a shepherd separates sheep from goats.

He'll separate. He'll discriminate. He'll distinguish.

He'll say, I never knew you. Out! We don't want any one of you. Any one of you to be separated from Jesus Christ.

We believe that's why God in His grace has brought you to be with us today. We'll do you good. Jesus will do you good.

Now there are just seven people in the room, aren't there? You're the seven. Three disciples. Mr. and Mrs. Jairus, the little girl, and Jesus.

Just the seven of them. And then we are told in verse 43 these extraordinary words. He gave strict orders that no one should know about this.

How can you keep such an event? It's laughable, isn't it? That evening she was out playing with her friends. And the street knew she was dead. And the servants had seen her and they were mourning, and the wailing had gone on.

And Jesus says, don't let anyone know. What's He talking about here? Well, what Jesus wants to do by that command is tell them not to tell anyone about what happened in that girl's bedroom. Alright? If reporters come next week and they say, oh, hello, now I've got my notepad here now.

Something exciting has happened, Mrs. Jairus, in your life, hasn't it? Just what happened? She said, oh, sorry, we're not allowed to tell you. Oh, and He wants to bribe her just a little bit. You know how reporters are.

And when she goes to the Jewish Ladies Weaving Guild on a Wednesday afternoon, and the women come around and they say, oh, something happened in your house then? She says, yeah, it did, and we are thankful to God. And that's all she'll say. That's all she'll say.

And there are a couple of reasons for that. The first is it's dangerous. At this early stage, this is Mark 5, and Jesus is beginning His Galilee campaign.

He's bringing the Gospel there. He's got 12 yokels, young men, and they don't know what the Kingdom of God is. They don't know who He is.

When He tells them He's got to suffer and die and rise again, it doesn't make sense to them. And He can't be hunted like a partridge in the wilderness by the Sanhedrin and their private army, and by Herod and his pilot and the soldiers. He can't go to the Dead Sea and hide in a cave there.

He goes to weddings, and He preaches in the open air, and He sits at a well and He talks to people. He wants that freedom. So He doesn't want a big disturbance about His power.

And the other reason, of course, is that He throws these people out and then they've got to be silent because they've ridiculed Him. Be careful. Be very, very careful.

He veils His glory from those who feel superior to Him and mock Him and disdain Him. All be careful. But what to those who find are this? No tongue, no pen can show the love of Jesus what it is.

None but His loved ones know. When He rises from the dead, He doesn't go to the Sanhedrin saying, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha. He doesn't go to Pilate.

He doesn't go to Herod. There are 500. He's loved them.

He's saved them. There are 12. There are three.

There's a half-brother that He needs to speak to. There's Peter. He needs to rehabilitate him and use him.

And He goes to those. They're all imperfect, but all of them have some faith, some hope, some trust in Him. And then He displays His victory finally.

He goes in and He goes right up to the little girl and He holds her cold hand. And He says, Talitha Kumi, little girl, I say, get up. Mark quotes actual Aramaic words.

Hebrew had died about 200 years before this as a living language. In the marvelous recovery of the language over the last century, it's just an extraordinary event. They learned the old language, but it had gone.

People spoke Aramaic now. It was the kitchen language in the carpenter's shop. And it's pretty sure that Jesus spoke Greek.

Peter has excellent Greek. But the normal language would be Aramaic. And you come across it.

Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani, my God, my God, why have You forsaken me? That's in Aramaic. And ephapha. Remember when He heals a man who is deaf? And He says, be opened.

And the man can hear the birds sing and the voice of Jesus. And a word like Abba. Abba is Aramaic for Father.

And so it's paid such an unforgettable impression on Peter what he saw. He's there looking. The dead girl and Jesus going.

When he went preaching all across Turkey, we call it today, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia, those places where he wrote the letter and he preaches to them and they want to know. Tell us about Jesus. Tell us what was He like? Didn't He heal a little girl? Well, yes, yes.

Oh, I was there. We went into the room, just the three of us. He led in and the parents were there.

He took her by the hand and He said to her, Talitha koumi. He said, that's our language. It means little girl, get up.

My mother said it to me. Every mother said it to their children. Siesta time.

It's hot in the Middle East. And you don't want your child out in the heat, but you don't want them to sleep too long or they won't sleep at night. So you put them down for an hour in the midday, and then you go and you say, Talitha koumi, Talitha koumi, come on little girl, come on.

Wake up sleepy eyes, come on. It's not like abacadabra. You understand that? It's not a magic word like that.

It's an ordinary word. Ordinary words are given new meaning when Jesus comes into your home. How you speak to your wife.

How you speak to your husband. How you speak to the children. It's all changed.

Jesus changes everything. Talitha koumi. Little girl, arise, He says.

And she got up. Who are these four men in my room? Mom, what are you doing? She's looking around. Give her something to eat now, He says.

Jesus has authority over death. Death is subject to the influence of Jesus Christ. That's the main truth.

This miracle is a sign. It signifies what He's going to do. He's going to raise the dead.

That's what this miracle is all about. Signposts are important, aren't they? When you see the signposts, you don't say, oh, we've arrived. You go the direction and you go the mileage that says on the signpost.

You say, okay, why don't we see this sort of thing now in San Antonio? Why don't we see two or three times a year a death certificate being torn up and the explanation given that they've been raised from the dead? Why don't we see it? Well, for the same reason that you don't see it very often when Jesus was on this earth. The Gospels tell us in Luke 7 of a widow's son who died, her only son, in Nain. And how Jesus raised the boy from the dead.

And then in John 11, you have the raising of Lazarus, Mary and Martha's brother. And Jesus raises him from the dead. And here in Mark 5. Just these three.

There may have been others, but we are not told there were others. Only three. In other words, He didn't bring many back from the dead.

Why not? Well, because it wasn't the time. The time for that is resurrection day at the second coming of Christ. What we have here are samples of that resurrection.

Many people who died when Jesus had His life 30 years, had His ministry three years, they remained dead. He didn't empty the cemeteries. He didn't put funeral directors out of business.

Grave diggers made a living. All those years that Jesus was on earth. Just these few.

Why did Jesus raise them? Why did Jesus restore them? Well, to show us what is ultimate reality. Alright? That's a lovely phrase. What is ultimate reality? Is it the corpse? Is it the coffin? Is it the grave? Is that what it's all about? Ultimate reality is that we die and rot.

Or is ultimate reality Jesus Christ? That's the challenge that you all have to face up to. What is ultimate reality? That He has power over the grave. He can open the jaws of death and He can bring out from the grave those who have died.

It was a sign. It was a foretaste. It was a preliminary sketch of what's yet to come.

That's what it was. Let me pick up that word foretaste. We lived in a little house when I was a boy in the 1940's.

I would be up first, I suppose, the children and the father and mother. My father was up and my mother. My father would rake out the ashes from the fire that kept that one room warm in the winter.

He'd get the ashes out. He'd put the unburnt coal on one side. Then he'd put paper and he'd put sticks and he'd put coal.

He'd put the coke on top of that. Then he'd light it with a match. Then he'd make a metal blower that he'd put over and he'd put paper around it to seal it so the draught would be underneath.

And then the paper lit the sticks and the sticks would light the coal. I'd watch all this every day. He'd go over then to the sink.

My mother would be at the oven there and she would be cooking eggs and bacon. That's all we had. We had cereal, eggs and bacon we had.

And my father would wash and then he'd shave at the sink there. And then that room would warm up. And Mum and I, before I went to school, I'd be in that room with my mother.

In the afternoon, we'd listen to the radio together. Then she'd make cake. She'd put in the butter and the flour and the sugar and the ingredients and she'd mix them all up.

She'd have two tins and she'd put them in the two tins with some greaseproof paper and she'd put them in the oven for 40 minutes or so. And then she'd give me the bowl and the spoon. I can taste it still.

And then in 45 minutes, she'd open the oven and she'd bring out the cake and she'd unclip it and take away the paper. And then she'd put jam across the two. She'd put the kettle on and she'd make two cups of tea, very milky for me and a cup of tea for her.

And then she'd cut the cake. She'd give me a piece of warm, warm Mum's cake. I'd had the foretaste, but now I had the cake.

Jairus' daughter, the widow of Nain's son, Lazarus raising. They had the foretastes. What's going to happen when He comes in the clouds of heaven at the end of the world when the trumpet shall sound and the dead in Christ be raised? And as He was raised from the dead, that's how the miracles of Jesus function.

They give hope to us. When we say goodbye to our loved ones in the grave, we know we're going to see them again. That's how it functioned.

It functioned for James. He's always the first because he's the oldest, I presume. James and John.

But he doesn't live long, does he? Within a year or so, Herod has arrested him and one day he's in prison and three soldiers come into the cell. One has a short-bladed sword and they get him by an arm each. And they do the swoop up, quite merciless and merciful through the solar plexus into the heart.

And as he realizes, ah, he's got memories. Lazarus comes forth. Talith Hakumi.

Jesus and the widow of Nain son and Him. Forty days He's there with them talking. This isn't the end.

Because I live, you shall live also. The great hope that the Christian has. Why should you believe in Jesus Christ today? Well, one of the reasons is because of the resurrection.

Perhaps that's the most important. That shows to us that His authority and His power, because the resurrection didn't take place in the realm of theology or dogma or traditions. It took place in history where stones and a boulder are rolled away and He comes transformed, alive.

Not a ghost now. He eats. They cook.

He cooks for them. They cook for Him. They eat and drink together.

A ghost doesn't do that. This is His promise. This wonderful verse, John 6.40, For My Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes on Him shall have eternal life, and I will raise Him up at the last day.

There it is. That's what we're talking about. That's what this whole incident is pointing towards.

That's the promise. And you can say it's too good to be true. And you can say whoever heard of anyone being raised from the dead, well, you just heard about it, didn't you? It's here in the Gospels.

It's here. You say they're prejudiced. And you are not? You're just transparent and open? Well then, look at this evidence if you are transparent and open.

Do I believe the record? Why? I can't but believe it. I'm just responding to truth. The only reason you should become Christians, every one of you this morning, is because it's true.

He said, Talitha Kumi and she rose from the dead. He said, on the third day I will rise again. And they went down into the garden and the stone was rolled away.

And there were clothes there, but He wasn't there. No one wanted that body. And then He appeared.

And He transformed those men. And the people I most like and love to be with are people He's transformed still today. He says, Revelation 1, 17 and 18, don't be afraid, I am the first and the last.

I am the living One. I was dead and behold, I am alive forevermore. And I have the keys of death and hell.

I love the writing of an American. She's not a Christian. Her name is Joan Didion.

She writes so well. And she writes about her early years when she was a student in California in the 1960's. They were the years of flower power and the Beatles and All You Need is Love and the big concerts and everyone was going to California, going to San Francisco with flowers in their hair.

You know that. And she was working as a desk clerk in an apartment block. And she was giving out the keys and giving out the bills and taking the money and getting the keys back and all around All We Need is Love.

What is this? What is this all about? What is it all about? She said, I had the keys, but I didn't have the key. And there are people just like that, aren't there? Today, they've got the key of the boat on the gulf and the condo in Florida. They have their safe deposit key and their fine car and their fine house keys.

They have the keys. They don't have a key. Why are we here? What is this all about? What is man's chief end? What am I to do with my life? What am I to live for? What am I to do with Jesus who is called the Christ? We have this wonderful example here then.

You have the pessimism and despair of those who just reject Jesus. Don't bother the teacher anymore. Your parents say, don't go to church.

Don't bother the preacher anymore. We don't mind you being religious, but we don't want you to be fanatical. You know, we don't want fanatics.

We don't want fanatics. We want followers of Jesus. We want people to discover truth and reality.

That's what we're in the business of. You have here such a kind and a mighty Savior. I can't understand how you can come here and listen to the Lord Jesus Christ and to His life and to His achievements and to the impact He makes on people and transforming grace and what it does, and you go away as unbelieving, as doubting, as questioning, as when you came.

I can't understand how you can do that. That this Jesus, His influence is over us, but His presence is with us. And by His Word, He's speaking to us today.

The only explanation I can give you is this. Men love darkness rather than light. That's the reason.

Andrew Bonner once talked to a Christian lady and she said there was a time in her life when she was very afraid of death. But then one day she was reading the Bible and Revelation 1. She's saying, I've got the keys of death and Hades. She says if Jesus has got the keys of death, the first face I'll see will be His face and the first voice I hear will be His voice.

Now, Jairus' daughter, she didn't respond like that, did she? She grew up and then she married and she had children I suppose. It must have been like that. And then Jairus died.

Men die first so often. And then her mother died. And then she came to the stage where she was on her deathbed and her family were around her.

And she told her family, you know, I lost my fear of death when I was 12 years old. And I know what's going to happen. When I die, the first voice I hear will be Jesus.

And He will say to me, Talitha kumi. And the first face I see will be His dear face. That's what we want for you, for all of you, young and old.

That's what we want. Our Heavenly Father, do bless Your Word to us now. Thank You.

We sing our hallelujahs to the One. Jesus Christ is risen today. Hallelujah.

Thank You, Lord. Thank You that You are alive. Thank You for Your grace that's helped us in our earthly pilgrimage until this very moment.

Thank You we're not in hell today. Thank You that we hear the Gospel today and can believe in Jesus Christ today. Thank You.

Thank You for He's bigger than death. And we pray that all who are here who as yet have not acknowledged Him as their God and Savior, will do so. Will do so now.

Will start having dealings as Thou has done dealings with us in this morning hour of worship for which we give thanks in Jesus' name. Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/kQuVsFs4omo.mp4>

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