

Alêtheia Christian Fellowship

April 28, 2019

“Faith or Unbelief,” Part 1

9:00 ~ Fellowship.

10:00 ~ Service with the King’s Kid’s & Communion for all who are Christians

NEWS

Please pray for the Mitchell Family

Church Workday, Saturday May 4th

Mother’s Day, the following Sunday

330 N. Somers Rd. (Mail: PO Box 10626) Kalispell, MT 59904~ (406) 755-1776

Visit the website ~ www.myaetheia.com ~ Hear a sermon at

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- 1) How bad do things need to get before you accept Jesus for precisely Who He is?
- 2) Is it a change of plan, or was it God’s plan all along?
- 3) Will God reward imperfect faith/theology? Does that mean it’s okay?

The _____ set of three miracles, this set emphasizes the faith-reactions people have to Jesus. They react with _____, or with unbelief.

The opening, (Matthew 9:18), refers to what Jesus said in verses 15-17. Judaism, as practiced, was _____ with Christianity.

That will then tie to the concluding reactions in verses, 33&34.

MATTHEW 9:18-26 ~ ¹⁸NASB While He was saying these things to them, a synagogue official came and bowed down before Him, and said, “My daughter has just died; but come and lay Your hand on her, and she will live.” ¹⁹Jesus got up and began to follow

him, and so did His disciples. ²⁰And a woman who had been suffering from a hemorrhage for twelve years, came up behind Him and touched the fringe of His cloak; ²¹for she was saying to herself, “If I only touch His garment, I will get well.” ²²But Jesus turning and seeing her said, “Daughter, take courage; your faith has made you well.” At once the woman was made well. ²³When Jesus came into the official’s house, and saw the flute-players and the crowd in noisy disorder, ²⁴He said, “Leave; for the girl has not died, but is asleep.” And they began laughing at Him. ²⁵But when the crowd had been sent out, He entered and took her by the hand, and the girl got up. ²⁶This news spread throughout all that land.

Matthew cuts out every detail he can, to keep the focus on _____.

It says, “A synagogue official.” Here, is based on the _____ accounts. Accordingly, we know his name was Jairus, or יָאִיר (Yä-ēr), in Hebrew, Ἰαῖρος (ē-ä-ē-rös) in Greek.

He probably had _____ feelings about Jesus, but his daughter’s condition prepared him to _____ Jesus properly.

Jairus humbly bowed low before Jesus and pleaded with Him to put _____ back into his child. Stop and consider the scene and the ramifications.

“Jesus got up.” He still does that today.

On the way, we have an _____ to the program. How often are we focused on an objective when someone, or something, derails us?

Is it a change of plan, or was it God’s plan all along? The difference is one of _____.

The 7 words, “Who had been suffering from a hemorrhage,” is αἱμορροέω (hī-mōř-řō-ě-ō). We get our word _____ directly from this word.

This woman had suffered with menometrorrhagia for 12 years. Beyond the _____, she had been suffering spiritually and socially as well. The Torah was very specific.

She snuck up behind Jesus and touched a tassel on His _____. It was a κράσπεδον (krās-pě-dōn), in Greek, which refers to a תְּצִיץ (tsē-tsīt) in Hebrew - a tassel from each of the four corners of a Jew’s garment as mandated by Numbers 15:38.

Her faith was mostly born out of physical desperation and so, was an _____ faith. She believed that the tassel had special power and so, her theology was _____, and Jesus met her where she was.

Jesus forced a face-to-face confrontation. Imagine her _____ at that point. But before doing anything else, Jesus _____ her.

Fill out the other side, detach this part of the page, and place it in the offering plate or the prayer/suggestion box in the lobby or with an Elder or Deacon of the church.

God Bless You!

He told her that her faith was what made her well. Many people think that it is individual faith that gets God to _____. That idea is a form of witchcraft.

Her faith is what _____ her to the encounter with Christ. He's the one Who healed her. It is a trust in God, not trust in faith.

She was restored. Temporarily. Whatever happens in this life is not only _____, but exceedingly so! (Psalm 39:5, James 4:14).

Everything, except the one thing that is not. _____ through Jesus Christ our Lord is eternal.

Jesus didn't say, "Your faith has made you well," He said, "Your faith has saved you." σωζω (sō-dzō).

Jesus arrived at the leader's home and abruptly cast the mourners out. They laughed, because they "Know for a fact that she was dead, Jesus knows for a fact that by restoring her to life he will make this period of death into nothing more than a period of sleep" - Nolland.

Check all that apply – detach and place in the offering or the prayer box

_____ I want to talk with the pastor about _____

_____ I want prayer for _____

_____ I want to volunteer to _____

_____ I want more information about _____

_____ Other _____

Name _____ Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Alêtheia ~ Matthew 9d ~ 042819

Welcome Friends

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO
MATTHEW
A CLASH OF KINGDOMS

Alêtheia Christian Fellowship

I don't know if you remember, but when we began chapter 8, I said we were launching into a two-chapter long section that was framed by three sets of three miracles each. The overall point of all of them is to declare with power, Who Jesus is.

Each set focuses on a slightly different nuance of that general point. We now begin the third set of three miraculous pericopes. This final set emphasizes the faith-reactions people have to Jesus.



As we've seen throughout, no one is ever the same after an encounter with Christ. Not only do people either react positively or negatively, they react dramatically, in one of those two directions. Most importantly they either react with faith, or with unbelief.

The set starts with... The opening, in verse 18, "While He was saying these things to them." That, of course, refers directly to what He just said in verses 15-17. Judaism, as practiced, was totally incompatible with Christianity. You cannot sew a new piece of cloth onto an old garment and you cannot put new wine into an old wineskin.

Christianity cannot fit into Judaism and beyond that, Christianity cannot fit individual people who are set in their ways, set in their thinking, set in their worldview, not only, can such folks not accept this drastically different faith, they resist it, even violently.

That concept will then tie directly to the concluding reactions in verses, 33&34, where it says, 33bThe crowd was amazed and said, “Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel.” 34But the Pharisees said, “It is by the prince of demons that he drives out demons.”

Are you amazed, or resistant? Can you be a new garment, or not? Can you be a new wineskin, or not? What will an encounter with Jesus show you to be? That incompatibility between the old and the new is the point of these next three miraculous pericopes.

The first one is a double. It is a healing within the primary miracle.



Matthew 9:18-26 ~ 18NASB While He was saying these things to them, a synagogue official came and bowed down before Him, and said, “My daughter has just died; but come and lay Your hand on her, and she will live.” 19 Jesus got up and began to follow him, and so did His disciples. 20 And a woman who had been suffering from a hemorrhage for twelve years, came up behind Him and touched the fringe of His cloak; 21 for she was saying to herself, “If I only touch His garment, I will get well.” 22 But Jesus turning and seeing her said, “Daughter, take courage; your faith has made you well.” At once the woman was made well. 23 When Jesus came into the official’s house, and saw the flute-players and the crowd in noisy disorder, 24 He said,

“Leave; for the girl has not died, but is asleep.” And they began laughing at Him. 25But when the crowd had been sent out, He entered and took her by the hand, and the girl got up. 26This news spread throughout all that land.

Since there’s a miracle sandwiched within a miracle, there’s a lot of information to go through.

As usual, Matthew drastically shortens this narrative as compared to Mark and Luke. Matthew’s version is only one third the length of Mark’s. Again, it has to do with purpose. Matthew cuts out every extraneous detail he can in order to keep the focus on Jesus.

It is all about Jesus. All about Jesus, and every bit that is not vital to the coherency of the story is a distraction that Matthew eliminates.

He’s riveted on his principle point of Who Jesus is and what Jesus does. Matthew isn’t even interested in the people’s reactions until the end of the set, and then, it is short and to the point.

By examining this closer, especially by bringing in some details from the parallel accounts in Mark 5, and

Luke 8, we can get a better idea of what happened, but then we are doing what Matthew avoided. We are getting bogged down in the minutiae that minimizes his emphasis on Jesus.

Here's how we proceed - we recognize the original impact by hearing the event in Matthew's words as we just did. Then we recognize that as soon as we began discussing it, we were already widening the conversation, which obviously expands Matthew's focus on Jesus to other things.

With that knowledge, we investigate, but in so doing, we must constantly remind ourselves of Matthew's point - that it is all about Jesus.



It says, “A synagogue official.” Here, it is just a generic term for a leader. The NASB, and others, go with this title based on the parallel accounts. Accordingly, we know his name was Jairus, or יָאִיר (Yä-ēr), in Hebrew, Ἰάϊρος (ē-ä-ē-rōs) in Greek.

He was an important leader in the Capernaum community and was almost certainly part of the delegation that had earlier pleaded with Jesus to help the Centurion with his paralyzed slave.

Jairus already knew what Jesus could do, but he was also, very likely, concerned about Jesus’ behavior. There’s no doubt that the Scribes and Pharisees who

already had an issue with Jesus forgiving sins and fellowshiping with tax collectors were complaining to him as a local Jewish leader.

He probably had very mixed feelings about Jesus, but his 12-year-old daughter had been stricken with a serious illness and was getting worse. I imagine Jairus tried everything. When he was at the end of his rope and his little girl was at death's door, he was only then prepared to meet Jesus properly.

Jairus, the Synagogue Elder, humbly bowed low before Jesus and pleaded with Him to put life back into his child.

Stop and consider the scene and the ramifications. This man was one of the most important and respected men in the village. He publicly took up a position of worship in front of the highly controversial Jesus and said, "My daughter has just died; but come and lay Your hand on her, and she will live."

There, hopefully, comes a point in life, where all the things that seemed important, power, prestige, position, honor and reputation, become meaningless. His faith was born of a little information and a lot of desperation.

I think, it was for him, a moment where he said to himself, “I don’t know all I want to know about Jesus. I know there are some things about Him I’m not crazy about and some of His teaching is way out of my comfort zone, but none of that matters right now. What Jesus has; I need. I need Him more, than I need to figure it all out first.”

I can’t begin to tell you how often I’ve encountered that situation. A person wants more information about Jesus, they want some time to think it over, they need to get their life in order first, take care of a few things and then... People have all kinds of objections and delaying tactics that keep a decision about Jesus at arm’s length, never realizing that by procrastinating the decision about Jesus, they are making a decision not to bow down before Him.



Then, the person encounters a crisis. They come to the end of their proverbial rope. They come to the end of themselves. Then they no longer care about all the things that seemed so important before. Then, they are prepared to meet Jesus properly. Then they are able to humbly bow low before Him and plead with Him for the help only He can give.

Why wait until you get to that point? Worse yet, why wait for that point, only to find out that in so doing, you've become so resistant to the Lord, you cannot bow before Him, even when the crisis becomes unbearable?

I'm telling you right now, if you haven't already bowed down before Jesus, you better do it now, before it's too late. Plead with Jesus, "Lord, I'm dead in my sin; but come and lay Your hand on me, and I will live."

"Jesus got up." That's cool. He still does that today. The request is, "Lord, I humbly beseech You to help, because I believe You are the only one Who can." And Jesus gets up.



On the way, we have an interruption to the program. We have Jesus, the father of the dying girl, no doubt some of his associates and several disciples moving through the town with purpose. They're on a mission -

it's time critical and extremely serious. Then, here comes a monkey wrench.

How often are we focused on an objective when someone, or something, derails our choo choo? How often do we get impatient, frustrated and irritated about it?

As I've said before, my friends, "Don't fall in love with your plans."

Here's another thing... Is it a change of plan, or was it God's plan all along? You see the difference, is one of perspective. For us it is an unforeseen and so an unexpected change, but for God, it was always the plan. Can you see the ramifications of that Truth for other things? Perhaps, even for controversial doctrines that divide Christ's Body?



The 7 words, “Who had been suffering from a hemorrhage,” is the single Greek word αιμορροέω (hī-mōr-rō-ě-ō). We get our word hemorrhage directly from this Greek word. Others derived are hymen, hematology, hemoglobin, etc.

This woman had suffered with menometrorrhagia, along with the attendant, severe cramps, and overall discomfort associated with it, for 12 long years.

Not only had she been suffering physically, she had been suffering spiritually and socially as well. The Old Testament was very specific about such things and she had accordingly been ceremonially unclean for those

12 years. Anything or anyone she touched would likewise be considered unclean.

Her exclusion from religious life and her ostracism from community life, must have been extremely difficult, especially psychologically and emotionally.

She snuck up behind Jesus in the throng of people that surrounded Him and touched a tassel on His garment. It was a κράσπεδον (kräs-pě-dön), in Greek, which under the circumstances, refers to a תצִיץ (tsē-tsīt) in Hebrew - a tassel hanging from each of the four corners of a Jew's garment as mandated by Numbers 15:38. They were, and still are, a visible reminder to keep the Law and follow God.

She had it in her mind that if she could just touch one of Jesus' tassels, she would be okay. We can surmise quite a bit from that simple idea.

1) First, it shows that she was afraid. Fear of rejection along with embarrassment about her condition. 2) It shows that she was concerned for Jesus, not wanting to make Him unclean by touching Him directly. 3) It shows that she had faith, even if it was mostly born out of physical desperation and so, was an imperfect faith.

4) It also shows that she believed that the tassel, as a deeply religious symbol, had more power than another part of His outer garment. It is like people today assigning some greater level of holy power to religious objects like Rosaries, Crosses, Bibles, Prayer Shawls, or to places like the altar in a church, the country of Israel, or to certain people like the Pope, a famous faith healer, or a member of the clergy.



The Church of the Holy Sepulcher is built around the Crucifixion and burial sites of Jesus. There is a large, flat, stone slab about halfway between the two places.



It is called the Preparation Stone, and is thought to be the place where Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus laid Jesus' body to prepare it for burial.

People rub Rosaries, Bibles, cell phones, passports, bookmarks, all kinds of things, on the stone, to transfer special power from the stone to the item.

I know for the vast majority, it goes without saying, but such nonsense is superstition, idolatry, witchcraft, whatever you want to call it... The belief that God hears your prayers better, or will answer your prayers more to your liking, because you have an enchanted item, or you recite a special prayer, or you say the

prayer in a more holy place, or you have a more holy person pray for you, is a superstitious reliance on magic and incantations, rather than on the goodness of God.

If I can do anything to move God on my behalf, to get an outcome I desire, I am no different than a pagan offering sacrifices, supplications and heroic promises to propitiate the deity to favor me.

Jesus is the one and only propitiation for the one and only true God. His will, not mine is a concept that actually proves that Christianity is true, because humans create religions that ultimately serve their will.

The woman's faith was imperfect, and her theology was imperfect, and Jesus met her where she was at.



We know that she wanted to slip away unnoticed after touching Jesus' tassel, but He would have none of that. Jesus forced a face-to-face confrontation.

Imagine her fear at that point. A person who wanted to go incognito, completely unobserved, was now front and center, the focus of everyone's attention, including that of the Master. Luke says, "She came trembling."

I can imagine that she was fairly terrified of what Jesus would say, or do. Would He chastise her publicly for her presumption? Would He take back His healing power from her? Would she be worse off than she was before she left her home that day?



But before doing anything else, Jesus comforted her. “Daughter, take courage,” is the most tender, gentle, reassurance He could have given under the circumstances. It’s like, “Dear sister, don’t be afraid anymore, I’ve got you, it’s going to be alright.”

He told her that her faith was what made her well. Jesus accepted her with a warm embrace (metaphorically speaking), despite her errors in faith and theology, yet He didn’t leave her where she started. His comment to her was a correction to both her faith and theology.

He was telling her that it was her belief in Him, in His care, concern, mercy and goodness, in His power and authority over sickness and death, not the tassels of His garment that made her well.

Further, Jesus was telling her that He healed her because of her faith in seeking Him out, not that her faith alone healed her.

This is a very important concept that is often overlooked. Many people get the idea that it is individual faith that gets God to act. Again, as we just saw, that idea is no different than witchcraft.



The thinking goes that, if I only have enough faith, I can get the outcome I want. If that were so, then my level of faith is all that matters in getting God to act. With enough personal faith, I become a super-spiritual person with the ability to perform supernatural acts.

People would come from far and wide to meet me. It inevitably becomes about me and my personal power to heal, or to affect the future. Like Benny Hinn, or Kathryn Kuhlman before him, I would be a celebrity miracle-worker.



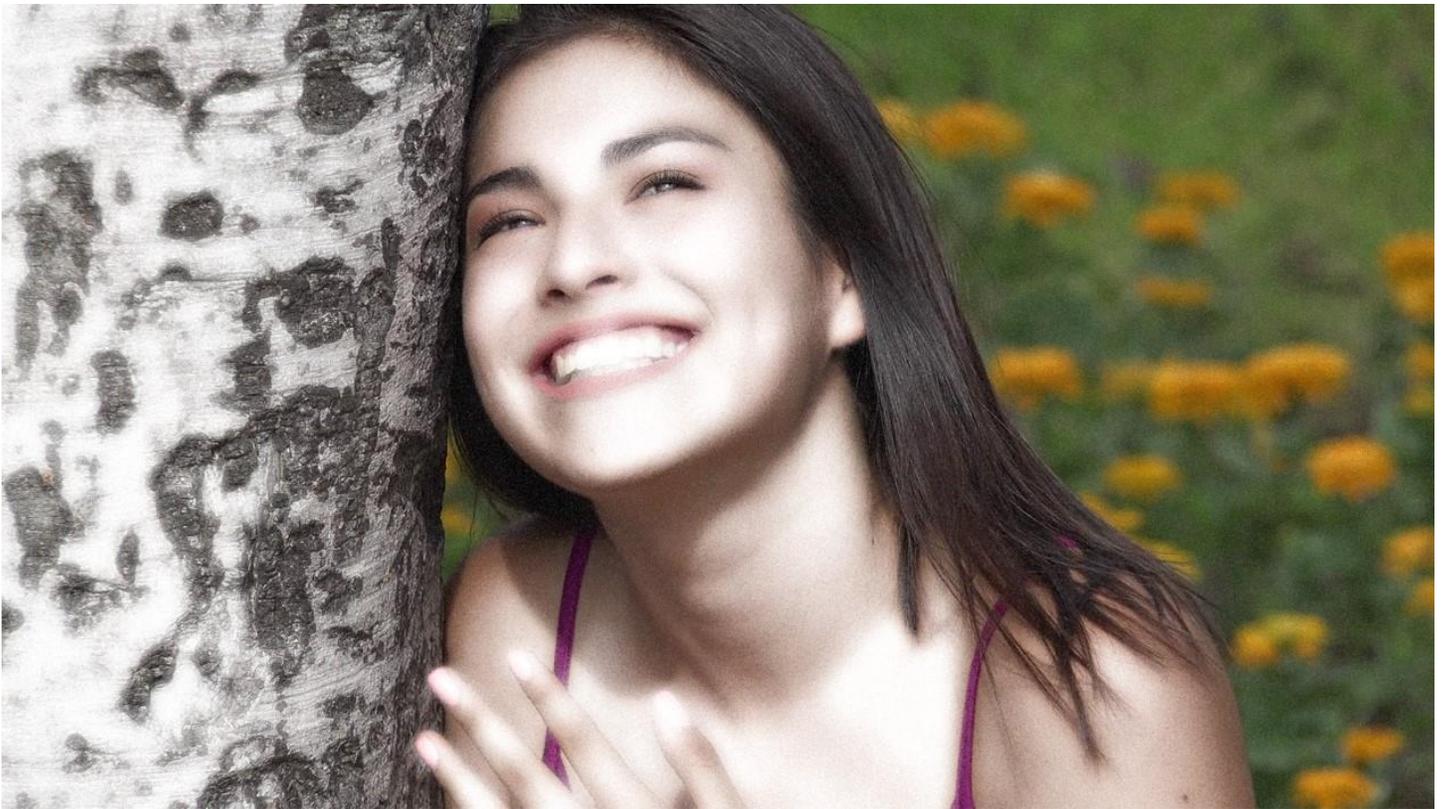
When Jesus told her, “Your faith has made you well,” He was not saying that human faith, as a thing in itself, is what releases supernatural healing power. Assigning special power to faith, as a thing, is no different than assigning special power to a Rosary rubbed on the Preparation Stone in the Holy Sepulcher.

Her faith is what brought her to the encounter with Christ. He’s the one Who healed her. Matthew makes that very clear by telling the story the way he does.

The faith extolled in Hebrews 11, is trust in God, not trust in faith. I desperately hope you can all see that important distinction. Our faith drives us to Jesus. Our

faith engenders hope in Him. Our faith leads us to pray, to seek, to trust... In Him. He is the special power. He is the one Who heals.

Because her faith brought her to Jesus, the woman was restored as though she had never had a physical ailment. Jesus made it public, because all the people needed to know that she was ceremonially clean and a full member of the community again.



She was restored - praise God. She was healed - hallelujah. In a completely temporary way. That lady lived for a while, and then she probably got sick, and she probably suffered, and she most assuredly died

and was buried. She was miraculously restored in a completely temporary way.

I wanted to say, that “I don’t want to minimize the pain and suffering of illness.” I wanted to say, that “I don’t want to minimize the healing of this woman or any other person.” I can’t say either, because minimizing both is exactly what I want to do. I want to minimize pain and suffering as what it is... Temporary. I want to minimize physical restoration for what it is...

Temporary.

We all rejoice that Amy was miraculously healed - we praise God for it - it is amazing, wonderful and joyous. But it is temporary. My friends, none of us are getting out of this life unscathed by pain and suffering and none of us are getting out of this life alive.

We are so afraid of that Truth, that people like Oral Roberts, Kenneth Copeland, Joel Osteen and Creflo Dollar, create a prosperity Gospel where all pain and suffering is Satanic, and if we have enough faith, we can skip it all. Then we hold onto the notion that without ever struggling in this life, we will be miraculously caught up in the Rapture, so we never have to die either.

As much as I wish it were not true, pain and suffering is part of life and it is how we grow. Physical death is our destiny, because the mortal cannot inherit Heaven. The mortal must take on immortality. Even if you are Raptured before you die, you must be transformed, which is the death of your physical body.

Whatever happens in this life is completely temporary and not only temporary, but exceedingly so! What is one hundred trillion years, compared to eternity? What then, is a long human life, of one hundred years? As the Psalmist said, 5NLT “You have made my life no longer than the width of my hand. My entire lifetime is just a moment to you; at best, each of us is but a breath” (Psalm 39:5). As James said, 14bNIV “What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes (James 4:14).

Everything in this life is temporary, except the one thing that is not. Salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord is eternal. That’s a miracle that makes all other miracles pale in comparison. Amy would agree.

I bring all this up to show you that Jesus has never been interested in the temporary. The woman

prophetically said to herself, not, “If I only touch His garment, I will get well,” but, “If I only touch His garment, I will be saved.” Jesus didn’t say, “Your faith has made you well,” He said, “Your faith has saved you.”

Because of the context, translators play it safe and take “Saved” to mean, saved from her malady. Well, I agree, I just think the Holy Spirit is showing us it was the physical and spiritual entirety of her malady that Jesus saved her from.

There are many ways to say that she was healed in Greek without saying that she was saved. The Holy Spirit had, not just Matthew, but also Mark and Luke, all use the perfect tense of the verb σώζω (sō-dzō) in telling this story. It stresses the current and ongoing reality of a past act. Her act of reaching out to Jesus was rewarded by Him saving her for eternity - now, that’s something to get excited about!

It is the same today, risk by reaching out to Jesus and your faith will put you in a position to be saved by Him. As I said, our faith drives us to Jesus, to hope in Him, to pray, to seek, to trust and then from that contact, He is the one Who saves us.

Biblically, that faith to pursue Jesus is itself a gift from God. How many times will God grant a person the faith to seek Jesus? Today may be the final time God grants you the gift of enough faith to reach out, bow down and plead with Him to save you.



Jesus arrived at the village leader's home and already the professional mourners were in full swing. The first century Rabbinical recommendation was that even the poorest families should hire two flute players and one wailing woman for mourning the death of a loved one. The official was not poor.

Add to the professional mourners, the girl's extended family and friends, along with those trying to make points with the Synagogue leader and you had a large crowd creating a cacophony of lamentation. Some genuine, some not so genuine.

Where Jesus had insisted on public revelation for the restored woman, here He wants the opposite. Ever sensitive to the unique circumstances, Jesus did not want the little girl getting up to the wailing of mourners.

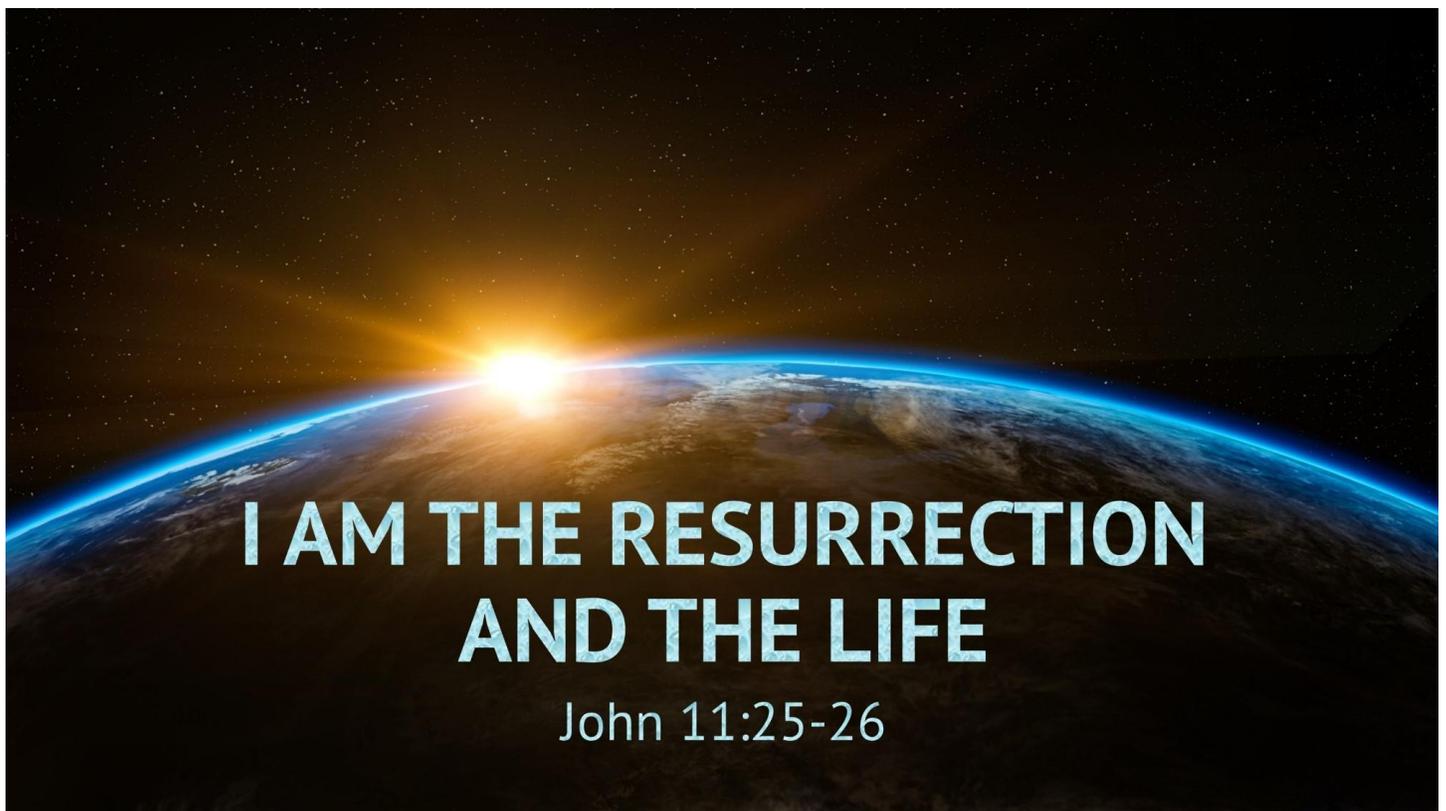
Jesus didn't politely ask everyone to take a break, He abruptly and curtly cast them out of the house, not unlike the cleansing of the Temple that we talked about last week.

"Leave," He said. "The girl has not died, but is asleep." The mourners misunderstood Jesus then, and so many people continue to misunderstand Him today.

A good explanation comes from John Nolland in his Greek commentary. He said, "Jesus is protesting the basis on which they are there: they are there to mourn, but in this case, there is no need. Matthew has created irony by having Jesus make a remark directed towards the future which the crowd takes as directed towards

the past. They hear diagnosis, Jesus offers prognosis; they know for a fact that she was dead, Jesus knows for a fact that by restoring her to life he will make this period of death into nothing more than a period of sleep.”

This has absolutely nothing to do with the little girl not being truly dead - she was. It's not worth telling otherwise. It doesn't do its job of confirming what Jesus will say about His own ministry in chapter 11, that “The dead are raised up” (Matthew 11:5).



Jesus was simply saying that where He is concerned death is metaphorically no different than sleep... It is a

temporary condition He has control over. Jesus said of Himself, Ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ ἀνάστασις καὶ ἡ ζωὴ (John 11:25). “I AM - I eternally exist as - the Resurrection and the Life.” I AM the one and only Life-generating and sustaining force.”

Jesus, “Took her by the hand, and the girl got up.”
What’s impossible for man, is nothing for God.

Where Jesus is concerned, “Death where is your victory?” And so, “Death where is your sting?”
Put your full faith and trust in Him.