

²¹ 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. ²² Then one of the synagogue rulers, named Jairus, came there. Seeing Jesus, he fell at his feet ²³ 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.” ²⁴ So Jesus went with him.

³⁵ While Jesus was still speaking, some men came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue ruler. “Your daughter is dead,” they said. “Why bother the teacher any more?”

³⁶ Ignoring what they said, Jesus told the synagogue ruler, “Don’t be afraid; just believe.”

³⁷ He did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James and John the brother of James. ³⁸ When they came to the home of the synagogue ruler, Jesus saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly. ³⁹ He went in and said to them, “Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep.” ⁴⁰ 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. ⁴¹ He took her by the hand and said to her, “*Talitha koum!*” (which means, “Little girl, I say to you, get up!”). ⁴² Immediately the girl stood up and walked around (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished. ⁴³ He gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this, and told them to give her something to eat.

“So Jesus went with him,” Mark writes. And it might not seem like a very noteworthy verse in the lesson I just read for you. “Jesus went with him.” Of course, Jesus went with him, you might think! How could he not have compassion on Jairus in his situation?

It’s every parent’s worst nightmare. His 12-year-old daughter was sick. His only daughter, Luke tells us. “My little daughter,” he calls her – she’s the apple of her dad’s eye. And now her life was being cut short before his very eyes. The doctors have all said, “There’s nothing more we can do.” Everyone can tell she’s in her final moments. So when word comes that Jesus just arrived in town, he runs to meet him, pushes his way through the crowds, and falls at Jesus’ feet. You can hear the fear, urgency in his voice: “**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,” Mark writes. And at first it seems like the least noteworthy detail in the story. But then you think a little more. Why didn’t Jesus just say the word and heal her on the spot? He did that later – in this very city. For the guy who probably helped build the synagogue Jairus was a leader of. A Roman centurion, whose servant was sick and on death’s doorstep. And Jesus says the word, and it was as the centurion asked. His servant was well, at that very moment.

But here, Jesus doesn’t just say the word. Here, Jesus goes with. He goes with, and thick crowds keep slowing him down on the way. He goes with, and someone else needs his help first. Did you notice the ten-verse gap in the lesson? On the way, a woman suffering with chronic bleeding touches Jesus. Is healed. Jesus stops and has a conversation with her. All while a little girl is dying.

Can you imagine how Jairus felt? How frustrated, as the crowds slowed them down? “Get out of the way, my daughter’s dying!” As Jesus stops to speak to the woman: “Jesus, we don’t have time for

this right now!" Until he looks and sees servants coming from his house, and his heart just sinks. And they come with the words he most dreaded to hear: **"Your daughter is dead. Why bother the teacher anymore?"** You can hear the despair in their words. Despair that's beginning to grip Jairus' heart. Why bother, when she's gone? Why bother with Jesus to begin with, if my daughter still dies, and I wasn't even there to say goodbye?

But maybe you can relate. Whether it was a loved one who was sick. Or a marriage on the rocks. Or some other disaster that threatened. And you fell at Jesus' feet and pleaded with him to help, take it away – to keep what you feared most from happening. And for all your pleading, nothing seemed to change. Jesus didn't just say the word; the disaster happened anyways. It seems like Jesus was in no hurry to get to you. He helps other people with their problems, but he didn't get to mine in time. And you can wrestle with the same despair that gripped Jairus' heart: "Why bother Jesus with my trust, when it doesn't seem to do any good?"

Ah...but Jesus went with. He went with, so that he could be there for Jairus at that very moment. To fan his faith back into flame, to replace his despair with hope. Jesus ignores what the servants are saying. Grabs Jairus by the shoulder, looks him in the eye and says, **"Don't be afraid; just believe."** Jesus redirects his attention away from all evidence to the contrary to himself, and says to Jairus, "Keep trusting in me, and you won't be disappointed."

He goes with you to do the same. It might not always seem like it. When he's not helping in the time or way we expect, he might appear distant and busy with other things. But there's only one place he went without you: To the cross. He went alone carrying your sins – your doubts and despair – and died for you there to pay for them all. He died alone with your sins so that it could always be true for you: "Never will I leave you or forsake you." Especially when your faith falters, he's with you in his word to fan it into flame again. Redirects your attention away from all evidence to the contrary to himself, and says: "Keep trusting me, and you won't be disappointed." Would the one who died to help you with your greatest need ever fail to help you with your lesser needs? Trust in Jesus is never misplaced.

Jairus was about to find that out firsthand. Jesus sends away the crowds and all his disciples but Peter, James, and John. He doesn't want to overwhelm a grieving family with all sorts of uninvited visitors. And as he gets near the house, he sees the ugly sights and sounds that go with death. The friends and neighbors have all gathered. Some are sobbing uncontrollably. Others are expressing their grief with loud cries of mourning.

But when Jesus enters the house, he says: **"Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep."** Think of the powerful comfort in those words! Death is final. Sleep is temporary. Death is an irreversible condition. Sleep is completely reversible. Jesus is announcing that when he's in the picture, death becomes something completely different than what it seems.

Jesus went with to bring comfort in the face of death. But did you notice how the crowds reacted? They took Jesus' comfort as comedy. **But they laughed at him.** If you don't know who Jesus is, what Jesus said seems crazy or cruel. Crazy, because, well, she clearly wasn't sleeping – she was dead. Cruel for downplaying the family's grief at this horrible time. If you don't know who Jesus is, you'd think he's crazy or cruel...

So Jesus shows them who he is. He sends away the scoffing crowds. Heads into the room with Jairus and his wife and his disciples. He takes the girl by the hand and says to her, "**Talitha koum.**" "Little girl," he says, "I say to you, get up." And with all the ease of waking someone from a nap, Jesus undoes her death. And **the girl immediately stood up and walked around.** And her parents' tears of sadness turn to tears of joy. And their eyes fill with complete astonishment at the one who gives life to the dead.

Jesus goes with to bring comfort in the face of death. It's not an unfamiliar scene, is it? The funeral scene in Jairus' home that day. It's the scene that's played itself out in every home ever since sin entered this world and brought death with it. Maybe as you heard about it, it brought to mind a similar scene in *your* home, when it was your loved one who died. Maybe it brought to mind the fact that one day it will be the scene for you – it will be your lifeless body in the casket.

Whatever the case, we wish Jesus would bring us the same comfort he did for Jairus that day, don't we? The promise that he'll show up at our loved ones' funerals – at our funeral – and just wake us up again. But Jesus promises us something far better. After all, Jairus' daughter was raised to a few more years of life. But eventually, she died again. Jesus didn't just come to this world to temporarily undo a few deaths in Palestine. He came into this world to permanently undo death for all of us.

And so he took the sin that brought death into the world – your sins and mine – and made them his own. He took the death that we deserved under God's punishment and died it in our place. The one with all the power to raise a dead little girl to life loved you so much that he let the life be drained from him on the cross. And when he rose on day three, he broke death's power for you, so that it can't hold you anymore. He's made death a sleep – a temporary and reversible condition that he'll wake you up from.

And now he goes with you to comfort you in the face of death. When you're mourning the ones you've lost in the Lord, he's at the funeral with you, pointing you to the cross and the empty tomb, saying, "See? This child is not dead, but only sleeping." He's there when you're on your deathbed, pointing you to the cross and empty tomb, "Don't be afraid. You will not die, only sleep." And you'll see with your own eyes on the Last Day that it's true. When he comes back and says to all the believers who have fallen asleep what he said to Jairus' daughter: "I say to you, get up." And your eyes will fill with astonishment as the one with power over death raises all the dead. And your tears will forever be turned to joy as he brings you to be with him forever.

"Jesus went with him." At first, it might seem like the least noteworthy verse in our text. But really it says it all. Jesus may not always say the word and take tragedy away. But he doesn't leave you alone in it. He goes with you to keep you from despair. He goes with you to comfort you even in death. He goes with you straight through death and brings you to life eternal. Amen.