

## **Aughnacloy, Ballymagrane, Clogherney & Sixmilecross Presbyterian Churches**

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**Matthew 28:18** *Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.*

Dear Friends

As your minister, it is a great privilege that I have in bringing this weekly devotion to you. It was a great opportunity and a blessing to return to the Meeting House last Sunday for public worship. We continue to pray that others will have confidence enough to join with us again at some point over the summer months. We also remain mindful of the many who feel that they are unable to attend public worship at present, that is ok too. Your safety is important to us. However, as we return to Church, we are unable at present to continue with weekly worship online and it has proved difficult to record the service for audio also. This is a major disappointment for many of you, including ourselves, however we encourage you to listen into the Moderators online service and continue with this weekly devotional in the meantime.

I plan to be on annual leave from Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July to Monday 10<sup>th</sup> August and Monday 24<sup>th</sup> August to Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September. During these periods emergency pastoral care will be provided: 20<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> July Rev J Smith for Aughnacloy & Ballymagrane and Rev J Hanson Clogherney & Sixmilecross, 27<sup>th</sup> July 9<sup>th</sup> August Rev. J Boyd (all four) and 24<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> August Rev E Frazer (all Four). Please contact your Elder and they will arrange the contact.

Our theme this week is 'Jesus – Lord Over Death' (Jairus' Daughter). **Mark 5:21-43** *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 leaders, named Jairus, came, and when he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet. 23 He 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. A large crowd followed and pressed around him. 25 And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. 26 She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. 27 When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, 28 because she thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed." 29 Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering. 30 At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?" 31 "You see the people crowding against you," his disciples answered, "and yet you can ask, 'Who touched me?'" 32 But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. 33 Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. 34 He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering." 35 While Jesus was still speaking, some people came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader. "Your daughter is dead," they said. "Why bother the teacher anymore?" 36 Overhearing what they said, Jesus told him, "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 leader, 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 began to walk 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. Amen*

In an age of anxiety, we don't know or what to believe! Today as we come to God's word, I am sure you are all aware of coronavirus and its effects on individuals and society with almost 3 million cases confirmed and 44,602 deaths

since it came to these shores four months ago. It is therefore appropriate that we look to God's word with fresh eyes and see the 'Power Jesus has over Death'. What is it about death that you and I find so scary? Is it because we know deep down, we are unprepared? Is it because it brings everything we worked for to an end? It severs relationships with loved ones that we have put so much time in.

Jesus confronts death as its master. So that you and I can approach our death with certainty and without fear. As we watch our Lord conquer one hopeless situation after another, it should give us hope when our own desperate times come. V36 is very important to us as we look to the power that Jesus has over death:

THE CONCEPTION of his faith v21-24. Jesus has returned to Capernaum and is immediately met by a crowd of people. A man named Jairus rushes into the crowd surrounding Jesus. He is a man whose little faith is about to grow very large. His faith has Direction -22-23a This man is "a ruler of the synagogue". He would have been an important man in his community. Jairus possessed power, privilege, prestige, position, and prominence. He was a religious man, who faithfully practiced the Jewish faith. At this moment in his life, none of the things that usually seemed important to Jairus mattered in the least! Sickness and death had visited the home of Jairus and none of the things that mattered in his life could drive them away! His power, his money, his position in the community, even his religion, were all powerless in the face those two enemies. Jairus needed help that none of his resources could provide! Fear of death; love for his daughter; and a sense of utter helplessness drove this man to Jesus! Jairus doesn't understand everything there is to know about Jesus, but he has come to believe that this man can heal. Tragedy doesn't care who you are! The trials of life are not going to pass you by. COVID-19, doesn't care that you go to church. It is out there, and it will take any opportunity it can get to attack, sometimes even if you are very careful. Sickness and death couldn't care less about your achievements and assets. When the trials of life come, you need a resource outside of yourself. You need a faith that rests in Jesus and in His power alone. His faith was directed towards Jesus.

God has a way of deepening our faith as we walk with Him through the days of our lives. Someone has said, "**A faith that can't be tested is a faith that can't be trusted.**" Here, we see the fledgling faith of Jairus put to the test. God has a plan for your situation! Even when you can't see what He is doing, God is working to accomplish His plan and purposes in your life and mine,

THE CONFIRMATION OF HIS FAITH; 36-43 The faith of Jairus was weak. The faith of Jairus wavered. But, in the end, the faith of Jairus won out. His faith triumphed because his faith was rooted in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Confirmed By The Saviour's Words; 36-39. Jesus knows the fear that rests within the heart of Jairus. Jesus says, "Be not afraid, only believe." Jesus is saying, "Jairus, don't believe what you hear, v. 35. Don't believe what you know, v. 38-39. Don't believe what you see, v. 40. Most of all, don't believe what you think! Trust Me!" Jesus approaches this scene and makes a strange statement. They laugh at Him, but there is much truth in His words. There are many people who look at death as the end of all things. They see it as a time of absolute hopelessness. Jesus seems to have a different opinion. There is not a situation we can think of that is beyond His ability! When you are faced with a hopeless situation, remember the words of the Lord and let His words be all the support your faith needs! Let His words secure your faith. Jesus is moved with compassion by the grief in this home and He calls the little girl's spirit back into her body. She gets up and everyone is amazed, there is nothing impossible with Him! Jesus cares about your situation. *1 Peter 5:7 Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.* Jesus is able to handle your situation, no matter what it is. We are in the presence of the Lord of life and death. Many challenges will come our way in this life, sickness, Cancer, Heart attack, stroke, Coronavirus. Accidents, Farm, Road, Construction site, Workplace, at home. Other tragedies. What Jesus tells us in these viruses today is that, at some time will leave this life on earth, even our faith in Him cannot stop that happening. However, He reminds us, that faith in Him, removes the penalty due for our sin, that we are assured of. Confront death with faith in Christ. There will be a day of judgement and only then will justice be done. Have you considered putting your hand into Christ's hand the only hand that has the power to get you through death?