

“The Child is Not Dead but Sleeping” Mark 5:22–42 // *The Difficult Sayings of Jesus*, #1

Happy Easter, everybody.

- Today marks the **central confession** of the Christian faith: Christ is *risen*. **If this didn't happen**, everything else we believe is based on a lie. But if it did, well, nothing else can stay the same.
- **I believe that it happened.** If you do, say Amen.

I want to welcome all of you, at all our campuses (one church, several locations)... (I know that some of you will be watching this overseas, via our website. And BTW, let me use this opportunity **all our messages are accessible online...** so if you miss one in a series you are interested in, or you fall asleep during this one, and want to know what happens in the end, you can access it there.)

Let me just **acknowledge that on a weekend like this** there are always some who don't really want to be here: You're here because your family got up this morning and said, "It's Easter, and we have to go to church, and *you have to come too...*" and so you're here somewhat against your will...

- **Reminds me of a conversation** I heard about between a husband and wife. She was getting ready, thought he was... she came out, he was still in his pajamas, and she said, "Why aren't you ready? We need to go." I don't want to go for 3 reasons: "1. Nobody is friendly to me; 2. Everyone is suspicious of me; 3. I just don't like it." She said, "First, that's not true. People are friendly to you. #2. The suspicion is mainly in your head. #3. You're the pastor. You have to go." That was my wife and I this morning. For whatever reason you are here, we are glad.

32:35 We're starting a new series this weekend called "*The Difficult Sayings of Jesus*." One of the **biggest misconceptions** about Jesus was that he was this tranquil, unflappable religious guru who just

went around spreading peace, love and groovy vibes. The **real Jesus**, however, was **divisive**; polarizing. **You either loved him or hated him.** That's how you know you've encountered the real Jesus, btw. You either love him or hate him.

- Perhaps **the greatest irony today** is that many people find him boring... *No one in the Bible was ever bored by Jesus.* **Hated him, yes.** Thought he was **full of it, yes.** Bored, never.

So we're going to take a look at some of the most challenging, divisive things Jesus ever said. These statements are going to do two things: **FIRST**, they are going to **address some of the deepest questions** you've probably asked about life, and **SECOND**, these statements are **going to help you figure out how you really feel about him.** *Do you love him or hate him?*

The **first one is a statement Jesus made** at a little girl's death. Her mother and father are beside themselves with grief, and Jesus walks and says, ³⁹And he said, "Why are you making a commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but sleeping." ⁴⁰And they laughed at him (to scorn)." **Mark 5:39–40**

- Maybe that doesn't seem like a big deal to you, but **imagine if that were your little girl**, or your **little sister** (I have a girl who is about 12. To think of the heartbreak if she was struck by a car, or got sick, and died. And someone walks in, looks in the casket and says, "Oh, don't worry, she's not dead, I think she's just taking a nap.") It's cruel. In bad taste.

Furthermore, you're going to find out in this story that her parents kind of blame Jesus for her death. Jesus had been on his way to heal her when he got delayed and because he delayed, she died.

- And her parents are like, "**Why did you delay when you knew she was just hanging on by a thread? Jesus, if you really cared, why would you let this happen?**"

You ever felt like that? "*Hey, if you're really up there, why did you let this happen?*" Maybe it concerned the death of someone you loved.

- Throughout my life I have sometimes struggled with faith... I know I am a pastor, and I'm not supposed to admit that, but I have... **usually it centers around the question:** if Jesus loves us so much, why is the world the way that it is?
- In this story **they have a choice to love or hate him**, and you have the same choice.

28:48 This really is one of the most bizarre encounters in Jesus' life, so let's go back to the beginning of the story and walk through it: ²² One of the rulers of the synagogue (an important guy), Jairus by name, came and fell at Jesus' feet ²³ and implored him earnestly, saying, "My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well and live."

- We'll find out later this is his **only child**. All parents love their kids, but there is a special bond between a dad and his oldest daughter. I know. I have one.
- **He's rich**, and so he's hired the best doctors money can buy, but they have told him that there's no hope; and she probably won't last until the end of the day.

And so, in desperation, he thinks, "**Jesus... Maybe, Jesus...**" (You see, Jairus was a **religious leader** and, on the whole, religious leaders were not excited about Jesus) but he is **desperate, and he thinks, "What if it's true? What if he could help?"** And so he runs around town asking everyone if they know where Jesus is, and finally he finds him and says, "Please, I beg you; **I know I haven't been the biggest supporter** of yours, but please, if you can come, do anything... please come."

²⁴And he went with him. (Imagine Jairus' joy at this moment: Jesus said, "I can do something, and I'll come.")

Next verse: But as they were going "**...a great crowd thronged about him**. Jairus is fighting through the crowd, trying to get Jesus to his little girl.

²⁵And there was a woman (in that crowd) who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years (**Discharge of blood** meant she had a disease that gave her menstrual irregularity; in those days Jewish law considered you unclean, which means she couldn't go into the Temple, and other people wouldn't touch her), ²⁶and who had suffered much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was no better but rather grew worse. ²⁷She (also) had heard the reports about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment. ²⁸For she said, "If I touch even his garments, I will be made well." ²⁹And immediately the flow of blood dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease.

³⁰And Jesus, perceiving in himself that power had gone out from him, immediately turned and said, "Who touched my garments?" ³¹And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing around you, and yet you say, 'Who touched me?'" ³²And he looked around to see who had done it. ³³But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling and fell down before him and told him the whole truth. ³⁴And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease."

Which is an awesome story...

- **Here's a woman who for 12 years** hasn't been able to go in before God or even be touched by anybody, and she thinks if she could just grab a portion of Jesus' robe, he could heal her...
- **And so she crawls her way** through the crowd, risking being trampled to death, and she reaches a hand through the legs of others and just brushes the hem...
- **And then Jesus stops and says, "Who touched me?"** and she tries to hide, but he won't let it go... so finally she comes forward trembling, thinking she is about to be rebuked, since as an unclean woman she had the audacity to touch Jesus, but instead of castigating her, he calls her "daughter" (the only time Jesus uses that term, btw, in all the gospel: a very tender, intimate word)... *Saying, to her: not only have I healed you of your disease, I've included in you in my family...*)

Which is an awesome story, but Jairus is like “Jesus, my daughter is at home struggling with every breath! Every second counts!”

³⁵ While Jesus was still speaking with this woman, there came from the ruler's house some who said, “Your daughter is dead.”

Now, could you imagine, just for a minute, what it would have been like to have been Jairus, here? **What Jesus did**, from a medical standpoint, could be considered criminal malpractice!

- **Doctors practice a thing called “triage,”** in which, in an emergency situation, you prioritize people who are critical.
- **Jairus’ daughter is minutes away from death**, and here you have a woman who has a non-life threatening illness she’s had for 12 years. If she’s survived the last 12 years, surely she could survive another **12 minutes!** **But Jesus stops, engages the woman**, and while he does, Jairus’ daughter dies.

What do you think Jairus felt? How would you have felt in that situation? “I mean, **you knew my little girl was dying**, and you delayed?” Confused, angry?

³⁶ But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to Jairus, “Do not fear, only believe ³⁸ They came to Jairus’ house, and Jesus saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. ³⁹ And when he had entered, he said to them, “Why are you making a commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but sleeping.” ⁴⁰ And they laughed at him (to scorn). But 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 Taking her by the hand he said to her, “*Talitha cumi.*”

- **Talitha** is an Aramaic word that means “little girl.” **Pet name.** The writers didn’t translate it into Greek because there probably wasn’t a good translation. Literally, it’s like saying, “honey.”

- **Cumi** is a very gentle word meaning “**get on up.**” That’s not a strong word, either; it’s the kind of thing you’d say if you were trying gently to rouse someone out of a nap.
- **(So, in other words, Jesus did not go into this room and shout,** “Child, I command thee, *come forth!*”
 - **He sat down on her bed, like her mother would have,** took her **hand**, probably stroked her **face**, and **whispered** to her, “*Honey, it’s time to get up.*”)

⁴² And immediately the girl got up and began walking (for she was twelve years of age).

(21:15) Five Important Things Jesus Teaches Us About Life and Death

1. To Jesus, death is as easy to fix as waking someone up out of a short nap.

What scares us most? Is it not our death—or the death of those that we love?

Do you see what a beautiful picture of death this is? Did you see the tender details...

- **You want to know what’s it like for a believer to die?** Jesus **sits by your bedside**, like your mother would. He **takes you by the hand**. And when you awake in heaven, his face is the **first face** you see; his voice the **first voice** that you hear. You wake up **refreshed**, more alive than you have ever been.

You see, there are two predominant views of death in our culture.

- **The first is that of the secularist: When we die that’s the end.** We are a biological accident; the result of a random collusion of particles emanating from a **big bang**. If that’s true, then when we die, it’s all over.
 - **Bertrand Russell, the famous skeptic** said that *we need to have the courage to embrace the fact that we and everything else we love will die in the death of the*

universe: “Don’t console yourself with Christmas carols”... he says, **No heroism, no sentimentality, can preserve any life beyond the grave; all our labors, all accomplishments, are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system...** Only when we admit that can we see life clearly (Now there’s an **Easter message** for you!)

- **The alternate view is that death is not natural...** God made us as eternal beings, and there is something not right, something foreign about death. That’s why it terrifies us so.
- **Question: Which view resonates more with your heart?**
 - **C. S. Lewis** asked this question: *Does not the fact that we yearn for eternity point to the fact that we were created for eternity?*
 - **Fish, he says, don’t complain** about being wet, because they were designed for the water. They complain when they are out of water: flop around.
 - **Doesn’t the fact we yearn** for eternity show that we were designed for it? **“If I find in myself a desire which nothing in this world can satisfy, the only logical explanation is that I was made for another world.”**
 - I saw an interview with the late **Steve Jobs**: do you believe in God? He said, “Throughout my life I’ve been unsure, but as I approach death I do more and more. He says because **if the human body is just a biological machine**, then when it’s turned off it’s over... But **that can’t be right**... I don’t want that to be right.” He said, incidentally, that’s why Mac products don’t really have an on-off switch. I don’t like the idea of me ever being turned off.”
 - Your head might tell you one thing, but your heart knows the truth

2. Jesus’ delay is not inconsistent with his love.¹

- **Jairus couldn’t fathom** why Jesus delayed. **“If he loved me**, if he cared, surely he’d have gotten there in time to help my little girl.”

¹ I am particularly indebted to Tim Keller for insight on the next two points from a message he preached at Redeemer on this passage called “The Timing of Jesus.”

- **But Jesus knew the delay would not make any real difference...** you see to him death was as easy to fix as rousing her out of a short nap, and so so the little girl’s death was of no lasting significance—it was just a temporary delay.
- **The point of this story is not that if you pray long and hard enough Jesus will save you from death on earth.** Of course not. Even this little girl died again. (She’s not around now.)
- **The point is to give you a picture of what we will all experience in the resurrection. AND** in the resurrection, the joy of what Jesus restores to us will make any pain we experience from his delay like a temporary inconvenience, a short nap.

Paul would go so far as to say this:

2 Cor 4:17–18, For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. ¹⁸ So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

- Our afflictions in this life, no matter how bad, are only light and momentary.
 - BTW, when Paul talks about pain here, he’s not talking about JV level pain. He’d experienced **Death. Abandonment. Betrayal.**
 - But compared to the weight of joy of eternity, and the length of time in eternity, this trouble is light and momentary.
- You say, **“It doesn’t feel light and momentary...** This person is gone. This was the **darkest chapter** of my life.”
 - Paul would compare it to a **woman in labor**... The moment you step foot in eternity, and see the beauty of what God has done through it all, all the pain of this life will seem like a **bad night in a cheap hotel.**
- I am not trying to minimize your pain. I’m trying to maximize Jesus’ victory over death. This story shows us the **Master of life and death** is fully in charge. His **delay is not inconsistent** with his love. He had a **plan for Jairus**. He has a plan for you.

12:25 **3. Jesus both offers more and requires more than you ever imagined**

- **Both people in this story came to Jesus** for one thing and ended up getting a lot more than they asked for; but **Jesus required a lot more** of both of them than they were expecting, too.
- **Jairus** came to Jesus in **need of a healing**; what he got was a resurrection (a **miracle upgrade**)
 - **But Jesus required him to trust** him in the midst of completely bewildering circumstances.
- The woman wanted a **hit and run with Jesus**. (Get her healing; get home.) She got not only healing, but was also called “**precious daughter**” by the Son of God.
 - **The COST** was that she had to expose herself to Jesus and publicly profess him before the crowd.

Coming to Jesus always offers more, and also costs more, than you realized.

- Many of you have been **drawn to Jesus because of a need... Forgiveness**. Help with a family that is falling apart. Putting back together a life that is broken. Maybe you need deliverance from an addiction or to find purpose and meaning.
 - **What Jesus offers to you is far more than you imagined**: he **not only wants to help** with your problem, he wants to make you his child. He wants to give you something so much greater, even, than the solution to the problem: union with him forever.
- **But he also requires far more** from you than you have dreamed. He said, “If anyone would come after me, let him take up your cross and follow me.” Total denial. Total surrender. Total trust.
 - **Just about everyone in here believes in Jesus**. And most would say they are his follower. **But I think by “follower” they mean what I mean when I say I follow Justin Bieber** on Twitter. (Even with the felony, I’m still a believer. (He’s not short on advice!) I take and leave his suggestions. Not a follower. A fan. Actually, not a fan. Curious spectacle. **Fan of Jesus or follower?**

- There’s **only one “trade” Jesus is willing to make**: He’ll give you himself for all of eternity; the promise that he’ll make every sad thing come untrue; that surely goodness and mercy will follow you... in return for your complete surrender. All of you for all of him. Lord of all, or not Lord at all. Are you ready to make that trade?

8:04 **4. Personal stature contributes nothing to overcoming death**

- The two characters in this story are very unequal:
 - He a **religious leader**; she is religiously unclean. (He’s one of the ones who would have declared her unclean.)
 - He is **rich**; she is poor. He **has servants**; she is one.
 - He has a **name** everyone in the city knew; her name is not even mentioned because no one knew her
- **Yet Jesus gives healing to them both in response to faith**. He makes not distinction. Their stature, their accomplishments; even their righteousness, mean nothing.
 - **Interpretive clue**: This woman represents uncleanness. **Little hint: Isa 64:6: all our righteousness is like a filthy rag**. Even this religious leader is unclean like this woman.
 - **Jesus’ salvation is not a reward for righteous living**, because none of us is righteous in his sight. We are all stained to the core by sin.
 - **Jesus can save all who call upon him**, because the point is not how righteous you are before he saves you, but the power he exerts when he saves you.
 - Or, in other words, it doesn’t matter how **bad of a sinner you are**, but **how great of a Savior** he is
- **You see, you might be here like this woman**: you don’t feel like you even **have a name...** you *don’t want people* to know you. You’re *in the crowd*. You’re *broken*. You *feel dirty*. If you just **reach out your hand**, to him, in faith, he’ll save you: from real uncleanness; make you his daughter.
- **On the other hand, if you think that God is going to accept you** because you are a pretty good person—on the scale of people,

you're in the better half, as long as he grades on the curve you're fine, then you'll never know his forgiveness and resurrection.

- **Bloomberg:** Pointing to his work on gun safety, obesity and smoking cessation, he said: "I am telling you if there is a God, when I get to heaven I'm not stopping to be interviewed. I am heading straight in. I have earned my place in heaven. It's not even close."²
- **Most people have that attitude...** Something that makes you worthy... You'll never know his forgiveness and resurrection. He only fills empty hands. All that you need is need.

4:31 **5. Our victory over death came only at great personal cost to him**

- Vs. 30 says that when the woman touched him, "power went out from him." It's an **odd phrase, because** (scholars say) it means he became weak. And what's really odd about it is that **throughout the Gospels Jesus has done far greater** things than this, legions of demons. Hurricane... without even breaking a sweat!
- **Why does this miracle take power from him?** Because our cleansing, like this woman's, and our resurrection, like this little girl's, would only come at great personal cost to him.
 - In order to **cleansing our sin**, he'd have to become dirty for us. **Ex 28:38:** Touching the garment of the high priest made his garment unclean. He took her uncleanness so she could be clean. He had to **bleed like the woman**; he became **unclean** in our place.
 - In order to **raise us to new life**, he'd have to be struck down in weakness.
- The gospel is **substitution**. "God made him, who knew no sin to become sin for us..."
 - He **had to go into death**, like the girl so that we could be raised to life.

I told you I've struggled to believe... that's sincere. But I believe this. Came from heaven. Healed the sick, raised the dead. Did 2 things I

couldn't do: 1. live the life I had always wanted to live and died the death I was condemned to die... 2. Overcome the thing that scares me most: the grave.

He's the only one who could do all this. Why do we say Jesus is the only Savior?

- **California grandma:** the one who would do the saving can't have the same problem as the ones who need to be saved!

Conclusion/MUSIC

This is the gospel: Jesus is the only Savior from the one problem that affects us all: death. He did it by suffering the penalty of sin in your place and offering you new life. He offers it as a gift to all who would receive it.

Question: Have you received him personally? Might I persuade you to consider him, in light of your coming death?

- "What **does it profit a man** if he gains the whole world? I often ask teenagers... What will a man **give in exchange** for his soul? What good will **all of your accomplishments** do in eternity? What are you going to **give to buy back** your soul? Your stature? Your money? Your profession? Will any of that matter?
- **The one who has Christ and nothing else in death has everything; the one who has everything else in death but not Christ has nothing.**

It's a gift that must be received freely by faith. PRAYER

(-3:09) BAPTISM

When you trust Christ, you are supposed to show it through baptism. Public declaration.

² <http://mobile.nytimes.com/2014/04/16/us/bloomberg-plans-a-50-million-challenge-to-the-nra.html>

- Many of you have never done that. **a.** Just trusting Christ today, or, **b.** maybe you **trusted Christ as Lord and Savior a while ago, years ago, even; either way, you've never shown it through adult public baptism.** You've been putting it off for a while. **Today is your day** to do this.

Excuses:

- **"I have no clothes."** T-shirts; shorts; underwear; hair ties and swim caps.
- **"I rode with people."** They'll wait. Raise your hand if you're not willing!
- **"I want someone to come with me."** That's fine. Ask your friend to go with you. Shoot, bring your whole row with you.
- **"I don't think it's that important."** Listen, it's a command of Jesus. Who are we to decide which of his commands we're going to obey and which we are not? **Many of you here who say you believe in Jesus** but you've never actually started to follow him; it starts with this first decision to be baptized. *I'm not asking you to fulfill a ritual, but to begin a whole new life of discipleship with baptism as your first step.*
- **"I was baptized as a child."** Their decision or yours? Every time in the Bible... studying Acts: 27x we see a baptism in the book of Acts; all 27 times they believed first. **"I don't want to shame my parents."** You're not! You're fulfilling their hopes!
- **"I need to think about it..."** About what? Whether he said it? Matt 28:19. Whether he meant it? He was serious. Whether he is Lord? Should have had that question answered before you became a Christian. If you are a follower of Jesus, you should be baptized?

Bullpen:

- And **the joy we have in that moment**, which will last for eternity, makes us wonder **why we were ever really bothered** by the delay. Paul would say it this way:
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 - Nothing that happens from here on out will ever put Jesus Christ back in that tomb. Nothing that Washington, or Hollywood every says; no sickness, no death, can ever reverse the fact that he is risen; he is risen indeed!
 -
 - One of our biggest problems is that we only think about life from the perspective of this life, and not from eternity.
- You say, “Jesus actually healed this little girl. Will I see that?” This is a symbol of something greater! This little girl died again—this is a symbol of the greater resurrection.)
 - 20 years seems like a long time here. Pain seems real. Is it really that long compared to eternity?
 - And the glory and joy eternity is so weighty that it outweighs even our most severe pain.
- Yet they are leveled by a problem they can’t overcome. Death.
 - Italian proverb: *“After the game, the king and pawn go into the same box.”* Death levels.

They shook their heads and mocked him. Christians say this kind of stuff all the time now, but is it just an illusion, a false hope we hang onto because we don’t want to deal with reality?

- You see because he faced death full on, in the face, it’s like only a nap for us.
 - “Shadow”: the only real death that can kill us, he’s taken. All the others are just shadows, naps.
 - Jesus never rushed and he won’t be hurried. He doesn’t need to because the real storms, the real death, has been dealt with, and when you realize that, you’ll quit worrying yourself.³
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 - He’d have to become weak so that he could give the power of forgiveness and new life to us.
- In Gethsemane Jesus prayed, “If it’s possible, can this cup pass from me?” In other words, “Can we just cut to the salvation part?” “No. No salvation apart from cross.”
 - Our healing and resurrection came only by his substitutionary death in our place.
 - The point is not what kind of sinner you are, but what kind of Savior *he is*. He is able to save to the uttermost those who come by faith to him.
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- You came to Easter service looking for an inspirational message and a guy basically who would stand up here and tell you, “Everything is fine.” What Jesus actually says to you, “If anyone would follow me, let me deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.”

³ This last insight, as well as a few others throughout, I owe especially to Tim Keller in his exegesis on this passage and Luke 8:40–56.

- You are frustrated with God because of his delay in answering your request. This story shows us that God's grace and love are not inconsistent with what seem to us to be unconscionable delays.

Our greatest problem is, to the Master, like waking us up from a nap. We can trust him with the timing. This story shows us that delay, painful delays, are fully consistent with his power and love.

and began walking (for she was twelve years of age), and they were immediately overcome with amazement.

"Our dissatisfaction with time argues for the fact that we were created for eternity: Do fish complain of the sea for being wet? Or, if they did, would not that fact strongly suggest that they had not been, or were not destined to be, aquatic creatures? We long to step out of the sea of time onto the land of eternity..."

The ground is level at the foot of the cross

- They are very unequal:
 - He is male; she is female;
 - he a religious leader; she is unclean. He's one of the ones who would have declared her unclean.
 - he is rich; she is poor
 - he has servants; she has no one
 - he is at the top of the food chain; she at the bottom.
- Two things are equal:
 - Death levels them both.
 - Italian proverb: Italian chess pieces all go back in the box!
- Jesus gives equal attention to them both.
 - Her faith is even of lower quality. That doesn't matter. Jesus saves all who come.
 - Doesn't matter if you are a member of hell's paid staff!

Only child. Imagine how excited he was—Jesus said yes!

- Jesus stops. This is almost criminal. Triage? This woman has had this issue for 12 years. Another 20 minutes won't help.
- Imagine Jairus—"but Lord, this is critical." Then, what he fears, happens. "Your daughter is dead." Imagine this moment for Jairus. He had just been filled with hope! Now his daughter, his only little girl, is dead.
 - Jesus' delay cost her her life.
 - Now confused, angry.

((The pervasiveness of death—it is coming. It's an enemy! Jesus took it.

Jesus got angry at funerals Here's a woman who also has given up hope. In those days that kind of blood flow made a woman ceremonially unclean. You weren't supposed even to touch people like that! For 12 years she's been shut off from God's presence and cut off from human contact. She thinks if she can get up close to Jesus and touch him she might be healed.

And she's right. Not only does he heal her; he calls her daughter. The only time he uses that phrase—a term of tender endearment. He embraces her.

Universal experience. Disappointment (how easy it would be to believe in God if he always showed up—statement from Dawkins or Ehrman to the effect, "I would believe in God if he always answered prayer, etc.")

Seems to be almost cavalier in the face of death.

- "Your little girl is not dead, but sleeping."

- Imagine if it was your little girl
- People still laugh

Ends with baptism.

All our services are online if you go to sleep in this and later want to see how it ended...

- Spoiler: Jesus raises from the dead.

She touched in faith. that's what get Jesus' power.

Italian proverb: All the pieces go back in the box!

William Sangster suffered from muscular atrophy until in final days, unable to speak. On last Easter, wrote a letter to daughter said "***It is terrible to not be able to wake up this morning and shout Jesus is alive. But it would still be more terrible to have a voice and not want to shout.***" Brothers and sisters, ***I want to shout "Jesus is alive!"*** Not just today but every day!

Easter: we celebrate Easter every week. How important resurrection is for Paul. Preaching a funeral for you.

- For the believer, death is:
 - A coronation
 - A rest from labor
 - Embarkation on a voyage
 - Move into a new house
 - Exodus into freedom
 - The transcendent thrill of being ushered into Christ's presence⁴

Not only is that statement difficult, Jesus seems to have been negligibly delinquent in getting to this little girl. He knew she was about to die, but he delayed his coming to her, which is going to raise another difficult question, "Why did he let her die in the first place?" Which is a question a lot of people have about God—if there is a good God, if all this stuff about Jesus is true, why does anyone suffer? Why doesn't he end war and injustice?

Let's go back and unpack this story... It's fascinating and it will reveal more about Jesus' answers for life than just about anything else you can read:

⁴ From Billy Graham's remarks at Dawson Trotman's funeral, Betty Lee Skinner, *Daws*, 379.