

## GET INTO THE STUDY



5 minutes

**DISCUSS:** Draw attention to the picture on **PSG page 56** and ask **Question #1: What are some home remedies you rely on when you're sick?**

**GUIDE:** Direct attention to **The Bible Meets Life** on **PSG page 57** to the three typical responses when a medical issue arises. (Allow volunteers to say which approach they tend to take.) Point out the author's realization that we need to pray in times of physical need.

**SAY:** "Today we will look at how a religious leader turned to Jesus when his daughter needed healing."

Reinforce **The Point** on **PSG page 57: Jesus brings healing to our lives.**

**PRAY:** Begin the Bible study with prayer. Ask God to teach us to turn to Him first when we need healing and restoration.

# SESSION 5 JESUS HEALS



## **The Point**

Jesus brings healing to our lives.

## **The Bible Meets Life**

When we experience pain or hurt, we turn to doctors and pharmacists. After all, they have remedies for much of what ails us. But we all experience pain and hurt—physical, emotional, relational, and

spiritual—that are beyond the scope of science. We need Jesus. In all things, we are to come to Jesus, because He brings healing we can't imagine. We can trust Jesus to take care of us.

## **The Passages**

Mark 5:22-24,35-43

## **The Setting**

After Jesus calmed the storm (Mark 4:35-41), He again displayed His power and authority in the land of the Gerasenes. In this predominantly Gentile region, He was confronted by a demon-possessed man who lived among tombs. Jesus exorcised a host of demons from the man, leading the fearful local residents to insist that He leave (5:1-20). When He arrived on the other side of the lake, Jesus encountered a synagogue leader who desperately needed His power over sickness and disease.

## Mark 5:22-24

**22** One of the synagogue leaders, named Jairus, came, and when he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet

**23** and begged him earnestly, “My little daughter is dying. Come and lay your hands on her so that she can get well and live.”

**24** So Jesus went with him, and a large crowd was following and pressing against him.

**1** ▶ **Verse 22.** After Jesus cast out the demons of the man from the region of the Gerasenes (Mark 5:1-21), He returned to other side of the lake where He encountered a large crowd—and a man named **Jairus**. Little is known about Jairus except that he was **one of the synagogue leaders**. The synagogue system developed during and because of the Jewish captivity in Babylon. With Solomon’s temple destroyed and the Jews taken into exile, “local worship and instruction became necessary. Even after Jews returned to Jerusalem and rebuilt the temple, places of local worship continued. By the first century they were called synagogues.”<sup>1</sup> While Jerusalem still stood as the heart of worship for Israel, synagogues served as local places of worship and instruction in individual communities. So, while festivals still required trips to Jerusalem, basic instruction in the law could be done locally.

As a leader of his local synagogue, Jairus would have been the layman responsible for organizing and conducting worship services and religious instruction. Though not a priest or rabbi, synagogue leaders were highly respected in their towns. He also would have carried a great deal of influence, which makes his approaching Jesus more impressive. Unlike other religious leaders Jesus dealt with, Jairus came with humility. ◀

Though Mark was silent on the synagogue leader’s background, Jairus apparently had heard about Jesus’ ability to heal, so he turned to Him in desperation. He simply had a need that could not be met any other way.

**2** ▶ **Verses 23-24.** Mark’s use of the word **begged** confirms that Jairus was desperate for Jesus’ help. In other passages, people came to Jesus with similar feelings of desperation. Later in this chapter, another desperate person, a woman with a bleeding disorder (vv. 25-34), interrupted Jairus’s own desperate situation. This woman had seen numerous doctors

## STUDY THE BIBLE

### Mark 5:22-24



10 minutes

**SUMMARIZE:** Before reading the passage, set the context by summarizing the information in **The Setting** on page 58.

**READ:** Read or ask a volunteer to read Mark 5:22-24.

**GUIDE:** Refer group members to **PSG page 58**, to the paragraph that begins “Jairus was a big deal in the community.” Ask a group member to read this paragraph.

**GUIDE:** Refer group members to **DIGGING DEEPER** on **PSG page 59**, for more information on the central role of the synagogue in the Jewish community.

**SUMMARIZE:** Use **Bible Commentary 1** to give further explanation about the synagogue and the status of the leader of the synagogue.

**SUMMARIZE:** Use **Bible Commentary 2** on page 59 and this page to explain that Jairus was desperate for Jesus' help. His young daughter was dying and Jesus was his last hope for healing.

**GUIDE:** Refer group members to **PSG page 60**, to the paragraph that states that many of us only turn to God when we are desperate, after we have exhausted every human possibility for relief.

**DISCUSS: Question #2 (PSG, p. 60):** When have you been extremely concerned about a situation in your life?

*(Alternate: What are some alternatives we typically pursue before turning to Jesus with our needs?)*

**TRANSITION:** "Next we will see how Jesus responded to news from the home of Jairus that it was too late; his daughter was dead."

and had spent all she had—but her situation only grew worse (vv. 25-26). She saw Jesus as a last hope for healing. Jairus may have been in a similar situation, and his request tugs at the heart of any parent. His young daughter wasn't just sick. She was **dying**.

While Jairus's request, "**Come and lay your hands on her so that she can get well and live,**" was rooted in Jesus' ability to perform a miracle rather than His position as God's Son, the passage still hints at spiritual transformation. The Greek word for **get well** is also translated as "save." It's the same word Mark used for the woman with the blood issue in verse 34. In Jesus' encounter with this woman, the word's meaning "borders on salvation in the theological sense. In all the miracles of Mark 5, physical healing is a parable of spiritual deliverance."<sup>2</sup>

Jairus's request also reveals a measure of faith on his part. Whatever doubts He might have had, he overcame them and believed Jesus could save his daughter's life. Jairus's request provides a great pattern for how contemporary believers should approach Jesus with their needs. The writer of Hebrews pointed out that we can approach the throne of grace with confidence (Heb. 4:16). That confidence, combined with appropriate humility, reflects how believers can have their requests heard and met. ◀

Jesus acknowledged Jairus's need and **went with him**. Humble appeals still touch the heart of God and lead Him to move on our behalf. Jesus once told a story of two men, one a proud hypocrite and the other a humble sinner. In the parable, Jesus made it clear that the humble man—though looked down upon by the rest of society—was the only one of the two who walked away forgiven (Luke 18:9-14). Later, James quoted the Book of Proverbs to remind his readers that while God resists those who are proud, He provides grace to those who display humility (Jas. 4:6; see Prov. 3:34). The principle of humility resonates throughout the New Testament and serves to instruct believers on how we should approach God with all our needs.

As usual, **a large crowd** surrounded Jesus and followed Him on the way to Jairus's house. This stands in stark contrast to the last crowd Jesus had dealt with. On the other side of the lake, a crowd of Gerasenes had asked Him to leave their region (Mark 5:17). Now, back among Jews, the crowds again welcomed Him and were willing to follow Him to find out what would happen next.

## Mark 5:35-40

**35** While he was still speaking, people came from the synagogue leader's house and said, "Your daughter is dead. Why bother the teacher anymore?"

**36** When Jesus overheard what was said, he told the synagogue leader, "Don't be afraid. Only believe."

**37** He did not let anyone accompany him except Peter, James, and John, James's brother.

**38** They came to the leader's house, and he saw a commotion—people weeping and wailing loudly.

**39** He went in and said to them, "Why are you making a commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but asleep."

**40** They laughed at him, but he put them all outside. He took the child's father, mother, and those who were with him, and entered the place where the child was.

**3** ▶ **Verse 35.** The darkness of despair reached its climax on the trip home for Jairus. Sometime between his initial encounter with Jesus and his arrival at home, people coming from Jairus's house gave him a devastating report: "**Your daughter is dead.**" These people could have been either Jairus's friends or his servants.

The people's following comment, "**Why bother the teacher anymore?**" may have carried a sarcastic tone. Perhaps they had originally tried to discourage Jairus from going to Jesus in the first place.<sup>3</sup> Regardless of their attitude, they were wrong about Jesus feeling bothered by Jairus's request and about His being a mere teacher. Jairus already knew Jesus' power and authority went beyond the teachings He shared, and what happened next would leave no shadow of a doubt.

Jesus is not burdened by our requests. He desires to help those who come to Him in genuine faith. He shows Himself strong through our weaknesses and urges those who are weary to find rest in Him (Matt. 11:28-30). As we draw near to God, He draws near to us (Jas. 4:8). As we come to Jesus in faith, He responds and meets the deepest needs of our lives. ◀

## STUDY THE BIBLE

### Mark 5:35-40



10 minutes

**READ:** Read or ask a volunteer to read Mark 5:35-40.

**GUIDE:** Refer group members to **PSG page 61** to learn what happened while Jairus and Jesus were on their way to Jairus's house. Point out that Jesus was delayed in this instance, but in John 11 when Lazarus was sick, Jesus deliberately delayed going to him.

**SUMMARIZE:** Use **Bible Commentary 3** to provide further explanation to the devastating news that Jairus's daughter was dead and they no longer needed Jesus' help.

**DISCUSS: Question #3**  
(PSG, p. 61): **How can we express trust in God even when things go from bad to worse?**

**SAY:** *“In verse 36, Jesus challenged Jairus to maintain his faith in Jesus’ ability to save his daughter. Jesus’ challenge to Jairus was to believe despite the circumstances, to believe even in the face of death.”*

**SUMMARIZE:** Use **Bible Commentary 4** on this page and page 63 to show that Jairus continued to his house with Jesus. Point out that:

- *Jesus allowed His inner circle of Peter, James and John to go with Him.*
- *Jairus’s home was a chaotic scene.*
- *The Jewish customs of expressing grief were different from our customs today in western culture.*
- *Professional mourners and musicians were a unique custom of first-century Jewish families.*
- *Jesus questioned why they were weeping and announced that the child was not dead, but asleep.*

**Verse 36.** It would not have been difficult for Jesus to hear the conversation between Jairus and those who came to meet him from his house. The word Mark used for **overheard** could also be translated “ignored,” indicating that Jesus was not deterred by the report of the child’s death. With His words to Jairus, **“Don’t be afraid. Only believe,”** Jesus challenged Jairus to maintain his faith in Jesus’ ability to save his daughter. Jesus’ challenge to Jairus was to believe in spite of the circumstances, to believe even in the face of death.

**4 ▶ Verse 37.** Jairus had a choice to make. He could choose to trust Jesus and keep moving toward his home or he could call the whole thing off and walk away from the hope Jesus offered. Whatever his questions—and his grief—he chose to move forward with Jesus.

Jesus left the crowd behind. So many people probably could not have fit in Jairus’s house anyway, but they certainly would have created a problem. He allowed only Peter, James, and John to accompany Him the rest of the way to the house. These disciples—among the first followers Jesus called and sometimes viewed by Bible students as His inner circle—were privileged to experience other significant events with Jesus. They were with Him on the Mount of Transfiguration (Mark 9:2-10), and Jesus chose those three to accompany Him when He went off to pray in the garden of Gethsemane (14:32-33) shortly before His arrest.

Certainly, Jesus could have healed the girl of whatever disease had afflicted her. But the fact that she had died did not deter Him from His plan. If anything, it provided an opportunity to perform an even greater work. Often Jesus’ timetable is different from our timetable. But when that is the case, we must make the necessary adjustments. His timing—and His purpose—is always perfect.

**Verses 38-39.** Jairus’s home was a chaotic scene. Unlike the somber and sedate nature of most funerals today in our western culture, first-century Jewish families expressed grief with loud weeping and wailing. Also, because he was a synagogue official, many in the town would have wanted to show their respect at the loss of his daughter.

Often, family members hired professional mourners and even musicians to join them and their friends in their sorrow. The customs of the day stated that even the poorest person should hire at least one mourner and two musicians for such an occasion. In addition to wailing and playing the flute, these

mourners would tear their clothes and even pull out their hair as signs of grief. Since Jairus was a wealthy and influential man, the number of professional mourners was likely greater than the minimum the custom required. Matthew indicates that when Jesus arrived at Jairus's house, there were multiple flute players present (Matt. 9:23). The gathering at Jairus's house was likely very large and the source of the incredible uproar Jesus encountered when He arrived on the scene.

Jesus understood the situation better than anyone else present. As a result, He asked a question that might have sounded strange on the surface: **“Why are you making a commotion and weeping?”** Under normal circumstances, it would have made perfect sense for this to have been a house of mourning. The little girl had died, and those close to her would have been heartbroken.

Some have suggested that Jesus' words, **“The child is not dead but asleep,”** implied the girl was not actually dead. However, the family's reaction does not indicate the girl was alive. Plus, the use of sleep as a metaphor for death is found in multiple places throughout the New Testament. Jesus Himself talked about death in terms of sleep when referring to the death of Lazarus (John 11:11-14). Paul used similar language in his letters to both the Corinthians (1 Cor. 15:51) and the Thessalonians (1 Thess. 4:13-18) concerning the resurrection of believers at Christ's return.

Jesus' attitude demonstrated that He knew how the story was going to end. Since Jairus had asked Him to intervene the outcome was assured—even after the girl had died. ◀

**5 ▶ Verse 40.** The response of the people present at Jairus's home was harsh. **They laughed** at Jesus' words. Their laughter did not indicate amusement, but scorn. The people's laughter also revealed a genuine lack of concern for the needs and the grief of Jairus and his family. If they had really cared about what the family was going through, they would have responded to Jesus' words with anger or moral outrage—even if that outrage was based on a misunderstanding of Jesus' intentions. Instead, they mocked Christ and His claims.<sup>4</sup>

In another display of powerful authority, Jesus cleared the house. The mockers were removed because they lacked the faith that Jairus had displayed in Jesus. And their unbelief meant that they would not be able to witness the miracle that was about to occur.<sup>5</sup> When Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, He prayed specifically for the crowd around the tomb, asking the Father to use that miracle to convince unbelievers that He was the Messiah (John 11:41-43). He made no special prayer in this case. He simply had the crowd of people removed from the house. With the unbelievers now on the

**GUIDE:** Refer group members to **PSG page 62** and invite a volunteer to read the paragraphs that start with “When they arrived at Jairus's house grief and mourning had already filled the place” and go through “For the Author of life, raising the dead was as simple as waking a small child from sleep.”

**SUMMARIZE:** Use **Bible Commentary 5** on this page and page 64 to learn how the mourners responded to Jesus' words. (They laughed.) Point out that Jesus removed those mockers from the room.

**DISCUSS: Question #4**  
**(PSG, p. 62): What are some ways we can express our belief and trust in God?**

*(Alternate: What have you learned in recent years about trusting God?)*

**TRANSITION:** “Next we will read ‘the rest of the story.’”

## STUDY THE BIBLE

## Mark 5:41-43



15 minutes

**READ:** Read or ask a volunteer to read Mark 5:41-43.

**SAY:** *"The only one able to bring a dead body back to life is the One who instills life in the first place. If Jesus is able to give and restore life, He surely can be fully trusted to handle any situation we face."*

**SUMMARIZE:** Use **Bible Commentary 6** to explain why Jesus often used the Aramaic language, and how Jesus demonstrated His authority over death.

**SUMMARIZE:** Use **Bible Commentary 7** for more information about the statement that "they were utterly astounded."

outside, He could focus on the task at hand. As believers we can trust Jesus to work in our lives, even when things seem to go wrong. ◀

---

**Mark 5:41-43**

**41** Then he took the child by the hand and said to her, "Talitha koum" (which is translated, "Little girl, I say to you, get up").

**42** Immediately the girl got up and began to walk. (She was twelve years old.) At this they were utterly astounded.

**43** Then he gave them strict orders that no one should know about this and told them to give her something to eat.

**Verse 41.** We can have hope because Jesus has authority over death. Jesus often ministered by touch. He healed a blind man by smearing mud on his eyes (John 9:1-7) and a deaf man who also had difficulty speaking by putting His fingers in the man's ears and on his tongue (Mark 7:31-37). He even touched lepers (1:40-42). The act of touching a dead girl's body would have made Jesus ceremonially unclean. But He had already cured both a demoniac and a woman with a bleeding disorder so touching a corpse just added one more item to the list of ways He would have been unclean. However, Jesus never let ceremonial laws stand in the way of bringing glory to God and ministering to those in need.

**6** ▶ While Mark quoted Jesus' words in Aramaic—"Talitha koum"—he also provided the translation for his Greek readers—"Little girl, I say to you, get up." Aramaic was the common language of the people in first-century Israel, meaning Jesus would have spoken Aramaic and probably used it to do much of His preaching and teaching. The emphasis of His words to the dead girl is on the authority of Jesus. He demonstrated His authority over death by raising this little girl from the dead. ◀

**7** ▶ **Verse 42.** The effect was immediate. As soon as Jesus gave the command, **the girl got up and began to walk.** It is not clear who Mark meant when he wrote, **they were**

**utterly astounded.** It could have been the parents and the disciples, or it could have been the unbelievers who Jesus had sent out. In all likelihood, Mark was referring to everyone involved. While many first-century Jews believed in the resurrection of the dead, they would have been astonished to see it happen before their very eyes! ◀

**8 ▶ Verse 43.** Mark’s Gospel systematically demonstrated Jesus’ power and authority over many of the things people fear the most. Jesus is the One who taught with unquestionable authority (Mark 1:22). Mark emphasized Jesus’ lordship over nature (4:35-41), demonic forces (1:23-27; 5:1-20), and incurable illness (5:25-34). Now, Mark had detailed Jesus’ mastery over death itself. In his letter to the believers in Rome, Paul shared that nothing can separate believers from the love of Christ—indicating that nothing is powerful enough to overcome His authority and power (Rom. 8:35-39). Death is the greatest enemy for humanity, but even it has been vanquished through Jesus’ victory, authority, and power (1 Cor. 15:53-57).

We need to remember that Jesus still has authority over illness and death. This does not mean He will heal every disease or illness, but we should not hesitate to pray for those who are hurting and ill. We also need to rest in the truth that through His life, death, and resurrection Jesus has overcome the grave on our behalf. Death really has lost its sting!

Jesus directed Jairus and his family to keep this miracle under wraps—a difficult request to be sure. Elsewhere in the Gospels, Jesus made similar requests to the recipients of His miracles. It has been suggested the reason for such requests was to prevent misunderstandings as to the nature of His messianic role. For example, in his Gospel John records an incident where the people desired to make Jesus their king (John 6:15). In the case of the raising of Jairus’s daughter, it would have been impossible to keep secret that the little girl had been brought back from the dead. But secrecy would have allowed Jesus time to leave the area. Jesus sought to avoid that kind of attention so He could continue His mission.

Mark did not specify why Jesus said to give the girl **something to eat.** It might simply have been that she was hungry, or due to her illness (and death) she may not have eaten for some time. A healthy appetite would have been further evidence of a healthy girl. Giving the girl something to eat would also have served to demonstrate that she really was alive, having been brought back from the dead. ◀

1. Robert J. Dean and Charles W. Draper, “Synagogue” in *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, gen. ed. Chad Brand, Charles Draper, and Archie England (Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003), 1544.  
2. James A. Brooks, *Mark*, vol. 23 in *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1991), 93-94.  
3. *Ibid.*, 94.  
4. Rodney L. Cooper, *Mark*, vol. 2 in *Holman New Testament Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2000), 89.  
5. *Ibid.*

**SUMMARIZE:** Use **Bible Commentary 8** to conclude the teaching about:

- *Jesus’ authority over death*
- *Why Jesus directed the family to tell no one.*
- *Jesus’ command to give the girl something to eat.*

**GUIDE:** Read or ask someone to read the story aloud on **PSG page 63** about the old man and his horse. The story shows that while we don’t always understand why something happened, we can always trust the One who can handle it.

**DISCUSS: Question #5 (PSG, p. 64):** What situation in your life is requiring you to trust in God and wait on His timing?

*(Alternate: What gives you hope when you face serious situations?)*

**DO:** Encourage group members to take a few minutes to complete the activity “**Help!!!**” on **PSG page 64.**

**LIVE IT OUT****5 minutes**

**GUIDE:** Emphasize **The Point:** **Jesus brings healing to our lives.**

**REVIEW:** Review **Live It Out (PSG, p. 65)**; (see text to the right). Encourage each group member to follow through this week with at least one of the applications.

**WRAP IT UP**

**GUIDE:** Remind group members that even though we do not know all of the answers to the mysteries and tragedies of life, we must hold on to hope that Jesus has the power to heal. Encourage individuals to trust Him for healing and to go to Him first in times of need.

**PRAY:** "Father, help us to trust You and believe that you have the power to heal.

**LIVE IT OUT**

How can you trust Christ this week? Consider doing one of the following:

- ▶ **Pray.** What are you going through that seems beyond hope? Go to Jesus in prayer and give your situation to Him. Trust Him to answer out of His great love and power.
- ▶ **Trust.** God does not always work according to our timetables, but we can trust that, when He answers, it will be the best answer at the best possible time. Keep praying and keep trusting.
- ▶ **Provide.** Find someone in your community who has a need he or she may feel can never be met except by a miracle. Let God use you and your group as the channel through which He works, giving glory to God in the process.



BIBLICAL  
**ILLUSTRATOR**



At Iconium; seat of judgment or possibly the Seat of Moses from a local synagogue. Though its origin is shrouded in the midst of antiquity, basically the synagogue was a community of people who gathered at a common location—either in private homes or in public buildings. There leaders would share news and legal notices and read Scripture to remind the people of their obligations to keep the Jewish festivals and observances. Weddings and funerals were held there. Visiting travelers would be lodged and hospitality extended; sometimes guilds were permitted to show and sell wares. Children were educated in the ways of the community and taught to read and write. Adults not able to

travel to Jerusalem for the festivals gathered for prayer and worship, especially on Sabbaths. These gatherings served the full gamut of community needs, including: political meetings, social activities, minor courts, manumission of slaves, sacred and secular meals, as well as religious and liturgical functions.

While synagogue attendance on the Sabbath was not a requirement, Jews did hold Sabbath services both in the morning and afternoon. The synagogue was never in conflict with the temple; instead it supplied an outlet for the reading of the Law and Prophets for those not able to go to the temple. The temple and synagogue existed side by side in harmony and with a clear division of function. The Jew went to the temple to seek forgiveness for his sins; he went to the synagogue to offer his personal supplications and to listen to expositions of sacred literature.

The excerpt above is from the article “The Synagogue in the First Century” (Summer 2007), which relates to this session. More *Biblical Illustrator* articles are available that relate to this session. See page 7 about *Biblical Illustrator*.

## SHARING THE GOOD NEWS

*Jesus was known for healing people throughout his earthly ministry. The greatest work of healing He does is found when we repent of sin and trust in Him as Lord.*

Each week, make yourself available either before or after the session to speak privately with anyone in your group who wants to know more about becoming a Christian. See the article, “Leading Someone to the Greatest Decision of All,” on page 2 for guidance in leading a person to Christ.

Remind group members that **page 2** in the **PSG** offers guidance in how to become a Christian. Encourage believers to consider using this article as they have opportunities to lead others to Christ.

**GROUPS  
MATTER.**

Grow with other group leaders at the **Groups Ministry blog.**

[LifeWay.com/GroupMinistry](http://LifeWay.com/GroupMinistry)