

**ALL IN**  
Mark 5

<sup>35</sup> 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?”

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

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

As John Hancock lifted his pen from the paper, having affixed his personal signature to a document which declared independence from the mother country, he knew that there would be plenty of people who thought him a fool. They would say, “England is too powerful, too well-trained, too fiscally adept to not quiet this little rebellion with a stomp of their large heel. How in heaven’s name could you possibly think that you could go against such a giant and win? You are an idiot, a dreamer, living in a fantasy world. You will be outmatched, outwitted, outplayed – and in the end, your body will hang lifeless from a rope as smarter folk look on with sadness.

But Hancock felt differently. He believed his cause was just, he believed in the power of his God, in the strength of his fellow citizens, and in the ultimate victory of the patriots of this new land. And so, 242 years ago, he didn’t just put down his signature, he wrote it big so that everyone could see that he wasn’t sheepishly compelled to sign, he was proud to sign. And he backed up his signature with his personal wealth – significant which it was – to help finance the revolution.

That’s similar to how Jesus displays himself in our text for today. Notice, on two separate occasions, people dismiss his faith in the power of his Father. First, it’s this phrase: <sup>35</sup> 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?”

In short, they said, “Jairus, it’s hopeless. No God and no prophet can raise the dead. Let the rabbi go on his way and teach.”

But Jesus declares, with boldness: “Don’t be afraid; just believe.” In other words, “don’t let the naysayers get you down. Don’t let the critics and the cynics and the skeptics guide your thinking. You know your God is more powerful than their words, and I am His Son and Promised One, so go with Him, not with them, and see how He will reward your faith with His presence and His love.

So Jairus moves on. He sticks with Jesus. He stands poised, ready, like John Hancock, to put his pen to the parchment. But a few minutes later, Jesus comes to the scene and sees the commotion of grief -- people crying and wailing loudly. And our text says this: “Jesus said, ‘Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep.’<sup>40</sup> But they laughed at him.”

They laughed at him. In the middle of their tears and grief, they somehow find the gumption to mock Jesus’ words. “He is a fool” they thought. “The girl is beyond hope. (Sacracstically) ...sleeping. How ridiculous. Jairus, don’t listen to this dreamer.”

Again, Jairus is tempted to listen to his friends. Again, doubts arise in his mind and they are fueled by critics and cynics and skeptics. But Jairus stays with Jesus. His pen begins to write on the dotted line, but the letters are not so big.

And then it happens. Jesus says two simple words – just two words: “Talitha Koum.” (of course, this is good word economy, because in English we would say, “Little girl, I say to you get up – 8 words!) And the next thing Jairus knows, his 12-year old is walking around the room as if nothing had happened.

Now Jairus is ready to put his signature down in bold print. He has seen the power and love of Jesus, and there is no turning back for him ever again. John Hancock.

Do you have anything like that in your life – besides Jesus, that is? Something that you weren’t so sure about at first, but put your signature to some years ago and have held onto with passion and zeal? Some of you veterans, I know you did that for your country. You risked your lives to keep freedom and justice as a part of our way of life – and as part of the world. I salute you for your diligence and self-sacrifice.

Some of you have done that with your career. You are committed to helping people in some way or another – as a counselor, as a teacher, as a nurse. It wasn't about the money – it was about accomplishing something, making a difference. And you went forth with passion.

Some of you have done that with your volunteer organizations. You feed the hungry, help the poor, work with the disabled, the lonely, the children, the elderly.

Somewhere along the line, you put your signature on the line, and never looked back. You believed, and therefore you did.

How about with your faith? Is your signature on the line, or are you still holding back? Are you John Hancock, or are you more like the weeping crowds around the dead daughter of Jairus?

Without a doubt, there are plenty of naysayers. There's the college professor who has convinced himself that all Christians are idiots who bury their head in the sand concerning the creation of the world, and so he mocks and scorns those who declare themselves believers. And his words will sound convincing to many as he throws his darts and hurls his jabs at what seem to be faith inconsistencies.

Then there's the neighbor, who's had a bad experience with the faith. Perhaps the nuns hit him across the fingers when he was naughty or maybe there was a harsh pastor who was better at showing the wrath of God than the love of God. He'll speak of Christians as hateful, right-wing conservatives who look down, judgmentally at those who disagree with them.

There are those who have had a bad life experience – perhaps they were abused, perhaps they lost a loved one in a difficult fashion, perhaps they had to deal with suffering or personal pain in ways that most have not. And they throw the questions, "How can a loving God allow such evil? How can an all-powerful God not intervene in such horrific circumstances?"

Yes, there are many naysayers. Plenty who will laugh when you talk of faith and mock when you talk of miracles.

For Jairus, there was that moment – that amazing day when Jesus took hold of the hand of his daughter and said, "Talitha Koum" – and up she rose. And, from that day onward, nothing could sway him from his wholehearted belief in the Christ.

Have you had such a moment?

I know, you're tempted to say no. After all, it's not every day that someone gets to see a true resurrection.

But I would challenge you to look again. Because you know a God who could've rejected the John Hancock way and said instead, "This world is hopeless. My people have gone too far astray. They've done too many heinous acts against me and against each other. Why should I do anything for them?" And instead, He said, "my heart bleeds for my people. I love them sooo much. I can't give up on the, let go of them, forsake them." And He performed the miracle of all miracles. He sent His Son Jesus Christ to walk into our world and declare, "Give them liberty and give me death."

Can you imagine an all-powerful God doing that? -- giving up His greatest to save the least – giving up His Son to save incorrigible sinners? But He did. He put His signature on the line, in blood, and declared that all who believe would be His children forever.

That's our miracle, my friends. Not anchored on a pipedream, but on a Savior – not build on sand, but on His holy precious blood and on His innocent suffering and death.

And make no mistake about it – that's not the only miracle He's done in your life. Over and over again He's healed you, He's guided you, He's comforted you, He's heard you. He's been responsible for your family, led you to friends, blessed you in your job. He's always there. He's always aware. And one day He will lead you to the freedom of eternity, where there will be no more problems, no more pains, no more tears.

I don't know about you, but as I consider His incredible love and His countless acts of mercy, I'm glad that I've put my signature on the line and said "Jesus is Lord of my life. I will trust in Him. I will follow Him. I will serve Him."

And I'm also thrilled that you are gathered here to do the same – to lay your life into His hands.

I guarantee, naysayers there will always be. But just as Jesus ignores them as He approaches the house of Jairus, so also can we as we cling to Him who proved His commitment to our care in every way. /// God grant it to you for the sake of Jesus. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.