

Title: ENCOUNTERING THE RESURRECTION

Text: Mark 5:21–43

Desperation (vv. 21-24)

Exasperation (vv. 25-34)

Fear (vv. 35-36)

Joy (vv. 37-43)

How do we find hope in the midst of unthinkable tragedy?

CONVERSATION STARTER

- Are you a punctual person? How do you respond when people are late? Describe a time when someone's tardiness cost you something.
- Read Mark 5:21-24, 35-43. Why is it important that we know Jairus' social standing in the synagogue? What similarities and differences do Jairus and the woman have in the story? Why does Jesus dismiss the people before raising Jairus' daughter (see v. 40)? What is the relationship between fear and faith in this story? What does Jesus mean when he tells the crowds Jairus' daughter is not dead, but asleep (see v. 39)?
- Read John 11:1-26. What similarities and differences are apparent between this story and Jairus' daughter in Mark? Why do you think Jesus waits two days to leave for Bethany after hearing of Lazarus' sickness? How can Jesus say that Lazarus' sickness will not end in death? Do you think Martha's response is justified? Why or why not?
- Read the excerpt below. Do you agree with Ladd's description of death? Why or why not? Would you add anything or take anything away? How do you think our broad culture interprets death? Does it differ from Ladd's perspective? How? Why do you think Christ's victory over death is so central to Ladd's understanding of the Gospel?
- How can we hold tension in our view of death as both a powerful enemy and a vanquished foe? How have you experienced death? How has the Christian resurrection hope affected that experience?

EXCERPT FROM: *The Gospel of the Kingdom*

BY: *G.E. Ladd*

This is the good news about the kingdom of God. How men need this gospel! Everywhere one goes he finds the gaping graves swallowing up the dying. Tears of loss, of separation, of final departure stain every face. Every table sooner or later has an empty chair, every fireside its vacant place. Death is the great leveller. Wealth or poverty, fame or oblivion, power or futility, success or failure, race, creed or culture — all our human distinctions mean nothing before the ultimate irresistible sweep of the scythe of death which cuts us all down. And whether the mausoleum is a fabulous Taj Mahal, a massive pyramid, an unmarked spot of ragged grass or the unplotted depths of the sea one fact stands: death reigns.

Apart from the gospel of the kingdom, death is the mighty conqueror before whom we are all helpless. We can only beat our fists in utter futility against this unyielding and unresponding tomb. But the good news is this: death has been defeated; our conqueror has been conquered. In the face of the power of the kingdom of God in Christ, death was helpless. It could not hold him, death has been defeated; life and immortality have been brought to life. An empty tomb in Jerusalem is proof of it. This is the gospel of the kingdom.