

Th224 Sin and Atonement: The Restoration of Relationship

Lesson Th224-23 Atonement: God's Will

What would you do to save your child from dying? Perhaps the first question we should ask, is would you care if your child died? This is a ridiculous question. Parents love their children. They want to see their children grow up, marry, have children of their own, and live successful lives. Parents love their children and want what is best for them. Because of this, parents are willing to do almost anything to see their children live and succeed.

Now the Jewish people worshipped God in the temple in Jerusalem. This was where they would bring their sacrifices to God. But the people turned their hearts from God and he sent the Babylonians to punish them. The temple in Jerusalem was destroyed and the Israelites carried off into captivity. This happened some 600 years before Jesus was born. The captivity lasted about 70 years. During this time the Jews would gather together to pray and study the Torah, which is the first five books of the Old Testament. These meeting places were called 'synagogues.' After the people of Israel returned from captivity, they rebuilt the temple. But the people continued to have meeting places, or synagogues, in their cities and villages. This practice continues today. Jewish synagogues can be found everywhere Jewish people live.

Synagogues were common throughout Israel in Jesus' time. Jairus was a synagogue leader, who lived in the village of Capernaum on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee. He was an important and highly respected person in his community. One day his 12-year-old daughter became extremely ill. We can imagine all of the efforts he went through to see that she recovered. But nothing was working; the sickness was getting worse. Jairus knew that unless something happened, his daughter would die. He had exhausted his own knowledge of medicine, and was having no success with the local healers. There remained one last chance. There was a much-debated teacher named Jesus, who had often taught in Jairus' synagogue. This teacher had performed many miracles of healing. It would be embarrassing, however, for a leader of the synagogue to approach Jesus and ask for a favor. But Jairus was desperate and was ready to do anything.

So, he set out from his home and went in search of Jesus. But Jesus was not at the house where he often stayed. Everyone knew the house, because Jesus had made it his ministry center while ministering in Galilee. But Jesus was not there. He and his disciples had sailed south to the opposite side of the Sea of Galilee. There, in the region of the Gerasenes, they had met a man who was possessed by thousands of demons. Jesus had cast the demons out of the man. Later he and his disciples had sailed their boat about 15 kilometers north, back to the village of Capernaum. They were met by a large crowd of people.

Finally, Jairus found the man he was looking for. He pushed through the crowd and in desperation, fell at Jesus' feet. "My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live," Jairus pleaded.

So, Jesus, with the crowd following him, began to move towards Jairus' house. Along the way a woman was healed, just by touching the hem of his garment. But before Jesus could get to

the home, messengers met Jairus with the worst news. “Your daughter is dead,” they said. “Why bother the teacher anymore?”

Jairus’ heart sank. That which he had feared the most had come upon him. There was no hope. His daughter was dead. But Jesus had overheard what had been said. “Don’t be afraid; just believe,” Jesus said to Jairus.

Then, dispersing the crowd, Jesus took with him Peter, James, and John. They followed Jairus to his home. When they arrived, the house was in chaos, people crying and wailing loudly. “Why all this commotion and wailing?” Jesus asked. “The child is not dead but asleep.” The people in the house turned upon Jesus and mocked and laughed at him. He ordered everyone out of the house except for Jairus and his wife, Peter, James and John. These he led into the little girl’s room. Then, taking the hand of the lifeless girl, he said, “Little girl, I say to you, get up!” Immediately the girl stood up and began to walk around (Mark 5:22-24, 35-42).

This story shows that it was the desire, or will of Jairus that his daughter live. But there was nothing that he could do himself to remove his daughter’s illness. It took Jesus, the Son of God, performing a supernatural miracle, to restore his daughter.

Sometimes, no matter how much we want or desire something to happen, it is impossible to accomplish. Our will or desire is not the issue. There are conditions that we cannot control.

Sin has separated us from relationship with God. Humanity was created with the ability and right to make their own choices. God built this into every person. What each one chooses cannot be controlled by God. This has led to people’s breaking their relationship with God and sinning. Remember what Paul wrote, “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom 3:23). He also wrote, “The wages of sin is death” (Rom 6:23). From these verses it would seem that it is God’s desire or will that everyone die and be sent to hell. But this is not so. It is just the opposite. It is God’s desire that everyone should come to repentance and that everyone’s relationship with God would be restored.

The apostle Peter wrote this in his second letter to the churches: “The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance” (2Peter 3:9).

This is God’s desire. But in order for this to happen, first God had to make a way for the sins of humankind to be atoned for. God’s law demands that the penalty for sin is death. There is no way around this. The demand of the law must be fulfilled. Atonement must be made. In our next lesson we will learn about God’s plan to satisfy the demand of the law and make atonement for our sins.

This lesson is **important** because it establishes that it is God’s desire than none should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

The **main truth** of this lesson is that even though someone might greatly desire for things to be a certain way, some things are beyond our control and require outside intervention.

Let's **review** this lesson—

1. Jairus was a leader of what? [Pause 5 seconds.]
 - A. If you said that Jairus was a leader of the Jewish synagogue in Capernaum, you are correct.

2. What happened to Jairus' 12-year-old daughter? [Pause 5 seconds.]
 - A. If you said, "Jairus' daughter got sick and died, but was raised from the dead by Jesus," you are right.

3. What is God's will or desire for every single person? [Pause 5 seconds.]
 - A. If you answered, "It is God's will or desire that everyone come to repentance, you answered correctly.

Your **assignment** for this lesson is to watch it at least three more times until you can tell this story in your own words. Then spend time in prayer asking God to bring your unsaved family members and friends to repentance.