

Question:

Some people claim the Bible contradicts itself in the story of Jairus' daughter. In Mark 5:23 and Luke 8:42, it says the daughter *was at the point of death*, but in Matthew 9:18, it says she was *already dead*. Which account is correct?

Answer:

The Bible does not contradict itself. The difference is due to where each Gospel writer begins the narrative. Understanding the context and the inspired nature of Scripture helps clarify this.

What the texts say:

Mark 5:23

“My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she may be healed and live.”

Jairus approaches Jesus while his daughter is still alive but critically ill.

Mark 5:35-36

“Your daughter is dead,” they said. “Why bother the teacher anymore?”

Overhearing what they said, Jesus told him, “Don’t be afraid; just believe.”

Here, the daughter’s death is reported after Jairus seeks Jesus’ help.

Matthew 9:18

“Your daughter has just died. But come and put your hand on her, and she will live.”

Matthew begins his account after the news of her death.

The Gospels are inspired by the Holy Spirit (2 Timothy 3:16) and therefore do not contradict each other. Each writer emphasizes different aspects of the story for their audience.

- Chronological order (Mark’s account):
Mark gives a full timeline: the daughter is dying, then dies, then Jesus raises her.

Does the Bible contradict itself in the story of Jairus' daughter?

This shows Jesus' power over death itself, fulfilling the promise in John 11:25-26

"I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die."

- Focus on faith (Matthew's account):
Matthew starts the story when the daughter has already died to emphasize the faith Jairus shows despite the hopeless news, highlighting Jesus' authority over death and the importance of trusting Him in seemingly impossible situations (Hebrews 11:1).

Why no contradiction?

- Jairus initially approaches Jesus while his daughter is still alive but near death (Mark 5:23).
- Before Jesus arrives, news comes that the daughter has died (Mark 5:35, Matthew 9:18).
- Jairus continues to believe Jesus can heal her despite the news of death, showing great faith (Mark 5:36).

Thus, both accounts describe the same event but focus on different moments within the story.

This passage powerfully reveals Jesus' divine authority over life and death and calls us to faith in Him, even when situations seem hopeless.

Does the Bible contradict itself in the story of Jairus' daughter?

If you have not yet accepted Jesus as your Savior, know that He invites you to receive Him today (Revelation 3:20). Baptism in His name (Acts 2:38) is the next step to receive forgiveness and the Holy Spirit.

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