

Mark 5:40

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they laughed him to scorn. But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying.

Analysis

And they laughed him to scorn. But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying. The crowd's mockery reveals unbelief's natural response to resurrection claims. 'They laughed him to scorn' (κατεγέλων αὐτοῦ, kategelōn autou) indicates contemptuous ridicule—they thoroughly mocked Him. This verb's imperfect tense suggests continued, repeated scornful laughter. Their mockery proved they understood Jesus meant the girl would live but considered this impossible delusion.

Jesus' response was decisive: 'when he had put them all out' (ἐκβαλὼν πάντας, ekbalōn pantas)—He expelled the mockers. The verb ἐκβάλλω (ekballō) means to throw out forcibly, the same word used for casting out demons. Jesus removes obstacles to faith before performing miracles. He retained only believing witnesses: the parents (who had faith to seek Jesus initially) and His three disciples. This teaches that God's mightiest works occur in atmosphere of faith, not unbelief. Mockery and skepticism hinder divine activity (Matthew 13:58). Jesus' selective audience—excluding scoffers, including believers—models wisdom: don't cast pearls before swine (Matthew 7:6). Share God's deepest works with those prepared to receive them reverently, not those who will mock and reject.

Historical Context

Expelling mourners from a house violated cultural norms—they were hired professionals performing expected social function. Jesus' forcible removal demonstrated authority over social customs when they conflicted with God's purposes. The phrase 'put them all out' indicates Jesus personally, perhaps with His three disciples' help, cleared the house of everyone except essential witnesses. This would have included professional mourners, flute players, and gathered crowd—potentially dozens of people. Such dramatic action underscored the seriousness of their unbelief and the sacred nature of what would follow. In Mediterranean honor-shame culture, publicly expelling people from a house was shaming action—Jesus wasn't concerned with offending scoffers. Early church practice followed this principle in excommunication—removing from fellowship those whose persistent unbelief or sin threatened the community (1 Corinthians 5). The contrast between indoor miracle witnessed by faithful remnant and outdoor crowd experiencing only secondhand report previews how God reveals Himself: intimately to faithful seekers, distantly to scornful rejectors.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. What scornful voices or skeptical attitudes do you need to 'put out' to create space for experiencing Christ's resurrection power in your life?
2. How does Jesus' pattern of excluding mockers while including believers inform our wisdom in sharing testimonies or spiritual experiences?

Interlinear Text

καὶ κατεγέλων αὐτοῦ ὁ δὲ ἐκβαλὼν ἄπαντας,
And they laughed him G3588 But out them all
G2532 G2606 G846 G1161 G1544 G537

παραλαμβάνει τὸν πατέρα τοῦ παιδίον καὶ τὴν
he taketh the father of the damsel And G3588
G3880 G3588 G3962 G3813 G2532

μητέρα καὶ τοὺς μετ' αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰσπορεύεται
the mother And G3588 them that were with him And entereth in
G3384 G2532 G3326 G846 G2532 G1531

ὅπου ἦν τὸ παιδίον ἀνακείμενον.
where was G3588 of the damsel lying
G3699 G2258 G3813 G345

Additional Cross-References

Nehemiah 2:19 (Parallel theme): But when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian, heard it, they laughed us to scorn, and despised us, and said, What is this thing that ye do? will ye rebel against the king?

2 Kings 4:33 (Parallel theme): He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the LORD.