

Text: John 11:17-25, 32-35, 38-44

Meaning: Christ displayed his Messianic power by raising Lazarus from the dead

Big Idea: Christ is the resurrection and the life

Objective: I want the hearers to trust in Christ

Theme: What does that look like?

THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENTS

READ JOHN 11:1-6

JESUS PREPARES US BEFORE HE BLESSES US (v. 5-6)

Scripture says Jesus loved Mary and Martha and Lazarus, so that's why He waited 2 days more to raise Lazarus. Why wait? BECAUSE HE COULDN'T DO RIGHT THEN WHAT HE COULD DO IN 2 DAYS.

GOD CAN'T DO IN YOUR LIFE RIGHT NOW WHAT HE CAN DO A FEW DAYS, WEEKS, MONTHS, OR MAYBE EVEN YEARS FROM NOW! We all want God to BLESS OUR LIVES, but the question is are our lives BLESSABLE! Can God trust us with a blessing?! God has to prepare your heart, test your faith, and take you to that place where you will follow Him no matter what.

READ JOHN 11:7-16

THE PLACE OF BURDEN IS THE PLACE OF BLESSING (v. 7-16)

When Jesus tells the disciples they are going to Judea again, the disciples raise great concern. This was the same place where the Jewish leaders just tried to stone Jesus just weeks earlier. But Jesus tells them, "Men, we must go to raise Lazarus from the dead." The very place where the miracle would take place was the same place where suffering and persecution awaited them.

Friend, don't think for one second that God's blessing is always in the easy place. It's not. The blessing of God is in the hard place. Jesus said that we must take up our cross daily and follow after Him. Jesus said that the servant is not greater than the Master, if they crucified our Lord the world will hate us as well. Beloved, if you think salvation means all your problems will go away you are sadly mistaken! In fact, some things will get much harder in your life. However, there will be joy unspeakable in the difficulty.

IF ALL YOUR CHASING IN LIFE IS A COMFORTABLE EXISTENCE YOU WILL MISS GOD'S PRESENCE!

READ JOHN 11:17

THE BLESSINGS IN OUR LIVES ARE MEANT FOR OTHERS (v. 17)

Why did Jesus wait 4 days to raise Lazarus? Because Jesus tradition said it took 4 days for someone to be officially passed. He could have raised Lazarus the moment He heard the news, but He wanted to make another direct statement to the crowd that He was the Son of God. So, the blessing was for Lazarus, but it was also for Mary, Martha, and the crowd!

We love to talk about how blessed we are. If we are blessed then someone else will be blessed as well. If our blessings stay only with us then our blessings have become curses in our lives.

If your money blessed only you and not God's Kingdom then it is a curse! If your good health blesses only you and not God's mission then it is a curse! If your intellect blesses only you and not God's people in teaching then it is a curse. If your gifts and talents are only used to impress others for your own gain and not in service to God's church then they have become curses in your life!

OUR SALVATION IS MEANT FOR SOMEONE ELSE'S RESCUE
OUR MONEY IS MEANT TO MEET SOMEONE ELSE'S NEED

OUR GIFTS AND TALENTS ARE MEANT TO BUILD SOMEONE ELSE'S FAITH
OUR STRENGTH IS TO SUPPORT SOMEONE ELSE'S WEAKNESS

THREE INDIVIDUALS IN THE PASSAGE THAT RECEIVE THE MINISTRY OF JESUS:

MARTHA – MARY – LAZARUS

In Christ's response to each of them we learn about the gracious ministry of Jesus.

READ JOHN 11:20-27

MARTHA

In Luke chapter 10 we see where Jesus spent time at Mary and Martha's house previous to this, and the Scripture says that Martha was busy cooking a meal for Jesus while Mary just sat at his feet. Martha then actually scolds Jesus and says, "Hey Jesus, Mary is making me do all this by myself – tell her to help me." Jesus responds by saying, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered by so many things. Mary has it right."

Here, after Jesus has tarried 4 days, Mary comes running to Him, and she says, "Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died!" Then she follows up with, "But even now I know that whatever you ask from God He will give it to you." Martha exemplifies faith here, but she is still trying to get Jesus on to her agenda instead of just trusting Him.

What about you? How often do we try to control the outcomes? How often do we lack true perception of what God is doing?

RELEASE THE OUTCOMES TO CHRIST

Martha was the person who wanted to control all the outcomes. She wanted to try and manage all the circumstances. She's the one who

wanted to stay busy working so she didn't have to face the reality of her distracted heart.

HE KNOWS OUR FUTURE BETTER THAN WE KNOW OUR PAST

So I ask the same question of us that Jesus asks of Martha here, "Do you believe that He is the resurrection and the life?"

Psalm 46:1-3, 10

God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.
² Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way,
though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea,
³ though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble at its swelling.....
¹⁰ "Be still, and know that I am God.
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth!"

READ JOHN 11:32-35

MARY

Mary didn't run out to Jesus when Martha did. Why? Her sorrow wouldn't allow her to. She was so hurt and so broken and so upset that she couldn't even bring herself to come to Jesus.

So, what did Jesus do? HE CALLED HER TO HIMSELF. He invited her into his arms of grace and she came.

Martha SPOKE, but Mary SANK. Mary just FELL AT JESUS'S FEET. Mary was overwhelmed with grief.

And she is DISILLUSIONED. Jesus, you could have saved him but you didn't. Why?

JESUS GAVE A WORD TO MARTHA – BUT HE WEPT WITH MARY!

Jesus was DEEPLY MOVED – the word in the original language speaks of anger and indignation. Who is Jesus mad at? He's certainly not mad at Mary or Martha. He's mad at THE DEVIL!

What led to all this sin, death, and pain? SIN – AND THE DEVIL IS THE FATHER OF LIES. THE THIEF LOVES TO STEAL, KILL, AND DESTROY.

WHEN WE ARE IN THE BATTLE – CHRIST IS OUR ADVOCATE! HE IS JUST AS ANGRY WITH THE DEVIL AS YOU ARE – AND IN JESUS'S NAME THE DEVIL HAS TO FLEE FROM YOUR LIFE!

Scripture says we must resist him, firm in our faith. Resist the devil and he will flee from you!

Scripture says that Jesus was also GREATLY TROUBLED – which speaks of acute mental and emotional stress. In His deity Jesus knew what was about to happen – he was about to raise Lazarus from the dead. But in his humanity, Christ was broken over the pain and sorrow in Mary's heart.

Beloved, I don't know what you are walking through today. You may be so overwhelmed with grief or sorrow or brokenness that you feel as though you can't even muster the strength to come to Christ.

I want you to know today that CHRIST WEEPS WITH YOU! If you'll take just one step toward Him, it can be a faint step at that, He will meet you there and weep with you.

He is the God of all Comfort and the Father of all Mercies. He comforts us so that we can comfort others who go through the same afflictions we go through.

TODAY CHRIST WANTS TO SIT WITH YOU IN YOUR SORROW,
DELIVER YOU FROM YOUR DESPAIR, COMFORT YOU IN YOUR CRISIS,

AND ENCOURAGE YOU IN YOUR EMPTINESS. HE ALSO WANTS TO TRANSFORM YOUR TRIAL INTO SOMEONE ELSE'S TRIUMPH!

REST IN THE COMPASSION OF CHRIST

The shortest verse in the entire Bible arguably has the most to say about the compassion of the Lord toward us

LAZARUS

Scripture says we are dead in our trespasses and sins apart from the salvation of Jesus, but when we trust in Christ He makes us alive together with Him!

What a picture of salvation in this passage! Christ calls us from death to life, from the grave to the

READ JOHN 11:38-44

RESPOND TO THE CALL OF CHRIST

ROLL THE STONE AWAY – what are the barriers keeping you in the grave? Roll them away! Pride, selfishness, past hurts or offenses, addictions, habits, destructive lifestyle choices – WE MUST CONFESS OUR SIN IN ORDER TO BE GIVEN NEW LIFE!

Today, roll the stone away!

RESPOND TO THE CALL

When Jesus calls, step out and follow Him! Today if you hear his voice do not harden your heart!

Some of you are so close, yet so far from Heaven. What if Lazarus had awakened in the tomb and looked out and said, "I like it in here. I'm good." That would be utterly ridiculous, yet there are some who hear the gospel and make every excuse in the book as to why they can't surrender to Christ.

Problem of perspective – LAZARUS KNEW HE WAS DEAD AND WANTED NO PART OF IT. SOME TODAY ARE DEAD AND DON'T EVEN KNOW IT.

ATHEIST NEIGHBOR

Man with an atheist neighbor – he was always inviting him to church and sharing Christ with him. One day the atheist finally had enough and said, "You have been preaching at me for years and I'm tired of it. I told you I'm not going to church and I don't want your Jesus. Evolution is the reason we're here, it's all by chance, and there is nothing after we die, we just go to the dust."

Man answered: "I hope you're right." It stunned the neighbor a bit, so he asked, "what do you mean?" The man answered, "If you're right I've wasted my life, but if I'm right YOU HAVE WASTED YOUR ETERNITY."

ETERNITY IS TOO LONG TO BE WRONG – COME TO JESUS!

REMOVE THE GRAVE CLOTHES – that old life is not who you are anymore! So, stop going back to that old life! Get a new set of godly friends! Leave the old coping mechanisms behind – you don't need all those old things or those old relationships anymore that kept you from Christ. Put on Jesus and the new life we have in Him!