

October 28, 2012

## **LAZARUS-FROM THE DEATHBED TO THE SAVIOR'S TABLE**

(adapted from sermonnotebook)

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John 11:32-44 (NIV)

<sup>32</sup> When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."

<sup>33</sup> When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. <sup>34</sup> "Where have you laid him?" he asked.

"Come and see, Lord," they replied.

<sup>35</sup> Jesus wept.

<sup>36</sup> Then the Jews said, "See how he loved him!"

<sup>37</sup> But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

### **Jesus Raises Lazarus From the Dead**

<sup>38</sup> Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. <sup>39</sup> "Take away the stone," he said.

"But, Lord," said Martha, the sister of the dead man, "by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days."

<sup>40</sup> Then Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?"

<sup>41</sup> So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. <sup>42</sup> I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me."

<sup>43</sup> When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" <sup>44</sup> The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face.

Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go."

## **FROM THE DEATHBED TO THE SAVIOR'S TABLE**

(adapted from sermonnotebook)

Central to the message of Easter is the story of the resurrection of Christ from the grave. But this morning we're going to back track in the life of Christ and tell the story of someone else Jesus resurrected before His own death and resurrection.

We're going to do this because we need to see that our death in sin is about new

life through the resurrection of Jesus. Jesus rose from the dead because He wants every one of us to have eternal life.

The man whom Jesus resurrected in today's Scripture was named Lazarus, and the Bible says he was a friend of Jesus. I want to talk to you today about Jesus being your friend.

Jesus wants to be your friend - but of course, friendship is a two-way street so you have to make a decision on whether or not you want to be Jesus' friend. Lazarus had made that decision and this is one of the most amazing passages in the entire Bible! Here we are allowed to see the glory, power and majesty of Christ's power in a dazzling display. Here we see a man named Lazarus go from the sickbed to the Savior's table!

In this text, we see what Jesus did for Lazarus. But, we can also see what He can do for the person who is still lost and in sin today. This passage shows us how Jesus can take us from our deathbed to His table. If you don't know the Lord, this would be a great day to come to Him. If you do know Him, it would be a great time to remember what He did for you when He saved you by His grace. Let's notice the journey as Jesus takes Lazarus *From The Deathbed To The Savior's Table*.

Lazarus was dead - Poor old Lazarus wasn't just sick any longer, he was dead! He was in a tomb surrounded by mourning family and friends, but he couldn't hear them. Even the Lord Jesus showed up at his grave, but Lazarus was unaware of the presence of the Lord. Lazarus was a dead man! He was unable to respond to his surroundings. Lazarus condition is a picture of every person who does not know the Jesus. Ephesians 2:1 says that the sinner is lost in trespasses and sins. In that lost condition, the sinner cannot sense the presence of the Jesus. They cannot respond to God. They cannot enjoy fellowship with God. They are dead.

Lazarus was decayed - According to Martha, Lazarus has been dead long enough for the decay process to have set in on his body. In the New Testament, Jesus resuscitated three people. In resuscitation you die again, but when you are resurrected, you are alive forevermore! Jesus raised the daughter of Jairus, she had just died, Luke 8, the bloom of life was still evident in her cheeks. He also raised the widow of Nain's son, Luke 7. He had been dead for several hours, as they were taking him out to the burying place when Jesus passed by. His body had already grown cold, and the effects of death were surely evident. Jesus also raised Lazarus.

When Jesus arrived at his tomb, he had been dead for 4 days. He had been dead long enough to stink. The lost person may be good and moral, they may have the look of life and goodness all about them, but if they are lost in sin, they are dead in Jesus.

Lazarus was doomed - As you listen to Martha, Mary and the crowd talk about Lazarus, you get the idea that they have given up on him. In their minds, he is dead and gone and nothing more can be done about it. Had this been any other death, I might have agreed with them, but there was one subtle difference that day: Jesus Christ was there! The others may have been ready to leave Lazarus in the grave, but Jesus wasn't! He makes all the difference! He is the only One who can make a difference in the person who is dead in sin.

If Jesus had not passed by where Lazarus was and called him to life, he would have continued to decay in that grave. And, Church Family, you can try any method you wish, but if the Lord Jesus Christ doesn't bring life to your dead soul, then you are doomed as well! Jesus and Jesus alone makes the difference in the life of the dead sinner. We may give up on folks like this crowd did with Lazarus, but thank God; Jesus doesn't operate like we do! When it looked like there was no hope, the Lord came to where Lazarus lay in darkness and He changed everything for Him! What has Jesus done for you? What do you need Him to do?

God made a personal call to Lazarus. When the Lord Jesus called out at that tomb, He issued a very personal call. He called specifically for Lazarus to come out of that tomb. That call was for no one else that day, but it was for Lazarus alone. Believers, the Gospel call is not a general call, it is a call to individuals from God, The call of the Lord is an intensely personal call! When God comes calling for you, God comes to you as an individual. God won't ask your mom or dad. God won't speak to your wife, husband, partner or significant other. When God comes, it will be a personal and intimate invitation! How many of us could testify to that truth this morning?

Here is a man who has been dead for four days, but at the command of Jesus, He is alive! He is able to meet with and embrace his family and friends. He is able to have fellowship with those he loves again! He is alive! They are truly alive – new Creations in Jesus. Like Lazarus, He is our only hope against death, physical and eternal.

When Lazarus came out of that tomb, he was still bound. Jesus issues the command that he was to be set free. He is no longer dead and he is not to look like nor live like a dead man. He has been delivered from death and its bondage. This is just what those who come to Jesus for salvation experience. He loosens all the chains that bind you! He breaks the power of sin on your life and allows you to go free. He liberates everyone that He saves. Man could roll the stone away, but only Jesus could issue the command for the dead to rise to new life.

Lazarus had spent four days sealed up in a tomb, totally oblivious to his condition. Now that he is alive, he is seen sitting at a table, fellowshiping with the Jesus Christ! Everything has changed for this him!

Has Jesus Christ ever showed up at the tomb of your life and called you to come to Him? Did you go when Jesus called? Or, are you still trapped in the darkness, bound, lost and waiting? If you need salvation, and Jesus is calling you, please come to Him. If your relationship with Jesus needs work, then hear the voice of the Savior speaking to your heart. Jesus, precious Jesus can and will move you from the deathbed to the Savior's Table!

To God be the Glory. Amen