

Title: Lazarus, Come Forth!

Text: John 11:33-46

John chapter 11, please. ^{We} want to continue where we left off last Sunday. John chapter 11, beginning with Vs 33, as we look at the resurrection of Lazarus. The great event that caused people to ^{Flock} ~~folk~~ to Jesus with cries of: "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord." *Would you please stand*

John chapter 11, verse 33..(Read Vs 33-46)

PRAYER

Now, remember what happened last Sunday. We looked at the purpose behind the sickness of Lazarus. ^{AND we learned in Vs 1-5 that} His sickness was to demonstrate the love of Jesus and the glory of God. Then, we got a little insight into the life of Mary and Martha. And we learned that Martha had expressed a lot more confidence in the power of God than Mary. When Mary came to Jesus, she was greatly grieved and said the same thing that Martha had said with the exception of the point of confidence. Mary said, in Vs 32, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." Whereas Martha expressed great confidence in the power of Jesus by adding in Vs 22, "even now I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you." And in Vs 27 Martha said, "I believe that you are the Christ, the son of God, even He who comes into the world." And so you see, Martha is expressing tremendous confidence in the power of Jesus.

(3D) Now, our thoughts begin, today, at Vs 33 with an expression of Christ's Love on this occasion. This is a beautiful portion of scripture in terms of the words used to express the emotions that Jesus was experiencing. The Bible says that when Jesus saw Mary weeping, and the Jews weeping, ^{Vs 33} "he was deeply moved in Spirit, and was troubled."

(1E) I believe what we have here, first of all, in terms of the response of Christ is that (1F) He was responding over the reaction of these people.

The word "weeping" comes from a word that is often used at a funeral service. They were "lamenting." It was a tragic loss. And that kind of mourning that was so typical of the mourners who wore their black and wailed and lamented and cried out. You see, all of that was going on, here.

WHY?

And Jesus was frankly troubled. Because here He is...the Son of God. Martha had just declared that whatever you ask of God, God will give you. And she had expressed her confidence.

But, among Mary and the others there was a lack of confidence in the power of Jesus. They believed He could heal. But, what could He do, now, that ~~the~~ LAZARUS person was dead. So, we have this expression in Vs 33, "He was deeply moved in Spirit, and was troubled."

The same thing is said in Vs 38.. "Jesus therefore again being deeply moved within." That phrase "deeply moved" is a very difficult phrase to ~~understand~~ ^{translate}. And I would like to tell you why.

The phrase has in its background a sense of irriation. And it appears that built into this phrase is something that we would call "mixed feelings." You have a mixed emotional feeling. It is like the person would like to cry, but he is so irritated because of what is happening that he can not cry. And there is a deep distriance within his heart.

and To understand why Christ felt that way, I think the only answer is that He was deeply distrubed over their failure to believe a miracle on this ocasion. "He was deeply moved in His spirit; ^{"A} And He was troubled. The word "troubled" means "agitated." I am not going to say that Jesus was down right angrey, but the word in meaning leans that way. It was both a sorrow and symathe mixed in with a little bit of anger in His heart about the situation.

Now, these two words are sort off bound together. And Jesus was deeply distrubed at the reaction of these people. And here He is, as He has already indicated in Vs 25 "I am the resurrection and the Life." "Do you believe this." And Martha made her confesison that she believed. And then to see this attitude

[{] Most Bible scholars rightly conclude, here, that Mary's reaction might have hurt ^{Jesus} Him more than any of the others. It was Mary who sat at the feet of Jesus and her failure in that moment to express confidence in the Lord's power deeply grieved Him in His heart. ^{Jesus} ~~Jesus~~ is certainly revealing, here, that He had human emotions. He was God in human flesh. But, let me tell you, He was all man. And He was experiencing those human emotions on this occasion.

(2F) But, there is something else, here, about His response. And that is that it was based on His affection for them. And that is true from Vs. 35. Here is the only place in the entire Bible where the word "wept" in the original Greek language is used. JESUS WEPT. It isn't used of anyone else, by the way. Just of Jesus. And the word is a very simple word. It means "he shed tears."

Now, I am not saying

~~It doesn't mean~~ that other folks didn't shed tears in the Bible. There are ^{other} words for crying and there are ^{other} words for weeping and so forth that indicate that tears were shed. But this is the only place where the simple word "to shed tears" is used. And Jesus was doing it. Jesus wept. Or, he shed tears....

You know, this reminds me of two other occasions in the life ~~of~~ our Lord in which he ~~shed tears~~. ^{was weeping}

^{me} The first is in Luke 19:41 when the Bible says that he wept over the city of Jerusalem. It doesn't use the simple term "he shed tears", but it used the term ~~"he shed tears"~~ "weeping". He ~~wept~~ ^{was weeping} over the city of Jerusalem. A city as a whole was rejecting him. And he ~~wept~~ ^{was weeping}

The second occasion was in the Garden of Gethsemane in Matthew 26:39. When he was praying in the garden. And Hebrews 5:7 clearly indicates that He wept and ~~shed tears~~ on that occasion.

So, He shed tears over the city of Jerusalem; and he wept in the garden of Gethsemane. And he wept over his ~~brother~~ ^{friend} Lazarus.

25 Now, I notice there are a couple of reasons that the crowd gives as to why ~~he~~ ^{Jews} was shedding those tears. (36-38)

(1F) (1) ^{first} According to Vs 36 "the Jews were saying, Behold how He loved Him." His love for Lazarus was the first reason. And that was well known. That goes back to ~~vs 36~~ ^{Vs} 5., where it says that Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. So, they are saying: "Well, we know that he loved Lazarus. And maybe that is the reason he is weeping."

(2F) (2) But secondly, according to Vs 37 there were those who were thinking that maybe Jesus lost his power. That was the indirect suggestion. Vs 37 says: "Could not this man, who opened the eyes of him who was blind, have kept this man also from dying?"

Obviously he couldn't do it. Which shows that he has a ~~little~~ ^{great} ~~of~~ ^{his} power. You know, isn't it amazing how often we see in John that there is this two fold reaction to anything that Jesus does. Some ^{FOLKS} believe. And some reject. Even at the conclusion of this miracle some believe and some run off to the Pharisees....Two fold reaction.

Now, I think the thing that we can learn here about Christ is, ONE:
 His concern and love for others. I think that is ^{obvious} obviouse. But, I think
 we can, ~~also~~, learn how grieved the heart of Christ can be when we question
 and doubt His power to perform miracles. ^{You see} ~~And~~ christ's heart was deeply
 distrubed at their failure to understand His power. That He could raise the
 dead. That He was "THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE."

SUFTLY
 And I believe that when any person rejects the power of Christ, certainly
^{God's} ~~His~~ heart is grieved. ^{The} ~~That~~ Bible says that God is not willing that any
 should perish, but that all should come to rependence. And how true that is.
 God's love and his wish is that every person should be saved. And it is sad
 when any person rejects the power of God. And the fact that Christ can save
 them. He was deeply grieved. Oh, dear friends, we have expressions here
 concerning His real love and tenderness and concern for people.

(QE) Beginning at Vs 39, notice, please, this experience of resurrection.
 There are three commands that our Lord gives, here, that have much application
 and blessing to the heart of both the believer and those of you who are seeking
 to believe. Much application. ^{So} ~~And~~ I want you to look, carefully, at these
 three commands.

(IF) When Jesus came to the toubm, the Bible says that there was a cave, and
 a stone was lying against it. And Jesus said, "REMOVE THE STONE." So, the
first command that Christ gave is really a command to remove the obstacel
that was standing in the way. It was a simple thing. But, it was affecting
 the faith of the people who were there. Jesus is getting ready to perform
 a miracle. And He is asking the peopple who knew that Lazarus was dead, who
 put him down into the tomb, who knew that his body is now smelling, Jesus is
 asking them, TAKE AWAY THE STONE.

And Martha is reacting in the same way that all of us would have reacted.
 "LORD, WHY ARE WE DOING THAT?" "After all, Lord, Lazarus is dead. And His
 body has a stench because he has been dead for four days."

And do you know what I believe Martha is asking? WHAT IS THE POINT OF
ALL OF THIS?"

Then Jesus says to her in Vs 40: "DID I NOT SAY TO YOU, IF YOU BELIEVE,
 YOU WILL SEE THE GLORY OF GOD?"

In other words, Jesus gave her a simple test. “TAKE AWAY THE STONE.” Think of the embarrassment that Mary and Martha might have felt standing there with all of their friends who had come to comfort them. Oh, this was no small graveside scene. No way! The Bible teaches that the Jews had come to comfort them. Some have suggested that Lazarus was well known and a very important man. And the taking away of the stone would cause great embarrassment. But, dear friends, it was a test of their faith. REMOVE THE STONE.

And I believe that has real application to every person in this room. The moment I read that and I thought about it, all kinds of obstacles keep coming to my mind. And the Lord sort of stuck me with a sharp pin. There are so many times in my own life that that is just what needs to happen. How about you? Take away the stone and watch God work. Remove the obstacle. You are standing in the way. And I think that is so true in the life of so many people.

Oh, let me tell you. This was a real test to Martha. Martha had made her confession of faith. She said, “Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God.” She had walked down the isle. But, now she is having a little test of faith. Take away the stone Martha. I am going to bless you Martha.

I wonder how many blessings we miss because we will not remove the stones. You know, so many times I find that that is my problem in trying to respond to the things that I know I should do. And God is saying, “Listen. Bill,

(5a)

those things need to be removed. And when they are removed, then, I am going to work. Then I am going to bless.”

And dear friends, it is those little things that you and I need to remove from our lives. TAKE AWAY THE ^{stone} ~~STONE~~. REMOVE THE OBSTACLE OF FAITH.

Dear friends, I do not know the obstacles that might be in your life. But I do know, in order for God to bless, we need to remove the stones.

(2F) The second command is receiving life when he said. “Lazarus! Come forth!”

When I try to visualize this scene, it just sends chills up my spine. You know, to have that stone rolled back and all those people standing there wandering what is going to happen. Think of the suspense. Then to hear Jesus loudly cry out: LAZARUS, COME FORTH. WOW!! You can sort of feel the suspense. As all those people are standing there waiting to see what will happen. Man! I can feel it right now. And I am not even there. LAZARUS! COME FORTH!

New life! The Bible says that when you receive Christ as Lord and Savior, you have new life. Old things pass away and all things become new.

Can you capture what they must have felt when Lazarus came out-off that tomb and stood there ^{with} ~~with~~ all those grave clothes on?

Oh, listen, I don't believe he came out of that grave waving at every body. NO, WAY! Those grave clothes were wrapped tightly around his body. And there he is standing there. And all the people are standing there with their eyes wide open. And I believe the only sound you could hear was the wind as it moved through the trees.

Now, the next thing is really funny, when you think about it. There is Lazarus standing there all wrapped in grave clothing. He can hardly move. And Jesus simple says in Vs 44, "UNBIND HIM, AND LET HIM GO."

Hay! folks! WHAT ARE YOU STANDING AROUND HERE FOR...UNBIND HIM, AND LET HIM GO". Get those grave clothes off of him. He is alive.

(3F) And that really hit me. Because this third command reminds me so much of what we really need in our life. Oh, let me tell you. We really do need to be released from every vestige and remembrance of the past. His past condition. He was brought back to life. If you cannot see the application here, you are blind. That not only was Lazarus alive, but a little simple thing: the grave clothes ~~had~~ to go.

And I wonder if many of us ~~are~~ not in the same condition. Standing here... spiritually alive...We are going to heaven. Once saved always saved. Praise God. Yet, here we are...still wrapped up with all those stinking smelly grave clothes of the past. Dear friends, how can you miss that application?

So, many things in our lives, as we look at people remind us of what it was to be dead spiritually. What a frustrating experience it must be to try to walk through life, spiritually alive, yet wrapped up in all those grave clothes. One foot in the kingdom of God and one foot in the world and trying to live like God wants you to live. Yet, all bound up in past remembrances.

Now, I don't know what that means in your life. But there maybe specifieces right now that are coming to mind. You think about it. Some grave clothes that are still wripped around you that are hindering your walk with Jesus. It is no wander that we don't have the freedom to minister like God wants us to..because we are all wrapped up. Calling ourself christians, yet, still tied up with all the things that hinder us.

"UNBIND HIM, AND LET HIM GO." Oh, how we need to be released. God's power is a wonderful thing. God gives new life. But, let's get the grave clothes off. That, dear friends, is a very important application.

(4E) Now, finally, notice the results in verses 45 and 46. What happened with those who experienced this resurrection? Vs 45 says: "Many therefore of the Jews, who had come to Mary and beheld what He had done, BELIVED IN HIM.... Praise God!" Isn't that wonderful? But, some of them went away to the Pharisees, and told them the things which Jesus had done." ~~FAKED~~

That contrast is amazing. You see it all the time throughout the Gospel of John. This reaction to the ministry of Jesus. This division of belief. But, it is also true today. There is little difference.

I wander what your reaction will be to this miracle? Will you believe? Will it cause you to repent of your sins and receive Christ as your Saviour?

Will it cause us, as Christians, to shed some of those grave clothes that so often hinder our walk with the Lord? *To Remove those obstacles of faith*

OR..will we just go away and say, "THAT WAS A NICE STORY"....

The Bible says that Jesus performed this miracle so that you may believe that He is the Christ, the Son of God; and believing you may have life in His name....WILL YOU BELIEVE? OR, WILL YOU GO AWAY?....

SHALL WE CLOSE IN PRAYER