

## Lazarus Come Forth

(When preaching this message, use a person wrapped in grave clothes to act as Lazarus... visual works well)

I'd like to begin with a favourite passage of mine, one I'm sure you are all familiar with; the story of Lazarus being raised from the dead.

Turn with me to John 11:1-44.

As their brother grew very sick, Mary and Martha turned to Jesus for help, because they had seen His miracles.

We too know of His miracles both through Scripture and through changed lives. When we need extraordinary help, Jesus offers us help.

Any difficult situation a believer faces can ultimately bring glory to God, because God can bring forth good out of any bad situation.

Jesus loved this family and often stayed with them, when He received the message that Lazarus was very sick; He knew their pain, but did not respond immediately.

His delay of two days really enforced what He had consistently taught, that His marching orders came exclusively from His Father.

Neither the needs of His closest friends or the fury of His enemies determined His actions.

His delay had a specific purpose.

God's timing and especially His delays can make us think He's not answering us, but be assured: He will meet all our needs according to His perfect schedule and purpose, we need to patiently await His timing.

If Jesus had been with Lazarus during the final moments of sickness, He might have healed him rather than let him die.

But Lazarus died so that Jesus power over death could be shown to His disciples and others.

Jesus has power over life and death, because He is the Creator of life. He who is life can surely restore life.

In verses 33-38 we see many of Jesus's emotions: compassion, indignation, sorrow, and even frustration.

**John 11:38 Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.**

He often expressed deep emotion, and we must never be afraid to reveal our true feelings. He understands them, for He experienced them.

When Jesus saw them weeping and wailing He wept openly; He cares enough to weep with us.

Both Mary and Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died, but even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You"

Jesus said, "Your brother shall rise again, I AM the Resurrection and the Life, He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live "

**John 11:39-40**

**39 Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days. 40 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?**

Notice that Jesus didn't roll the stone away from the door Himself, He asked Martha to do this.

To me this is speaking of body ministry; getting around the tombs of others' lives, rolling away some barriers, perhaps as you're getting closer into ministry the stench of death (some repugnant practices they may be involved in) gets up your nostrils.

It's time to really start practicing our love walk, God commands us, it's not an option or a suggestion, but a commandment to love one another as He has loved us...

That means the unlovely as well.

Time to take your eyes off the situation, and keep them clearly focussed on Jesus...

When we become born again the Bible says:

**2 Corinthians 5:18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;**

The things of your old past keep you bound and affect the way you see yourself.

Too many of us are spiritual mummies; we have had a true conversion experience, but we live a life encumbered by the same things that entombed us in the first place.

We need to discover how to remove the grave clothes that relegate us to a life of repression, and resist us from reaching our full potential.

Then Jesus with a loud voice, releasing His power and might cried "Lazarus come forth."

When Jesus called Lazarus to come forth from the grave, he shuffled out bound from head to toe in his old grave clothes; a major hindrance.

They just didn't drop off that very minute, and Jesus didn't set to and begin to unwrap him, no, Jesus told His friends to unwrap him, loose him and let him go.

That's where we come in again with body ministry.

He's looking for our involvement.

We need to release Lazarus free from all that has him bound; I wish to portray Lazarus not only as an individual, but liken him to the Church.

I believe this is the hour when Jesus is calling forth "The Lazarus Generation" or "Lazarus" into body ministry, with each of us having a very important role to fulfil.

We look to see where to begin to unravel the grave cloths; A good place to start is in prayer.

As we unwrap the mind; quote Scripture, bringing all those thoughts the captivity of Jesus, old thought patterns are removed.

As we uncover the ears we need to speak the Word, breaking negative influences.

The deaf shall hear.

The eyes... Get the Word in front of them, let them receive their sight.

The only cure for those with a low self-esteem is that they begin to take the Word in through the eye gate, or the windows of the soul... they'll begin to see themselves the way God see them.

Perhaps pray over the mouth to break some old addictions and habits.

The area of the heart... destructive relationships, wounds, and offenses take place there; pray for their healing.

The hands that are bound, get alongside Lazarus, extend your hand to theirs in friendship, perhaps pray that the works of their hands would prosper, God says He will, take Him at His Word.

The feet... Perhaps the Lazarus you've got alongside of has been finding his walk a difficult one; encourage them that His Word will be a lamp unto thy path and a light unto thy feet.

He will make straight the crooked places before you, your ears shall hear a word behind you saying, "This is the way, walk in it, whenever you turn to the right hand, or whenever you turn to the left"

"it's not by might, nor power, but by my spirit," says the Lord.

The eyes of the blind shall be opened, the ears of the deaf shall hear, the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing.

Jesus said "I am the resurrection, he who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live"

Come on Saints; **get a hold of this!**

When one is born of the Spirit, the Spirit takes up His abode in him; He dwells in us. What a glorious thought!

I have the power that Jesus has! Through his blood that was shed,  
The same power that rose Jesus from the dead resides in me!

It is not of much importance what we are by nature, intellectually, morally or even physically, what matters is what the Holy Spirit can do in us and through us.

The question is “How much will we allow Him to do?”

Christian work is not to be done in the power of the natural, but in the power of the spirit.

The Holy Spirit eagerly desires to do His work for each of us.

As I pondered these Scriptures, I wondered why it was that Lazarus didn't call out to Jesus himself, why was it that Mary and Martha sent for Jesus and exercised their faith?

There are certain times throughout our Christian walk that we just can't seem to pray for our own situation, don't feel like you've got enough faith to believe; maybe this was Lazarus' state.

And that's okay. That's when others gather around you and intercede; stand in the gap and believe for your situation.

**1 Corinthians 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.**

We need to understand that God works through spiritual gifts to reproduce the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Recognise the importance of these gifts for dynamic ministry.

Accept the importance of tongues for holy self-edification.

Recognise that Kingdom ministry involves signs, wonders, and miracles.

Humbly call for God to restore the miraculous dimension to the church.

Never give up! Continue steadfastly in faith and abound in service to God.

Know that nothing done in Jesus's name is in vain.

I am assured that if we take our minds off ourselves and our problems; do something good in the life of someone else, you will be sowing seeds that will produce a good harvest not only in your life, but theirs also.

We are each strategically positioned within the body, each of us has their own unique ministry, however, we need to start functioning in unity and in one body, with one heart beat unravelling and unmasking the God potential within each of us.

I encourage you today as you hear His voice, His call to come forth; that you would arise and begin to function in your calling...

I sense the Lord is saying it like this to you: "This is an hour I would cry unto you with a loud voice, come forth, come forth, come forth!"

I will set those around you says your God that will assist you in the unwrapping of your grave clothes, and in so doing you will see that this is indeed a time of preparation, a time of release, a time of stripping away of those things that have had you bound and hindered your walk.

I am going to break the shackles off of you.

I will cause you to arise and take back your destiny to step forth into the high calling of God.

The Lord says, "Look to me, I am going to cause you to rise up."

The Lord says, "It depends on your choices; I am going to loose signs, loose wonders, and miracles in your midst that I may establish my kingdom with.

**For I Am That I Am... The Resurrection And The Life**