

Lazarus, Come Forth

The Dead Live Again

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Bible Text: John 11:1-45
Preached on: Sunday, March 17, 2024

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Well, grab your Bibles and go to John chapter 11. This is our third installment on the series leading up to and including Easter Sunday morning entitled "The Dead Live Again." And of course they do because our Lord and Savior loves us and he's Lord over death. Nothing's too hard for him. I just simply entitled this exposition "Lazarus, Come Forth." Kind of a long text, if you will. Should be several sermons but I'm not going to do that but we'll begin in John chapter 11 verse 1. John chapter 11 beginning in verse 1.

1 Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. 2 It was the Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. 3 So the sisters sent word to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick." 4 But when Jesus heard this, He said, "This sickness is not to end in death, but for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it." 5 Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. 6 So when He heard that he was sick, He then stayed two days longer in the place where He was. 7 Then after this He said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." 8 The disciples said to Him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone You, and are You going there again?" 9 Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. 10 But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him." 11 This He said, and after that He said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I go, so that I may awaken him out of sleep." 12 The disciples then said to Him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover." 13 Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that He was speaking of literal sleep. 14 So Jesus then said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead, 15 and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, so that you may believe; but let us go to him." 16 Therefore Thomas, who is called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, so that we may die with Him." 17 So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days. 18 Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off; 19 and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary, to console them concerning their brother. 20 Martha therefore, when she heard that

Jesus was coming, went to meet Him, but Mary stayed at the house. 21 Martha then said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. 22 Even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You." 23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." 24 Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." 25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, 26 and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?" 27 She said to Him, "Yes, Lord; I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God, even He who comes into the world."

Can I just stop there for a moment? Notice she keeps kind of evading the point. Kind of there, but not really there. She's kind of on board, but not really on board. Verse 28, continuing.

28 When she had said this, she went away and called Mary her sister, saying secretly, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you." 29 And when she heard it, she got up quickly and was coming to Him. 30 Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha met Him. 31 Then the Jews who were with her in the house, and consoling her, when they saw that Mary got up quickly and went out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there. 32 Therefore, when Mary came where Jesus was, she saw Him, and fell at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died."

Now, here she is just like her sister, Martha, qualifying this thing. "If You'd have gotten here before he died, we could have gotten this fixed." Jesus is just saying over and over again, "I am the fix." Verse 33,

33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, He was deeply moved in spirit and was troubled, 34 and said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see." 35 Jesus wept. 36 So the Jews were saying, "See how He loved him!" 37 But some of them said, "Could not this man, who opened the eyes of the blind man, have kept this man also from dying?"

Third time now, "If You'd just gotten here early enough." You know, Jesus is never late. "If You'd just gotten here earlier." Verse 38, and this keeps troubling Jesus, verse 38,

38 So Jesus, again being deeply moved within, came to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. 39 Jesus said, "Remove the stone." Martha, the sister of the deceased, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there will be a stench, for he has been dead four days." 40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?" 41 So they removed the stone. Then Jesus raised His eyes, and said,

"Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. 42 I knew that You always hear Me; but because of the people standing around I said it, so that they may believe that You sent Me." 43 When He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth." 44 The man who had died came forth, bound hand and foot with wrappings, and his face was wrapped around with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go." 45 Therefore many of the Jews who came to Mary, and saw what He had done, believed in Him. 46 But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them the things which Jesus had done.

You know, there's always many different perspectives and on a lot of issues there can be many valid perspectives, but here we have people, Martha, Mary, the gang that were with them, and Jesus, all with different perspectives on this issue of Lazarus having died. Martha and Mary loved Jesus but didn't quite grasp everything about him yet. The multitudes that didn't love him, hanging around and they would honor him for free food and free health care that he was giving. And then the Jewish authorities hanging around, well they hated him because he was stealing their following; more people were beginning to be loyal loyal to Jesus than loyal to them and it reminded me this past week, I have managed to bruise the bottom of my left foot. So if I'm a little gimpy, it's because I bruised the bottom. What happened was I have an old tractor with old implements and they just don't fit together on there good anymore, so you have to take your foot or a sledgehammer and bang on it which leads me to a very important perspective, I need a new tractor with new implements. Miss Pam has a different perspective. She says, "No, you don't need to be running around like you're still 25 and think you can do all of those things like you used to do. Plus our house needs painting." So that's the way it works in life.

So we have Martha and Mary and the group with them and the Jewish authorities and they're all having this different perspective on who Jesus is, what he can do, how he can do it, just who he is, but then we have Jesus' perspective, which is really the only one that actually matters. And so as we look at this narrative, folks, in a very real way, the raising of Lazarus is not the most important thing. Raising Lazarus is not hard for Jesus. The most important thing is that all through this narrative, Jesus is teaching, teaching, teaching, reproving, sharpening, correcting their understanding. He wants them to get it. He wants them to grasp.

You know, Satan from the beginning of time has always tried to cast doubt and error on the truth of Jesus Christ. He's always done this. And every error that comes down the pike comes from Satan ultimately. Uh uh the Muslims would say Jesus was just a prophet, but he's not God the Son, the Son of God. Then the Mormons would say that Jesus is this uh spirit brother of of Lucifer and of Adam and he's not really a God because he's a created being and on and on and on we could go. But when you get to John's gospel, John gives us seven key miracles, we'll mention those in a moment, where John in effect is saying Jesus did this miracle, only God could do a miracle like this and Jesus therefore is God. He's, as the theologians say, he's God of very God. He's not just kind of God or sort of God or close to God. He's not a demigod. He's God of very God. He's

100% God as if he were not man at all, and at the same time, 100% man as if he were not God at all. Over and over and over and over again, the Bible teaches this and that, by the way, is the cornerstone, the foundation of the Christian faith that Jesus is God and he's our Savior.

You know, no one can really take in all that God is. I mean, for all of eternity with perfect redeemed hearts, perfect redeemed minds, and perfect redeemed ears and eyes and understanding, yet for all eternity we will continually learn of the wonders, the wisdom, the power, the beauty, and the glory of God. You'll never exhaust him in heaven. So your pleasures in learning of him never ends and never stops increasing in heaven. What a wonderful thought that is. You see, God is our gift. God is our blessing. God is the most pleasure-producing entity that has ever existed or could ever exist. But, however, though we cannot know God fully, the best understanding of God is Jesus Christ. John 14:8, Jesus said, "If you've seen Me, you've seen the Father." In John 1:18, Jesus said, "No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him." The word explained is the root word we get exegesis from. It means we exegete the text of Scripture, that's what we use it for, and we unfold what's actually there. We don't interpolate or use eisegesis, putting things there that are not there. We exegete taking things out of the text that are truly there and unfolding them before us. Well, the Bible says Jesus exegetes God. He unfolds God in a very real and true way before us. Uh the virgin birth declares that Jesus is God. Zecharias, Elizabeth, Anna, Simeon says that Jesus is God. God the Father at his baptism, in effect, said Jesus is God. The Holy Spirit at his baptism says Jesus is God. The demons, Luke 4:34, "I know who You are, the Holy One of God." All of his healings say that Jesus is God. His teaching was like no other teaching. Those declare that Jesus is God. And he could raise the dead. Jesus is God.

Now, looking at our text, and we'll have to kind of skip through here and pass over a lot of stuff, but let's first of all notice the believer's unbelief. The believer's unbelief, and that is that Martha and Mary and many of the believers depicted in this narrative believe, but they didn't quite believe everything. And even though Jesus kept kind of correcting them, well, he didn't just kind of, he did, kept better informing them of who he was and what he could do, they still had unbelief. Subpoint A, let's look at Martha's yeah-but faith. You have a yeah-but faith? "Well, I believe yeah, but. I know I'm supposed to obey yeah, but. I know I'm supposed to honor my parents but..." We all have some of that, don't we? Always qualifying because we like to place ourselves on the throne and dethrone our Lord who told us so many things so very clearly.

Martha and then also her sister Mary had what you might call faith in a growing God. That's blasphemy in a sense, but I don't mean God's growing. It's a figure of speech. I mean their perception and understanding of who Jesus was and who God is, is growing. They're grasping more and more of it. They do believe, yet they've not believed that they can lay aside all doubt and rest in confidence in God's purposes, God's power, God's goodness, God's wisdom. They do believe, but they always seem to have questions of, "Well, how or why or what about..." Yes, I believe the Scriptures. I believe God can do anything, but. So they have in their minds' eye a limited God. Their God has not grown,

at least in their understanding, to the place of being the all-wise, all-compassionate, all-loving, all-powerful God.

In verse 2, what does the text say about this very thing? Lazarus is sick. Verse 21, Martha said to Jesus as he shows up near Bethany, "Lord, if You'd been here, my brother would not have died. Lazarus could be okay, Lord, but You weren't here. You weren't here." Now, we know Jesus purposefully delayed his coming. Look again at verses 4 through 6, "But when Jesus heard this," about Lazarus being so sick, "He said, 'This sickness is not to end in death, but for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it.' Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus." Verse 6, "So when He heard that he was sick, He then stayed two days longer in the place where He was, "purposefully delaying his coming. It unfolded like this. Day one, they send messengers from the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus to go get Jesus because Lazarus, whom Jesus loves, is very, very ill. Then days two and three, Lazarus dies on day one, obviously. Days two and three, Jesus purposefully does not go there. Day four, Jesus finally returns to Bethany and he performs the resurrection of Lazarus. I think this delay did two main things. Number one, it removed all doubt that Lazarus was indeed dead. You know, the Jews believed the spirit could come back into a man before the fourth day but at the fourth day, it's all over. No way to resurrect someone then. Secondly, not only did it remove all doubt that Lazarus was dead, it removed all doubt that Jesus can raise the dead. That's what he was accomplishing. And Jesus from the very get-go, have you ever heard that it's all about the glory of God? That everything is about the glory of God and that's what Jesus says here, verse 4 again, "This sickness is not to end in death but for the glory of God so that the Son of God may be glorified by it." Jesus is as if he's he's wrestling in his humanity here to say, "I've got to get you guys to see who I am that you might marvel and worship and treasure and glory in Me, who I am and why the Father sent Me."

Well, Martha could not quite grasp all of this. Again, "Lord, if You'd been here, if You'd just been here, he would not have died." Yeah, but. "Yeah, Jesus, You can do anything, but now he's been dead four days." In verse 22, Martha continues with a yeah-but faith. Sorry about my voice. It'll come back in a minute. I'm going to get really loud then. Verse 22 he she says to Jesus, "Even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You." But this didn't really include the resurrection. In the back of Martha's mind, "Whatever God wants You to do, You can do Jesus, but not raise a four-day dead corpse." That's basically what she's saying.

Look at verse 23, "Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.'" There she goes again. Martha said, "Oh oh, I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?" Martha had childlike fear that Jesus couldn't do it. She needed childlike faith that, "I don't understand it, but I know You can do it." You always have one or two. You're either walking in childlike fear or childlike faith.

Um in my study at home, there's a deer standing in the corner. I took that deer some years ago and it had unique coloring on it and I'd seen somebody had mounted a whole deer

like that before so I mounted, I had this one stuffed. It's not alive. It's got stuff in it. But my grandchildren are not so sure if it's dead or alive. And my Georgiana Belle came in my study yesterday and when she rounded the corner, she said, "I don't like that." And her grandmother said, "It's not alive. It's not alive. It's not alive. Come over here. Let me show you." And so she takes her over there and Georgie is trying to drum up her faith. "It's not alive," she would say. "It's not alive. It's not alive." Pam puts Georgie on the deer. Three seconds later, "Ahhh!" It was alive then to her and she came off. She was kind of fighting between childlike fear and childlike faith. And that's where we find ourselves and that's where Martha and Mary find themselves.

And look at verse 38. "So Jesus, again being deeply moved within," deeply moved because now Mary's joined in the same conclusion. "If You'd have been here," and the group, the gang that's there has joined in this same conclusion and this troubles our Lord. Martha can't yet believe.

Verse 39, "Jesus said, 'Remove the stone.' Martha, the sister of the deceased, said to Him, "But," well, it's not in the text but it's there. "Lord, by this time there will be a stench, for he has been dead four days." "But Lord, it can't work that way." It brings me back to our pilgrimage together as pastor and people when a hundred times I had older men and good men in many ways would tell me, "Brother Jeff, you can't do it that way, that won't work." And I'd say, "If it's biblical, it it'll work." Well, Martha's basically, Mary's basically, this group is basically saying, again, he's been dead four days and the word there literally means he stinks. His corpse stinks by now. Martha believes generally the Lord can raise the dead. If you will, look at verse 24 again. Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day. Lord, I know there's going to be a great resurrection out there one day. We we get all of that." She's not saying it, but then she's also saying, "but I don't think You can actually raise Lazarus from the dead today."

Yeah-but faith. It's a little bit like um having priceless antiques that your great-grandmother left you that are very valuable, and you've stored them in a or stored them in a secure, humidity-controlled place, and you know they have great value, but they're just stored. You don't know what you're going to do with them. There's no use to to them right now. That's kind of the way we look at God's promises and God's provision and God's power. It's out there for some day. A lot like your 401k or for preachers, our 403b or whatever. Well, that's, it's there unless our economy goes real bad and it's out there for some day. But Jesus was trying to tell them, "You've got to understand something. The power of God and the resurrection of the dead is not so much about a time and place, but it's about a person. That's Me. Look at Me. Focus on Me. Marvel over Me. Honor Me. Love Me. Obey Me. I am the resurrection and the life." Matter of fact, whatever you need, he am. He am everything and anything that's righteous and good for you. He am. Church, church, church, look to Jesus, not a theory, not a philosophy, not a formula. Forget about the plan of salvation and hold to the man of salvation, Jesus Christ. That's where he's trying to get these folks teaching, teaching, teaching all the way through here.

Well, that's um, I left out point B, sub-point B, doubting Jesus' personal concern and compassion. I I'll not belabor that other than to say that's the other side of the coin of

what Martha and Mary and this gang of people are doing, that somehow he doesn't really care deeply and personally for our situation, and somehow he doesn't really care deeply and personally for Lazarus being raised from the dead. I'm not saying they formulated a theory about it, I'm just saying I think it's obvious there's a sense in which we know you're compassionate, but not to that level. And can I charge you church, how compassionate do you view Jesus? Or how compassionate do you think he views you? He cares deeply. He loves deeply and he's infinite. He hurts deeply for his own and there's a sense in which not only was this a yeah-but faith, it was also "we don't think you care that deeply." I think that's quite clear from the various verses in the flow of the context.

Now, II. Not only the believer's unbelief, we see a lot of that in here, and aren't you glad the Lord's patient with us in our believers' unbelief? Like he shows such patience with these ladies and with these people. Now II, the Lord's unabated personal power. In other words, everything they lack, everything they're weak in, all the deficiencies of their understanding and spirituality does not deter the Lord's power. Oh, what a glory that should give us in the security of our salvation. Your salvation does not rest on you, but on him. And his power's unabated, never negated, never diminished, never in question. We do, like Mary and Martha, have too much of a yeah-but faith from time to time. Matter of fact, so often we kind of strut our stuff spiritually with our "yeah-but" faith. We run across a brother or a sister who's gained some ground on us spiritually. We run across a brother or sister who who's walking in faith in ways we ought to be walking in faith and then we quickly try to vindicate ourselves by saying, "Oh, but aren't they odd? They're just, you know, they're kind of they're kind of fanatical." No they're not. You're weak. You don't have faith like they have, at least that's the case many times.

But here Jesus with graciousness and compassion we don't see anywhere where he rebukes Martha or Mary or the group. He just doesn't do that. Martha, Mary are experiencing deep sorrow over their dear brother's passing and this was just not the place for a rebuke but he just keeps trying to teach and shepherd their thinking and move them forward. Matter of fact, in verse 22, it's a very interesting phrase here in verse 22. Uh wrong verse. Uh da da da. It's in there somewhere. Martha goes to Mary and says, "The Teacher's asking for you, so come quickly." Now that's significant because rabbis, Jewish rabbis did not teach women. The women were beneath them, they thought, which gives you another illustration of the glorious liberation that Christ in the gospel brings women. But here too, women refer to him as their teacher which means that Jesus Jesus did not separate the women off. He included them in his teachings. Powerful truth there. But God is always teaching us. He's teaching us this morning. He teaches us every day if we get into his word.

What's the primary point of the teaching? What is Jesus driving toward, driving toward, driving toward? Here's the primary point in Jesus' teaching, "Everything that is in God is in Me personally. Everything that is in God is in Me as a person. I am the person who brings to you the totality of who God is. So don't view Me as the conduit, view Me as the finish point. Don't view Me as as a way to get there, only I am the end of the way also. I'm the arrival point. I'm the destination. I'm paradise. I'm it. Look at Me, see what I am." Again, the power of the resurrection, he's pointing out to them in various ways, is not

centered in a time and place so much as it's centered in a person. That's why he tells Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life."

Oh church, if I could just infuse into our bone marrow a a a rabid rest in Jesus Christ. Somebody comes up to you and says, "Well, you've got to join this church if you're going to be saved and you're going to have to keep these dues and you're going to have to not do all these don'ts and you're going to have to jump through this hoop or maybe go visit this priest or whatever that," and you just need to stand back and say, "You've got anything better than Jesus? Anything?" No. "Okay, I'm just going to stay with Him. I'm just going to stay right here resting in Him."

Now, two thoughts here just to develop this phrase, "I am the resurrection and the life." Two two aspects to it. He's talking about a spiritual resurrection, that's conversion when you're spiritually raised from the dead, and he's also talking about physical or a bodily resurrection. Wherever Jesus is, he can do either/or or both at the same time because it's all in him. For example, we see both of these lay parallel together in John chapter 5. John chapter 5 verses 25 through 27, Jesus speaking says, "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is." In other words, this is happening right now. What is happening? "When the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live." That's talking about spiritual resurrection, the spiritual new birth, being born again. Or as Ephesians 2:5 says, quickened or made alive in Christ. Christ does that. He is the one, it is the agency of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit whereby men go from dead spiritually to alive spiritually. And that's when those affections start changing and that's when you start liking being around people who love the Bible and love the the children of God, and that's when you start thinking about, "I want to be in a real church that's really centered on Christ and His word and sound doctrine." And that's when you start thinking about, "I want to use my resources to advance God's kingdom because the things of this world seem to be growing strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace."

The spiritual new birth and then also Jesus is the agent of the physical birth or resurrection, if you will. It's all up to him. He has the divine prerogative. Listen to this. He has the divine prerogative to birth into his kingdom and raise from the dead anyone he wants to. It's all in him. Martha, it's all in him. Mary, it's all in him. Gang that's gathered around mourning Lazarus being dead, it's all in him. It's all about him. John 5:28 and 29 speaks of the physical bodily resurrection. "Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming." Now he didn't say this one now is, because he's pointing to that future great resurrection at the end of the age. "An hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, and will come forth." So when Jesus returns, when he returns physically and personally at the end of the age, he will impart physical new life to all the dead corpses in the world. Matter of fact, all the dead corpses that have ever existed. There won't be one Adam blowing down the street that was once a part of the son of Adam that not will not be joined together with the rest of the Adams that was once a part of that son of Adam and reconstituted and invigorated with life to stand before Jesus and he will judge all. It's in him. It's in him.

There was a phrase I didn't want to miss here. Oh, oh, oh, John 5:25 through 27. Put it back up there, guys. Look at verse 27, if you will, all right? Verse 27, "and He gave Him," that's the Father gave Jesus, "authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of God." I believe if this doesn't include, it explicitly teaches that it's his choice whom he raises. It's all about him. It's his prerogative. All of this is under him. It's his personal prerogative and Martha had not linked this up in her thinking yet, that it's all personally connected to him. And Colossians develops this out so powerfully about it's all personally in Jesus Christ. Let me run through it quickly. Colossians 1:13 and 14, "For He," that's Jesus, him personally, "rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom," that's Jesus, "we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." Personally, his power saves us. Colossians 1:15, "He's the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation." Personally, he is the God of very God, if you will. Colossians 1:16, "For by Him all things were created." Personally, he created all things. The last part of Colossians 1:16, "all things have been created through Him and for Him." He's the beneficiary of all things. So he is the one. Personally, he saves us. Personally, he's the image of the invisible God. Personally, he created all things. Personally, he is the beneficiary.

Look, it means it's all for him. It means it's all... Jesus is walking here. He's heading to Bethany. Bethany's out here on this ledge. He's walking to Bethany and he wants these people to grasp that they need to be enthralled with him. They need to be loving him. They need to be treasuring him. They need to be trusting him. You think, "Well, that sounds kind of like an ego trip or something about Jesus, doesn't it?" I'm gonna get to that in just a minute. I've already said this, but I like to say it. I'm going to say it again. Personally, he's our Savior. Personally, he's the Creator. He created all things. Personally, he's the beneficiary. It's all made for him.

Now Colossians 1:17, "He is before all things and in Him all things hold together." Personally, he's the sustainer of all things. Christ is the controlling and unifying force in all the universe. Personally, him. Him. The universe is not held together by some impersonal law of gravity. He holds gravity. It's all in him. I'm getting ahead of myself, but basically he's saying to Martha and he's saying to Mary, and he's saying to this gang of folks gathered there that may believe in him at one level or another, "You're gonna have to look at Me. You're gonna have to get enamored with Me."

So no wonder when you get through Colossians 1:13, 14, 1:15, 1:16, 1:17, he's personally our Savior, he's personally the image of the invisible God, he's personally our the Creator of all things, and all things are for him, he's personally the beneficiary for all things. It's all about him. It's all for him. It's all for his glory. And then Colossians 1:17, he holds all things together. He sustains all things. And then Colossians 1:18, "He is also head of the body of the church and He is the firstborn, the beginning from the dead, so that He himself will come to have first place in everything." In everything he's first. Martha didn't quite get that. Mary hasn't quite grasped that. So Jesus, probably the pinnacle point of teaching here is again that phrase in verse 25 where he says, "Now Martha, I am the resurrection and the life. It's My personal prerogative to raise Lazarus whenever I choose,

however I choose. It's My prerogative. I have the power to do it and I will do it in My way for My own glory."

"Pastor, I I prayed and prayed for my sick husband. I prayed and prayed for my sick baby. I I prayed and wept and fasted for my grandmother and God didn't raise them." Two things. He loves you. He cares for you. He was burdened for you. He hurt for you. But in some way or shape, he chose the route he chose for his own glory. For his own glory. And one day the tapestry of the providence of God in our lives will come together and we'll see the finished product and you know what you're gonna do? You're gonna fall your face and say, "Oh, how good You are. Oh, how good You are. I couldn't see it down there. I couldn't see how it was best. I I couldn't see how it was working. I I couldn't conceive how this could be right or good or best or righteous. But, O God, now I see it." And you're gonna glorify God for all eternity. And that's what everything's about. So you might as well start glorifying him now and get in on it early. Just start practicing early.

III, Lazarus lives again. Look at verses 32 through 34. "Therefore, when Mary came where Jesus was, she saw Him, and fell at His feet, saying to Him, 'Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.'" There we go constantly. Verse 33, "When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, He was deeply moved in spirit and was troubled, and said, 'Where have you laid him?' They said to Him, 'Lord, come and see.'" "Lord, let's take you to the tomb where Lazarus has been dead four days. And by the way, Lord, if You'd gotten here earlier."

Then verse 35, the shortest verse in all the Bible, "Jesus wept." I'm conflicted here. I listened to what is esteemed as some of the best expositors that's ever lived in the last couple hundred years and basically they would say what I want to say and I agree with this, that we cannot plumb the depths of all that is meant here. Jesus wept. But there is an exhaustive context here that I think helps us greatly grasp some things we can hang our hat on on why Jesus wept. First of all, the word wept here is a different word from the anguish and the sorrow of the crowd, probably professional mourners. Remember the professional mourners around Jairus' daughter's death, and they're they're weeping and wailing and mourning and music comes in, and this is a different kind of word, and I think it means Jesus doesn't weep like those clowns. Jesus is not weeping like those put-ons. Don't know that for sure, but I think that's probably why a different word is used.

Now, he wept. Let me give you three thoughts. Number one, because he cares deeply for his children's sorrows. I think that's definitely there. He cares deeply that Mary's hurting. He cares deeply that Martha's hurting and others that love him are hurting. Hebrews 4:15 reminds us, "For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses but one who has been tempted in all things as we are yet without sin." He walked this earth experiencing the pains, the loss, the heartache, the troubles, the sorrows, so that he can identify with us.

So first of all, I think Jesus wept because he cares deeply for his children's sorrows but secondly, because he was burdened deeply for his children's shallow understanding. And we saw that over and over and over, did we not? He was troubled. He was sorrowful

again because they kept missing the point. They kept missing that it's his personal prerogative and power and he can do anything. And they didn't quite grasp that and he hurts. He's burdened for them that they don't get it. They the thing that totally perplexed them, death, was totally powerless against Jesus and he's burdened that they don't get that. The thing that totally perplexes us is powerless in the face of Jesus Christ. So often we act like he doesn't have that power. In Matthew 23:37, Jesus said, "How often I wanted to gather you together like a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were unwilling. I wanted you to see Me. I want you to know My care, My My protection, My provision, My glory, My power and who I am, but you wouldn't come."

But not only did he weep because he cares deeply for his children's sorrows and he's burdened deeply about his children's shallow understanding, but thirdly, he's deeply burdened or rather I should say he desires deeply that we grasp his glory. He's not just a prophet. He's not just a teacher. They didn't grasp who he was completely. Again, verse 4, what did Jesus say? "But when Jesus heard this, He said, 'This sickness is not to end in death, but for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it.'" And then verses 41 and 42. "So they removed the stone. Then Jesus raised His eyes, and said, 'Father, I thank You that You have heard Me.'" So Jesus is speaking out loud. He's still teaching them. He's still teaching. We're trying to bring them along. Verse 42, "I knew that You," God the Father, "always hear Me; but because of the people standing around I said it, so that they may believe that You sent Me." "They may understand who I am." Jesus is saying again, "It's all about Me." It's the same kind of, I I think, sorrow that is expressed by Jesus weeping here that we see reflected in John 14:9. Jesus said to him, John 14:9, "Have I been so long with you and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? That burdens Me, you don't know who I am fully." Same with Martha and Mary. And then he says, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

So as we conclude, just three quick thoughts, and these will be quick thoughts, and I'm gonna run on. Number one in verse 39, a decaying body. A decaying body. Jesus said, "Remove the stone." Now they would they would they would hewn out those tombs and they would put a a dugout trench, if you will, a a a track, if you will, at the mouth of the tomb, the opening of the tomb. They put a big stone there so you could roll it in that little in indentation and roll it back and forth. So it wasn't really that big a deal to remove the stone.

He said, "Remove the stone. Lord, by this time there'll be a stench. He's been dead four days." So we know there's a decaying body. Secondly, a declared teaching. Again, in verse 40, Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?" There it is again. "I'm trying to get you to see who I am so that you will bring Me glory and honor Me and glorify My Father who is in heaven."

And then lastly, a demonstrated glory. Now again, as you run through John's gospel, there's seven key miracles that basically say Jesus did this miracle, only God could do this, so Jesus is God. He turned the water into wine at the wedding in Cana of Galilee, that's number one. Number two, healing the nobleman's son. Number three, healing the

man healing the man at the pool. Number four, walking on water. Number five, feeding the 5,000. Number six, healing of the man born blind. Number seven, Lazarus. It's a demonstration of glory.

Verse 43, "When He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come forth.'" I guess Lazarus was hard of hearing in there, reckon? Lazarus' been dead four days. It's going to be a little bit different than Jairus' daughter been dead a few hours. No. He wanted them to hear it. He could have whispered, "Lazarus, come forth." Here I come. He could have thought it. Wouldn't you have liked to have been there? He's all bound up. He's floating out. He's like that guy in that funeral procession, whoop. Just. Folks, these things happened.

Jesus said, "Well, unbind him, let him go." He he didn't need dead dead clothes and death clothes anymore. Now, preachers have spiritualized that, and I don't think that's necessarily wrong that we as God's church have our role in taking the newly raised from the dead and unbinding them from the old life and helping them to walk in the new. And I think one lesson for us there is that um we should continue to do all that we can do and leave it to God to do that which only he can do, raise the dead. And it's all for his glory.

Let me conclude with this thought. Maybe not the best analogy or illustration, but hopefully it it works and you might say, "Pastor, over and over and over, you just never stop. It's about the glory of God." That's because it's about the glory of God. It's all about the glory of God. You're about the glory of God. You got a job for the glory of God. You have children for the glory of God. You have a brain for the glory of God. You have money for the glory of God. It's all for the glory of God. But as you see such an emphasis repetitively in the text and in this narrative in particular, you know, humanly you might say, what is it, doesn't mean anything to God just to do something for somebody else. When when a woman gets pregnant, and unlike the wicked hellish thinking of our present age, that's a glorious and wondrous and miraculous blessing of God to conceive a precious child and get to gestate and carry that precious child, birth it into the world and nurture it and care for it. But when a woman is carrying that baby, almost without exception, everything she does that's good for her is good for the baby. If she eats right, it's good for the baby. If she gets the right kind of exercise, good for the baby. And on and on you could go. Basically, everything she does good for herself is good for the baby. Look, if God is God, then he's the Creator, you are the created and everything that he does for his glory is good for you. Do you get that? The best he can do for you is to get you to glorify him because he can't not be your Creator. He can't divorce the fact that you're made in his image and so everything God does to exalt, advance, glorify, establish his kingdom is good for his children. Matter of fact, it's the best for his children.

Now I'm going to tell you something, some of you got some weird warped ideas. You think God's kingdom's over here. Oh, and that's good. That's important. We oughta do something there. But really, my life's way over here. It's good for a bad foot right here, right here. I'm telling you. You think, no, now here's my life over here. I'm going to do something for God's kingdom over there, but here's my life over here. Wrong, wrong, wrong. It's all one thing. It's all one. You're enveloped in the kingdom of God and

everything we can possibly do to treasure, honor, glorify, love, treasure, advance, lift up, look to, preach about, teach about, share about Jesus is good for us.