

That You May Have Life in His Name - July 23, 2023

John 11:1-44 - Lazarus is Raised from the dead

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Welcome - i know some of you are perhaps new to Auburn or new to Grace Auburn Church.

We would love to connect with you - either through the cards, introducing yourself, or stopping at the welcome desk on your way out.

Year long study - the Book of John - That You May Have life in His Name (John 20:31)

Today, John 11:1-44

The Sheep of Father know the Father's voice – Jesus' voice – and the sheep are kept safe from dangers without and dangers within.

(10:28 - no one will snatch them out of my hand; 10:29 - no one is able to snatch them out of my Father's hand)

Professor who called it the Great Spiritual Double Nelson.

*I reference back today because Jesus great, ultimate and powerful claim that no one who has been saved by the Father can ever lose that salvation → **that power is put again on full display in John 11.***

John 11:1-16

- Jesus has only recently “escaped” another attempt to arrest and kill him. Leaving Jerusalem he has crossed the Jordan river and gone again to the wilderness where John had been preaching and baptizing.
- Many are coming to faith, believing in Jesus → seeing the fulfillment of all of the Messianic hopes.
- And news comes from his friends Mary and Martha that their brother, also a friend of Jesus' is deathly ill.
- **“But when Jesus heard it, he said, ‘This illness doesn't lead to death. It is for the glory of God...so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.’ (v.4)**

- V.5 - John reminds us that these are not distant friends → these people are family, deeply loved by Jesus.
- V.6 - AND that Jesus lingers in the wilderness for two more days.
 - The giver and taker of life → has a dying friend and he stays put.
- V.7 - ok, now we can go to Judea (the disciples assume that Jesus remained to protect himself from those who want to kill him.
- V.8 - we can't go back!
- V.9 - friends, we still have work to do. It is still day, the night is coming, but we must go and do the work of my father.
 - What work is that?
 - That light would invade the darkness. Sickness would give way to health.
 - **DEATH would be beaten back by LIFE.**
- V.11-16
 - Jesus speaks of sleep (just as Jairus' daughter had fallen asleep and wasn't dead - not truly).
 - They don't get it. Still.
 - So he tells them plainly: “Lazarus has died, and I am glad” for your sake that you may believe.

John 11:17-37

So Jesus does make it to his friends, eventually. When people here he is drawing near to Bethany, Martha runs to him, words full of hope and despair.

- Note, Jesus shows up after Lazarus has been in the grave 4 days.
- He waits until well after he's dead to set out for Bethany, allowing perhaps desperation to rise, but undoubtedly because our savior had a plan.

V.21 - "Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died."

- God, you could have done _____, but you didn't. You weren't here.
- You could have healed _____, but you didn't.
- You have could have saved, but you didn't.

v. 23 - "Your brother will rise again."

- Martha needs more than a future, theological understanding that she will see him one day.
- V.25 - Martha, whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live!
- V.26 - believe in me and you will never die.
- **"Do you believe this?"**

Again, Jesus' question centers in on life and death.

Then Mary also comes to Jesus with the same desperation: "Jesus, if you had been here my brother would be alive."

Jesus' compassion and humanity on display.

Here are people he cares for deeply, deeply hurting. And it moves him to tears.

"Where have you laid him?"

John 11:38-44

V.34,38 → "Deeply moved" → this is not a "awwww i'm so sorry kind of moved."

- The original language indicates that there is a deep indignation in Jesus' emotion.
- Righteous anger toward the injustice of death is brewing beneath the surface.

Take away the stone.

But Jesus, it's a mess in there. I don't think you want to see and smell this.

Take away the stone.

V.40 - "Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the Glory of God?"

Jesus prays for all to hear → that they may believe that Jesus and the Father are actually one.

V.43 - Jesus yells in victory → Lazarus come out!!! Literally Lazarus, this way out! – literally directing out of the gloomy dungeon of death.

"If this voice of Christ had been directed to all of the dead, they would all have presently risen."¹

¹ Trapp - quoted in David Guzik's *Enduring Word Commentary - the Gospel of John*.

The One who speaks and holds all of creation together speaks a warning to death - "Death to Death is coming."

And a living man, wrapped in grave clothes, is loosed by his friends and received with great joy!

In thinking of this Word for us today, I'd like to start with amazement. Absolute awe of Who Jesus is and what He does for those who believe by faith.

In my own soul, here are a few things I'm wrestling with in studying this passage and preaching through it today:

1) Jesus is Sovereign King over sickness, life, and death

We know it to be true that he gives life. But do we believe in his sovereignty like Martha believed in the resurrection?

- Is it some theoretical or future thought that you'll deal with one day?
- What then does "**Sovereign**" mean? The best description of the word I have found is not really a definition → simply put: **answering to no one.**
- a) **Deut. 29:29** - "The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law
- b) **Psalms 115:1-3** "Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory, for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness! Why should the nations say, "Where is their God?"
Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases.
- c) **Or as Eugene Peterson put it: Our God is in Heaven doing whatever he wants to do. (MSG).**

2) Jesus does everything He does for the Glory of the Father

- a) **John 11:40** → **didn't I tell you that if you believed you would see the Glory of God?**
- b) Lazarus has died and I'm glad – for your sake – that you might see the glory of God.
- c) Everyone who believes in me will never die.
- d) Jesus comes to wake up those who have fallen asleep.
- e) Death will not have the final say.
- f) Indignant toward the final enemy of his Father, Jesus looks at Lazarus, at Martha and Mary and commands us "Roll away the stone...come this way beloved. Take off the grave clothes."
- g) All that you might see the Glory of my Father.

3) All sickness and even death of this body is from God. (tim Keller - "I'm not yet holy enough to see God.") - "God gave me cancer."

- a) If this be true, no matter how hard, let us not waste the days we have left nor waste the breath in our lungs.

4) We don't get to choose our path

- a) What do I mean? Surely Martha and Mary would not have picked the path of sickness that leads to death.
 - **J.C. Ryle: "if Christians were allowed to choose their own course through life, they would never learn hundreds of lessons about Christ and his grace, which they are now taught in God's ways. Let us remember these things. The time may come when we shall be called to take some journey in life which we greatly dislike. When that time comes, let us set out cheerfully, and believe that all is right."**²
- b) But we do choose our response?
 - Will we live by faith → trusting Jesus on our darkest days.
 - Or will we stay in the "Jesus, if you had been here, then _____"
- c) We choose faith, or we choose bitterness, resentment.
 - ***let us set out cheerfully, and believe that all is right***

5) For the believer - death is but a momentary gap between breathing oxygen and breathing in the presence of the Father.

- a) Be of good courage friends. Believe, and you will see the Glory of God.
- b) Put your trust and hope in Jesus and his Kingdom coming and all loss in this life will be light and momentary, preparing for you a heart that is full of hope that you are ready to see Jesus.

² J.C. Ryle - *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels - Volume 4: John*.