

Vision 2026: Advance

Introduction: I'd like to invite your attention to the book of John, chapter 11.

John is in the New Testament, which is the second part of your Bible. The first part is called the Old Testament.

If you need to use the index, that's cool. If you are using an app, it's in the same place.

Now, if you are watching today & are checking out Christianity, or maybe returning to the faith of your childhood, or maybe you're not even sure there is a God, I'm glad you are here. You are welcome with your doubt, uncertainty or questions & we pray God will reveal the truth about Himself to you.

Now, lets look at the text together.

Loose Him

John 11:33-35

{Short introduction to this text}

John 11:33 Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. ³⁴And He said, “Where have you laid him?”

They said to Him, “Lord, come and see.”

³⁵Jesus wept. ³⁶Then the Jews said, “See how He loved him!” NKJV

A. Church, we love to preach about the Jesus who shows up when all hope is gone. We shout about the stone rolled away & the grave clothes left behind. We preach the faith that believes God for a resurrection.

But today I want to show you something different. Not only the resurrection power that meets you in your future, but the resurrection power that reaches back into your past.

a. Most of you have already been saved & Spirit-filled, you have testimony. But if we're honest, some are still wrapped in what you used to be. You came out of the grave, but the grave clothes came out with you.

b. There is a graveyard in every one of us, & its headstones read yesterday.

Yesterday's failure. Yesterday's shame. Yesterday's word spoken over you that you've never been able to shake. Yesterday's sin that God forgave & you never did. You've been trying to move forward while dragging a past that was supposed to stay buried.

- c. Listen, when Lazarus stumbled out of that tomb, bound hand & foot, Jesus didn't say, "*Go back and try again.*" He didn't say, "*Wait until you're perfect.*" He turned to the crowd & spoke a command that still echoes through the graveyard of your yesterdays: "*Loose him, and let him go!*"
- d. The One who called Lazarus by name is calling you, & He didn't come to leave you tangled. He came to set you free.

B. When you get saved, your spirit is born again; the old nature is “*crucified*” with Christ, but you still live in this fleshly body. The Apostle Paul said in **Romans 6:6** “*that we should no longer be slaves of sin.*” As a new creation in Christ, you cast aside the old desires & want to live for Christ & His glory. You are no longer under sin as the master.

a. Commentator David Guzik says, “*God gives the believer a new man – a self that is instinctively obedient & pleasing to God; this aspect of our person is that which was raised with Christ in His resurrection.”*

Ephesians 4:24 & Colossians 3:10

b. Your soul is still being “worked” on. It’s called Sanctification, it is an on-going work. – *Not a license to sin* – Your mind, your will, & emotions are still shedding grave clothes.

i. *Romans 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind – I like The Passion Translation “*Stop imitating the ideals and opinions of the culture around you*”*

ii. James 1:21 (**BILBLE**)

C. Lazarus came out alive, but he was still wearing the old man's graveclothes. That is why Jesus didn't stop at '*Come forth.*' He added, '*Loose him.*' The new man was already raised. Now the grave clothes had to come off!

John 11:43-44 (BIBLE)

⁴³Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, “*Lazarus, come forth!*” ⁴⁴And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, “*Loose him, and let him go.*”

Remember the application:

I. Remove what Binds

A. Irrevocably Dead

- a. Many Jews believed that the soul remained near the body for three days after death in the hope of returning to it. {This is possibly why Jesus waited the 4 days.}
- b. Jesus calls him out {Brief conversation with Martha & Mary. Commands the stone to be rolled away...}
 - i. Resurrection – Jesus told Martha, “*I am the resurrection and the life.*” Moments later he calls Lazarus by name to “*Come forth.*”
 - ii. Lazarus couldn't come out because he was strong. He came out because Jesus called his name.
- c. Lazarus came forth, but still “*bound hand and foot with graveclothes...*”

Church, I'm afraid we have picked up a misconception. We think that the moment we get saved, every sin, every bad habit, every wrong choice, every generational curse & every addiction just disappears. But that is far from the truth.

As we said earlier, your spirit is born again. The new man is alive. But there is still a war with the carnality of the flesh. Lazarus walked out of that tomb alive, yet he came out bound hand & foot, & Jesus still had to say, "*Loose him.*"

So, I want everybody to hear this. Let this be your awakening: What you have felt keeping you in a defeated Christian life is nothing more than grave clothes left over from the old life. It is not who you are. It is only what is still clinging to you.

Today, you begin to know & understand that those grave clothes are coming off. Jesus did not raise you to shuffle along in bandages. He raised you to walk, to move, & to live in the victory He intends for you. Not just to survive, but to thrive in your new life in Christ.

B. Union with Christ

- a. { 𐤒Nun} “*Loose him.*” Jesus proclaims life that continues beyond the grave in resurrection. Not going back. Not returning. Moving forward in freedom.

Galatians 5:1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us {say - me} free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. NKJV

- b. { 𐤒Tav} Life with Jesus beyond the tomb is all about the old becoming the new, it is about finishing. That which was dead is alive.

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. NKJV

- c. { 𐤒Resh} When you receive Jesus’ Word, you become aware you cannot live without God.

- i. The meaning of the Greek word “Loose” - to loose, untie, release, set free, dissolve, break up, or destroy.
- ii. **Psalm 146:7b** says, “*The Lord gives freedom to the prisoners.*” **Isaiah 61:1b** *He sent me to heal the wounds of the brokenhearted, to tell captives, “You are free,” and to tell prisoners, “Be free from your darkness.”*

d. He was Bound → Loosed → Released → Free to go – **resurrection followed by release**: Jesus commands that the man who has come out of death be “loosed” from the physical restraints of the graveclothes.

C. A Change of Identity

a. Lazarus was known as he who “was” dead. Many knew he had died, but his new identity was – *“Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead.”*

- i. He who was an adulterer/fornicator. Who was an alcoholic/drug addict.
- ii. Who was in witchcraft. Who was living immoral & in debauchery.
- iii. Who was bitter, contentious & jealous. Who was short fused & hot-tempered. Who was a divider of friendships & churches...

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b. Apostle Paul had a change of identity

- i. He was known as a Hebrew of Hebrews, Pharisee, zealous persecutor of the Church. He said, *“**Philippians 3:7** what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him.”*
- ii. Because he lived as crucified with Christ & said, *“**Galatians 2:20** it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.”*
- iii. Paul taught it, & lived it: When the mind is renewed, the life is transformed. The mind is the engine, & everything else follows.

II. Conclusion

A. Another man with a change of identity, a resurrection from his past – Jacob – Supplanter – Deceiver

- a. Genesis 32 records the night Jacob wrestled with the Angel of the LORD all night & wouldn't let go until the Angel "blessed" him.
- b. He was asking for a new life, a new way of living. The angel said, "*What is your name?*" – forcing him to confess, Deceiver – He had been known as a grabber—heel, birthright, blessing & flocks.
- c. Now known as Israel. He had the same history, but a new name. God prevailed in the wrestling, but the one who held on was changed.
- d. He wrestled through the dark night & came out with a limp the rest of his life. –Jacob – David – Peter – Paul shed the graveclothes of their past...

B. The reason we can do this is because of the resurrection of Christ.

- **He asks us to:**

- * *Repent*
- * *Live by Faith*
- * *Be Baptized*
- * *Be Filled with His Spirit*

Conclusion: PRESENT THE GOSPEL FOR SALVATION – EVERY WEEK – AND THE NEED TO COME FORWARD IN PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE OF CHRIST.