

RAISING LAZARUS FROM DEATH TO LIFE

John 11

'I Am the Resurrection and the Life'

Introduction:

1. Robert Frost once said,

"In three words I can sum up everything I've learned about life: it goes on."

2. What do you think Robert Frost Meant By This?

- a. Did He Mean—When something bad happens, get over it—life goes on...
- b. Or Did He Mean—even after you die and your gone, life on earth goes on (without you)
- c. Or Did He Mean—that there is something MORE THAN THIS LIFE...

That Life After Death Goes On, and On—INTO ETERNITY...

3. What Have You Learned About Life? —>Have You Learned that Life Goes On?

I. THE MIRACLE

(1) JESUS' LOVE (1–3)

1. Lazarus Lived in Bethany with His Two Sisters, Mary and Martha

- a) They Opened their Home to Jesus
- b) It Was a Home of Peace and Love
- c) The Son of Man Had No Home to Lay His Head, but He Often Stayed here

2. They Became Friends Whom Jesus Loved (v.5)

- a) This is the Close Relationship Jesus Calls Us To
- b) Do We Open Our Homes to Jesus?
- c) Is He Welcome in Our House and Heart? (John 15:13–15, 17)

(2) JESUS' DEITY (v.3–7)

1. News Has Reached Jesus that Lazarus is Sick—but Jesus is Omnipotent...

- a) Jesus Knows the End from the Beginning...
- b) He Knows that Lazarus is Chosen for a Special Purpose
- c) A Difficult Task—That Will Cause Lazarus to Be Hated and Even Targeted for Killing

2. The Tragic Death of Lazarus—Will Result in a Magnificent Miracle

(3) JESUS' JOY (v.11–15)

1. Lazarus is Dead, Jesus said, 'and for your sake I am glad...'

- a) Jesus was glad that He was not there to save Lazarus from Dying—WHY?
- b) Because We Needed to See and Understand Who Jesus is
- c) That He is Not Just a Criminal Who Will Die on a Cross—

He is the Son of God who Will Die as a Criminal For Our Sins!

2. It Brings Jesus Joy FOR US—when we open our eyes in faith and believe

- a) Jesus Wanted Them to See the Glory of God
- b) To Have Faith—Because Without Faith—We Can't Be Saved!

(4) JESUS' CALM ASSURANCE (v.20–27)

- 1. When a Loved One Dies—There Are Always Regrets...**
 - a) "If Only..." If Only I Had Done Things Different...
 - b) Mary and Martha Are Both In This Regret Loop: "If Only... Jesus Had Been Here"
 - c) They Knew Jesus Could've Healed Lazarus If He Had Only Been There
- 2. Jesus Assures Martha: Your Brother Will Rise Again**
 - a) As Christians This is the Truth We Can Encourage With—you will see them again!
- 3. Jesus is Revealing His Divinity—'I Am the Resurrection and the Life'**
 - a) Jesus is not Just a Prophet Waiting for the Resurrection,
He Says: **I AM THE RESURRECTION!**
 - b) He's not saying, 'I Have Special Access to God's Supernatural Power...'
He's Saying... **I AM THE POWER!**
Jesus is the Great I AM—Who Has Power Over Life and Death!

(5) JESUS WEPT (v.32–38)

- 1. (v.33 NIV) When Jesus Saw Her Weeping, and the Others all Weeping,
He Groaned Deep within His Spirit and was Troubled...**
 - a) He stands in the Mist of Suffering and Death
 - b) He Stands Before Spectators and Skeptics who don't Believe
 - c) He Stands before the Tomb of His Friend
 - d) He Stands Before Sobbing Mourners
 - e) He stands in the Shadow of Death, acutely aware of the ghastly horror of centuries
of generations going to the grave and already in graves
 - f) He stands in the Shadow of the Cross He Must Soon Endure to conquer death
- 2. Jesus Was Deeply, Emotionally Moved—
and when He reached the Tomb—He Wept.**
 - a) We See His Deity—and His Humanity Together is a Beautifully Profound Way
 - b) He is Lord over all—and yet was a man of sorrows aquatinted w/ grief
 - c) *"If these teardrops were pearls of love, what shall we say of those blood-drops wept
in the Garden of Gethsemane?" (James Smith)*
- 3. Jesus Wept—because Jesus Loves**
 - a) We Do Not Have a High Priest Who Cannot Sympathize with our weakness
 - b) When You Weep Tears, Jesus Knows What That Feels Like
 - c) The Lord is Near to those who have a Broken Heart,
and saves those with a contrite spirit (Ps 34:18)

(6) JESUS' COMMAND (v.38–40)

- 1. Jesus Commands that the Stone Be Removed...**
 - a) But Martha objects - Lazarus Has Been Dead **FOUR DAYS**—
His Body is Already Decomposing

This is a Decision Point for Martha—Obedience of Faith, even if it doesn't make sense

- b) **"Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?"**

2. Why Didn't Jesus Roll the Stone Away Himself?

- a) Isn't it a Faith Test for Us as Well?
- b) Will we do what Jesus Asks? —Even if it doesn't Make Sense?

(7) JESUS PRAYED (v.41–42)

- 1. Jesus wanted the glory to go to God the Father
- 2. And This is One of Several Prayers of Christ Recorded for Us
- 3. Do We Realize the Power of Prayer?
 - a) And Isn't Our Answered Prayers to God—actually Miracles Today?

(8) JESUS' POWER (v.43–44)

- 1. **Jesus Called with a Loud Voice: Lazarus, Come Out!**
 - a) The Dead Man Came Out! W/ Burial Linen Strips still wrapped around Him!
- 2. **Jesus said: 'Loose Him and Let Him Go'**
 - a) Lazarus Doesn't Need a Tomb Anymore
 - b) Lazarus Doesn't Need Grave Clothes Anymore
 - c) Loose Him and Let Him Go—He is Free Now!
- 3. **Apart from Jesus Christ there is neither resurrection nor life.**
 - a) He Holds All Things By the Word of His Power!
 - b) He is the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End...
 - c) He Has the Keys of Hades and of Death—He Has Power Over Death

II. THE IMPLICATIONS

(1) JESUS MIRACLES WERE NOT JUST SUSPENSIONS OF THE LAWS OF NATURE—THEY WERE GLIMPSES OF THE TRUE SPIRITUAL REALITY BEHIND EVERYTHING!

- 1. **In a Sense We Are Living in a Miracle—**
 - a) the Physical Universe we live in was Created by a Miracle of God!
 - b) So Living in a Creation Made By a Miracle—is in a sense Living in a Miracle
 - c) Everything we take for granted... The Light from our nearest star
 - d) the bio-sphere, the terra-formed planet, the eco-system
 - e) The air we breath, as a result of photosynthesis, all created by a miracle
- 2. **And Since God Created the Universe—He Has Power Over The Universe**
 - a) He set in motion a miracle and He upholds it by His Divine Power
 - b) So It Should Be No Surprise He Displayed His Power Over Creation—
 - Even While in Human Form!
- 3. **But Jesus Miracles Were More Than Suspensions of the Laws of Nature—**
 - a) John Called them 'Signs'—because they Pulled Back the Veil and Revealed the True Spiritual Reality Behind Everything!
 - b) "Some see the miracles recorded in scripture as an implausible suspension of the laws of the physical universe. As signs, though, they serve just the opposite

function. Death, decay, entropy, and destruction are the true suspensions of God's laws; miracles are the early glimpses of restoration. Jesus miracles display the true laws of the new creation. Jesus healings are not supernatural miracles in a natural world. They are the only truly natural things in a world that is unnatural, demonized and wounded". (Jurgen Moltmann)

(2) RESURRECTION IN CHRIST BRINGS TRUE FELLOWSHIP W/ CHRIST

1. Notice After Lazarus is Raised from the Dead (John 12:1-3)

- a) We See a Scene of Friends in Fellowship with the Lord!
- b) This is the Fellowship We Are Called to in Christ

2. Our Resurrection In Christ Brings True Fellowship with Christ

- a) When We Are Born Again of the Water and the Spirit in Baptism...
- b) When We Are Buried with Christ in Baptism and Raised w/ Christ to New Life
- c) We Have Communion and Fellowship with Christ!

(3) RESURRECTION IN CHRIST ALSO BECOMES A WITNESS FOR CHRIST, AS A LIGHT IN THE WORLD—BUT ALSO A THREAT

1. Lazarus's Life Became a Witness to the Power of Christ (John 12:9)

- a) People came to see Jesus but they also went to see Lazarus!
- b) His Life Became a Testimony to the Power of Love of Christ!
- c) Imagine being somewhat of a celebrity!

Yes I'm the one who was in the grave 4 days!

2. But Lazarus' Life Was Also a Threat to Those Who Hated Jesus (12:10-11)

- a) They Wanted to Destroy the Evidence!
 - Which in this Case Was Lazarus' Life Back From the Dead!
- b) They Hated Jesus and Wanted to Destroy Anything He Touched...
 - Including People He Saved

3. Our Life in Christ is a Testimony to the World

- a) Some Will See the Lord's Work in Us for Good
- b) Some Will See the Lord's Work in Us as a Threat
- c) May We Always Live a Life that Brings Glory to God Either Way

(4) IN CHRIST DEATH IS NOT THE END BUT THE BEGINNING

1. But to Fulfill God's Purpose for us to Live Forever with Him

Jesus Had to Experience Death Himself—So We Could Live

- a) You Cannot Go to the Cross of Christ and be unmoved...
The Cross reveals the Worst of Man—and the best of God (Phil Sanders)
- b) While We Were Still Sinners—Christ Died for us
And God Raised Jesus From the Dead! (Colossians 2:12-13)

2. The Resurrection Shows This is Not the Last Act of the Human Drama...

- a) God Will Not Let Death Have the Last Say...
- b) Because God is Not God of the Dead, but of the Living!

For we know that if our earthly house, *this tent*, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. (2 Corinthians 5:1)

- 3. There was a Time When There Was No Time—and Jesus Was There
The Time Will Come When Time Will Be No More—and You Will Be There**
 - a) This world is passing away and the lust and corruption of it—but he who does the will of God abides forever! (John 5:24)

CONCLUSION:

- 1. In a Cemetery in Hanover, Germany is a Grave...**
 - a. Huge slabs of granite and marble were cemented together...
They Were fastened with heavy steel clasps.
 - b. It belongs to a woman who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead.
 - c. On the Grave Marker were inscribed: "This burial place must NEVER be opened."
- 2. However, In Time, a Seed covered over by the stones began to grow.**
 - a. Slowly it Grew through the soil – a tiny seed become a tree that pushed aside the stones.
- 3. The Incredible Life Force Contained in that Little Seed is just a Reflection**
 - a. of the Power of God's Word—That Will One Day Call ALL From the Graves...
 - b. Jesus Said, "Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation." (Jn 5:28ff)

This is the Hope of God's People of All Time

PSALMS 23:6

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
All the days of my life;
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord
Forever.