

Theme: Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead to show that He is the Lord of Life and that everyone who believes in Him has eternal life.

I. Intro - Climactic Battles

- A. Many stories have these - hero faces the greatest foe
- B. Very often these are extended battles, outcome in doubt
- C. We have been following an epic tale
- D. Jesus has shown control over nature, diseases, people
- E. In the final sign, He faces the greatest enemy: death
- F. Why does Jesus raise Lazarus? What does it mean?

II. The Sign: Raising Lazarus From the Dead

- A. Lazarus is sick - and Jesus seems to do nothing
Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha...³So the sisters sent word to Jesus, "Lord, the one you love is sick."⁴ When he heard this, Jesus said, "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it."⁵ Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.⁶ So when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days, John 11:1, 3-6
 - 1. Lazarus is sick, word sent to Jesus His close friend
 - 2. "This will not end in death; I will be glorified"
 - 3. But He waits for two days - no word of healing sent
 - 4. Jesus is purposefully raising the stakes for this climactic sign

B. Jesus does not go until Lazarus is dead

After he had said this, he went on to tell them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up."¹² His disciples replied, "Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better."¹³ Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep.¹⁴ So then he told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead,¹⁵ and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." John 11:11-15

- 1. Jesus knows Lazarus is dead - shows His Deity
- 2. He refers to death as sleep, resurrection as waking
- 3. This climactic battle will not be a struggle for Jesus
- 4. The disciples are dense and miss His meaning, so He tells them plainly Lazarus is dead
- 5. Jesus acted purposefully so they may believe

C. Jesus' words with Martha

"Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died.²² But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask."²³ Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."²⁴ Martha answered, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."²⁵ Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die;²⁶ and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?"²⁷"Yes, Lord," she replied, "I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world." John 11:21-27

- 1. Martha: he would not have died if You were here
- 2. But I know God will hear You - I trust You

3. "He will rise again"; "I know, on the last day"
4. "I AM the resurrection and the life"; I AM the master of death for all my followers - do you believe this?
5. Yes! You are the Messiah, the Son of God!
6. This is the response Jesus is seeking from all of us!

D. Jesus prepares the sign - and Martha waivers

Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. ³⁹"Take away the stone," he said. "But, Lord," said Martha, the sister of the dead man, "by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days." ⁴⁰ Then Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?" John 11:38-40

1. Jesus prepares the sign - remove the stone!
2. Martha waivers still not understanding
3. Four days - Jews believed the spirit departed after three days, so there is no possibility of resurrection
4. Jesus' calls out to her faith, not her doubt!
5. He reminds her that God is at work and is going to be glorified!

E. The sign - Lazarus is raised from the dead

When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" ⁴⁴ The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go." John 11:43-44

1. Jesus cries "Lazarus come out!" - and he does!
2. The battle only lasts seconds! One short sentence!

3. There is no contest in the climactic sign!
4. Death itself is no more able to disobey Jesus than water, food, disease, or the human body! He is Sovereign over all!

III. The Reality: The Lord of Life

A. The sign shows that Jesus is the Lord of life

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; ²⁶ and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?" John 11:25-26

1. The I AM saying shows the meaning of the sign
2. This was why Jesus had to wait until Lazarus died
3. The whole Gospel moves to this truth

a. This is clearly stated in the Prologue

In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. John 1:4

b. This is the culmination of the 7 signs (example)

For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself... ²⁸ "Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice ²⁹ and come out... John 5:26, 28-29

1. Jesus has life in Himself - He is the Lord of Life
2. Those in the graves hear His voice and come out
3. Lazarus is a type and shadow of the resurrection on the final day

B. This is the sign that points to Jesus' resurrection

1. This is really the ultimate battle - what happens if death lays its icy fingers on Jesus Himself?

2. The result is the same - He defeats death and raises Himself!
3. He had even promised this in the second sign
 Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days." ²⁰ They replied, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?" ²¹ But the temple he had spoken of was his body. ²² After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken. Jn 2:19–22

- a. Martha believed and found life!
- b. Many people seeing this final sign believed and found life!
- c. This is why the signs are recorded - that we might believe and have eternal life!
 Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. ³¹ But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. John 20:30–31

IV. Applying the Word

A. How do I respond to the Lord of life?

1. Astoundingly, some respond with hostility!
 But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. ⁴⁷ Then the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin. "What are we accomplishing?" they asked. "Here is this man performing many signs. ⁴⁸If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our temple and our nation." John 11:46–48
 - c. Do not follow them in this foolish choice!
2. The proper response - believe and have life!
 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; ²⁶ and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?" ²⁷ "Yes, Lord," she replied, "I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."...
⁴⁵Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him. John 11:25–27, 45

B. The ultimate sign and reality for our ultimate need

1. This final sign shows the reality related to our greatest need
2. Nothing else matters if death has the final word!
3. All healing and all provision are futile if we die and rot to nothing
4. But Jesus demonstrates here that He is Life and the ruler over death. Not even death can disobey His Word!
5. In the beginning, there was nothing and Jesus spoke and creation, space, and time came to be.
6. When all was chaos and dark Jesus spoke and light pierced through and life sprang up
7. When you and I lie in the grave, with death-dew cold on our brow, Jesus will shout "Come forth", and like Lazarus, we will rise!

C. A song of worship and faith

The Lord of Life

John 11:1-53

April 21, 2019

Prayer

Revelation 1:4-5

Teaching keywords: Christology; Deity of Christ; Lent; miraculous gifts and signs; death; resurrection; faith; Easter

May grace and peace and resurrection power rest on you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from Spirit before his throne, ⁵ and from Jesus Christ the Lord of Life, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over all. Revelation 1:4–5

Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ²(This Mary, whose brother Lazarus now lay sick, was the same one who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair.) ³ So the sisters sent word to Jesus, “Lord, the one you love is sick.” ⁴ When he heard this, Jesus said, “This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God’s glory so that God’s Son may be glorified through it.”

⁵ Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. ⁶ So when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days, ⁷ and then he said to his disciples, “Let us go back to Judea.” ⁸ “But Rabbi,” they said, “a short while ago the Jews there tried to stone you, and yet you are going back?” ⁹ Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Anyone who walks in the daytime will not stumble, for they see by this world’s light. ¹⁰ It is when a person walks at night that they stumble, for they have no light.”

¹¹ After he had said this, he went on to tell them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up.” ¹² His disciples replied, “Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better.” ¹³ Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep. ¹⁴ So then he told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead, ¹⁵ and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.” ¹⁶ Then Thomas (also known as Didymus) said to the rest of the disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with him.”

¹⁷ On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. ¹⁸ Now Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁹ and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. ²⁰ When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home. ²¹ “Lord,” Martha said to Jesus, “if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²² But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.”

²³ Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” ²⁴ Martha answered, “I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.” ²⁵ Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; ²⁶ and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?” ²⁷ “Yes, Lord,” she replied, “I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.”

²⁸ After she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary aside. “The Teacher is here,” she said, “and is asking for you.” ²⁹ When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to him. ³⁰ Now Jesus had not yet entered the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. ³¹ When the Jews who had been with Mary in the house, comforting her, noticed how quickly she got up and went out, they followed her, supposing she was going to the tomb to mourn there.

³² When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” ³³ When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. ³⁴ “Where have you laid him?” he asked. “Come and see, Lord,” they replied. ³⁵ Jesus wept. ³⁶ Then the Jews said, “See how he loved him!” ³⁷ But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?”

³⁸ Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. ³⁹ “Take away the stone,” he said. “But, Lord,” said Martha, the sister of the dead man, “by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days.” ⁴⁰ Then Jesus said, “Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?” ⁴¹ So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. ⁴² I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people

standing here, that they may believe that you sent me.”

⁴³ When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” ⁴⁴ The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, “Take off the grave clothes and let him go.” ⁴⁵ Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him. ⁴⁶ But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done.

⁴⁷ Then the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin. “What are we accomplishing?” they asked. “Here is this man performing many signs. ⁴⁸ If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our temple and our nation.” ⁴⁹ Then one of them, named Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, spoke up, “You know nothing at all! ⁵⁰ You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish.”

⁵¹ He did not say this on his own, but as high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation, ⁵² and not only for that nation but also for the scattered children of God, to bring them together and make them one. ⁵³ So from that day on they plotted to take his life. John 11:1–53 NIV2011