

Listening for the Promise

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

Fifth Sunday of Lent – March 26, 2023

“Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?’ She said to him, ‘Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world.’”

–John 11:25–27–

Jesus was about to raise Lazarus from the dead. By itself, this miracle would not prove that Jesus was the Messiah; Elijah and Elisha had also raised people from the dead. By itself, then, this miracle would only prove that Jesus was a prophet. To prevent us from misinterpreting His work and His person, Jesus gives us some verbal revelation along with His redemptive act. In this revelation He spells out His identity for us: “I am the resurrection and the life.”

And Lazarus’ sister Martha, also confesses His identity: “I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world.” Raising Lazarus from the dead shows that Jesus is the Christ. However, the Pharisees had a different idea. They were afraid of Jesus since He constantly upstaged them. He threatened their religious system and their vested interests. So they thought that He was an evil man. And since they couldn’t deny Jesus’ miracles, they often attributed them to an evil spirit. Thus, when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, they did not repent and acknowledge Jesus as the Christ. Rather, they plotted to kill him (see Jn. 11:45–53)!

This wicked act shows us something of our own sinfulness. We are not primarily rational beings but reasoning beings. We often use our reason to support ideas, projects, and perspectives that derive from our sinful emotions and desires. Our will controls our intellect, and our will is bound in sin. Consequently, when we are set upon a certain perspective or course of action, we are resistant to opposing evidence. In fact, since our beliefs, projects, and perspectives derive from emotional grounds, opposing evidence only makes us mad, rather than convincing us. And the greater and more impressive the opposing evidence is, the angrier we become. Since our will is bound in sin, we will not acknowledge contrary evidence, not even if someone were to rise from the dead. And so, in the Pharisees’ plot to kill Jesus, we see the nature of our own sin. Because we are by nature sinful and unclean, we have murderous, covetous, and adulterous hearts. And since our will is bound in sin, we are unable to free ourselves. However, since Jesus is the resurrection and the life, He is able to free us from ourselves, despite ourselves.

Sola Worship Resource — Weekly Devotional © 2023, Sola Publishing (www.solapublishing.com), written by John King. Scripture taken from ESV Bible® (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright ©2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Listening for the Promise

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

Fifth Sunday of Lent – March 26, 2023

“Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?’ She said to him, ‘Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world.’”

–John 11:25–27–

Jesus was about to raise Lazarus from the dead. By itself, this miracle would not prove that Jesus was the Messiah; Elijah and Elisha had also raised people from the dead. By itself, then, this miracle would only prove that Jesus was a prophet. To prevent us from misinterpreting His work and His person, Jesus gives us some verbal revelation along with His redemptive act. In this revelation He spells out His identity for us: “I am the resurrection and the life.”

And Lazarus’ sister Martha, also confesses His identity: “I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world.” Raising Lazarus from the dead shows that Jesus is the Christ. However, the Pharisees had a different idea. They were afraid of Jesus since He constantly upstaged them. He threatened their religious system and their vested interests. So they thought that He was an evil man. And since they couldn’t deny Jesus’ miracles, they often attributed them to an evil spirit. Thus, when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, they did not repent and acknowledge Jesus as the Christ. Rather, they plotted to kill him (see Jn. 11:45–53)!

This wicked act shows us something of our own sinfulness. We are not primarily rational beings but reasoning beings. We often use our reason to support ideas, projects, and perspectives that derive from our sinful emotions and desires. Our will controls our intellect, and our will is bound in sin. Consequently, when we are set upon a certain perspective or course of action, we are resistant to opposing evidence. In fact, since our beliefs, projects, and perspectives derive from emotional grounds, opposing evidence only makes us mad, rather than convincing us. And the greater and more impressive the opposing evidence is, the angrier we become. Since our will is bound in sin, we will not acknowledge contrary evidence, not even if someone were to rise from the dead. And so, in the Pharisees’ plot to kill Jesus, we see the nature of our own sin. Because we are by nature sinful and unclean, we have murderous, covetous, and adulterous hearts. And since our will is bound in sin, we are unable to free ourselves. However, since Jesus is the resurrection and the life, He is able to free us from ourselves, despite ourselves.

Sola Worship Resource — Weekly Devotional © 2023, Sola Publishing (www.solapublishing.com), written by John King. Scripture taken from ESV Bible® (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright ©2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.