



Repentance Tabernacle Church

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Raising Lazarus!

Lesson Text: John 11:17-44

Focus Verses: John 11:23-25 -²³ Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. ²⁴ Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. ²⁵ Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.

Truth About Covenant: The ultimate hope of covenant is resurrected life in Heaven.

Covenant Context: We have seen that part of being in covenant with Jesus gives us access to miracles of healing. But our ultimate hope of covenant with God is a promise of a resurrected life in Heaven. In this story, Jesus demonstrated absolute authority over death when He raised a four-days-dead man from the grave with just the power of His spoken word.

In John 11, two sisters whom Jesus loved sent word that their brother was sick. All of us have done that: we pray for a miracle, we send a text asking for prayer, post the need on social media, or call a minister we trust. Illness of any kind leaves those concerned with a feeling of helplessness. For a believer, it is intuitive to ask for prayer and expect those prayers to be answered.

John, the only Gospel writer to include this marvelous event, articulated the closeness Jesus shared with this family. John's retelling of these events seems brutal (John 11:3-6). Jesus' did not respond with the immediacy that seemed appropriate for such a dire situation. The sisters' responses (John 11:22, 32), Jesus met each one's need with compassion and as an invitation to draw closer to Him in their sorrow so He could minister to them.

After the crowd led Jesus to Lazarus's tomb. Jesus responded in two noteworthy ways. He felt their sorrow and understood their grief. He felt their pain as He wept. Second, Jesus groaned. If it were not for sin, we would not deal with death and the lasting pain it leaves in its wake. When Jesus stood at the tomb of Lazarus, He confronted sin and death. Jesus commanded the crowd to roll away the stone. They did and Jesus roared into the tomb: "*Lazarus, come forth*" (John 11:43). He then made one more command: "*Loose him and let him go*" (John 11:44).

We will never know why God does everything He does. And the good news is we don't have to know in order to be in covenant relationship with Him. That is where our faith must be strong that God knows what He's doing and He will do what is right, whether we understand or not. We just need to trust. **He is God, and He is always good.**

We have the same opportunity, no matter what we face or the outcome, to invite Jesus into our need. It's okay to express our hurt and even our disappointment to Jesus. It's even okay to ask Jesus questions. He may answer, He may not, but He already knows what we want to know. Our honesty gives Him the opportunity to show us He is still the resurrection and the life. No circumstance can change who He is or what He has promised to be.

The miracle, like many others, caused people to believe. They saw Jesus' command death, death bowed, and they believed. Miracles are for that reason; they are so we believe Jesus is who He said He is. They are not just for us to have a better life or less pain in this one. Miracles are so we will see Jesus for who He is and worship Him as the Almighty.

While all of us may not share in the experience of having a loved one raised from the dead, we all share in the truth of what happened that unforgettable day in Bethany. Yes, Jesus is able to heal us, which is why we pray for Him to heal when we or others we love are sick. But He is able to do so much more. One day, Jesus will call all of us who are yet alive—or even have been laid in a grave—up in the resurrection. When He heals, we give Him glory. And when He calls us home, we will have all eternity to give Him glory.

No matter what you're dealing with, Jesus is the answer. He is able to heal and restore what sin and sickness have stolen. He is also able to command death and death obeys. Each time God commands death, it is just a glimpse into that great and glorious day when He will command death for the final time, and He will raise up everyone in covenant with Him to be with Him, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.