

“The Authority and Power to Resurrect the Dead is Christ”

John 11:17-44 (vv. 41-44)

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Introduction

This week lesson is basically a study of the same scriptures as we had on last Sunday. However, in the study for this Sunday, we see the manifestation of authority and power of the resurrection of the dead is Christ, the Son of God. While there was little doubt that Jesus was the Son of man, there were many who doubted He was the Son of God.

Every time a person was raised from the dead, it was an extraordinary miracle that showed that God, who is the Source of Life, has the ability to give life to whom He will and when He will – even after death.

The power and authority to resurrect the dead is Christ because Christ is God. “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.” (Colossians 1:15-17)

Jesus Christ is all powerful and all knowing. He can take that which is dead and make it alive again because He has the power and authority to do so. For those who believe in Jesus though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Jesus shall never die. As believers we can rejoice in our living and as well as in our dying because as Apostle Paul states in Philippians 1:2, “For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” Our trust and faith are in the One who has the authority and power to resurrect the dead.

The Lesson

1. vv. 17-19.

Upon Jesus's arrival to Bethany, He found that Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days. Bethany was about two miles from Jerusalem. Many residents of Jerusalem had come to Bethany to comfort Mary and Martha. The fact that there were many that came out to mourn and comfort them speak highly of the standing and respect of the family in the community. Jesus' delay was on purpose. He knew He was going to restore Lazarus to life. He knew that the resurrection would strengthen the disciples' belief and remove the doubts of others. We oftentimes do not see that God's delays in answering our cries for help, result in unforeseen blessings and another level of spiritual growth.

2. vv. 20-28.

The personalities of Mary and Martha are quite different. Martha is more of a woman of action while Mary is a woman of quiet reflections. (Luke 1:38-42) As soon as Martha heard that Jesus is coming, she goes out to meet Him while Mary remains sitting in the house. Martha was not being critical of Jesus when she stated to Him that if He had been there her brother would not have died. That was a statement of grief and belief that Jesus could have healed her brother if He had been there when Lazarus was sick.

Verse 22, Martha displays great hope and belief in Christ's ability to ask anything from God and that God will grant it.

What kind of faith do we have when tragedy strikes us, and it appears that God is not hearing nor answering our prayers? Do we stand strong in our faith or do waver and begin to doubt God?

We know that God does not exist for our pleasures and purposes. God created us for His purposes and benefits. We often do not understand why things happen as they do but we can trust that God truly loves us and He all things for His purpose and glory.

Martha believed and trust Jesus. Jesus told her that her brother would rise again. She didn't doubt that, but Martha was not thinking of the present but

sometimes in the future. God is able to meet our needs in the present as well as in the future.

The fifth of the seven “I am” statements, Jesus stated that I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.

Jesus is I am as we see in John 6:35; 8:12; 10:9; 10:11; 14:6; and 15:5.

Jesus is the resurrection (He raises those who are dead in sin) and the life (He gives them eternal life). Those who believe in Christ, though they may die physically, shall live. Those who really have Christ’s life shall never die.

Martha accepted the “I am” as Christ, the Son of God.

Martha returns and quietly tells Mary that Christ has arrived.

3. vv. 29-37.

Mary goes out to meet Jesus. The Jews observing her haste departure, assumed that she is going to the grave, so they follow her to comfort her. The words that Mary said to Jesus are the same as Martha’s (vv. 11:21). How many times had they repeated these words to each other in the last four days?

Jesus felt and saw the deep grief of Mary and the Jews as they wept.

We are reminded of the humanity of Christ and His love and concern for His people. The shortest verse in the Bible, “Jesus wept.” We have a Savior that can identify with us in all points of life, whether it is sorrow or joy.

Though the Jews saw the love of Christ, some of them debated whether not He could have prevented the Lazarus’ death as He had opened the eyes of the blind.

4. vv. 38-44.

Jesus felt deeply the grief over his beloved friend’s death as He came to the tomb. Jesus commanded for the stone in front of the tomb to be rolled away.

Martha objected to this strange request since Lazarus’ body had been in the tomb for four days and probably stink at this time due to decomposition.

But Jesus reminded her of His previous statements, “Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they

**die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?"
(John 11:25-26)**

Christ offered a prayer before He performed the miracle. The prayer was one of thanksgiving rather than requesting. He is thankful that the Father has heard. Jesus expressed His thanks to the Father because of the people who were hearing Him. Jesus knew that the miracle was going to take place that would strengthen the faith of His disciples and for others to believe that He was the Son of God and that the Father had sent Him.

The voice of the One with all authority and power to resurrect the dead, spoke with a loud voice so everyone present could hear Him when He said, "Lazarus, come forth."

He that was dead came forth bound in his graveclothes.

Jesus told the people to loose him and let him go. There was no doubt that Jesus had worked a miracle that God could have performed.

Let us not be bind by the graveclothes of this world. Let not our hands be bind that we cannot work. Let not our feet be bind, that we cannot evangelize. Let not our mouths be bind, that we cannot tell the goodness of God and speak the words of our testimony.

Jesus orders: "Loose him".