

Who is The Lord Jesus Christ?

Message #9 The Resurrection & the Life

John 11:25

Was the Lord ever late? In Mary and Martha's mind He was too late to prevent the death of their brother. They thought the Lord had deserted them in their hour of great need. They thought he was four days late. Yet, we discover that the Lord deliberately waited two days before He started his journey to visit Martha and Mary (Ch. 11: 6). Someone may be here today fretting that the Lord has waited too long and left something issue in their lives unanswered or unfinished.

Eternity will reveal that this too is for the glory of the Lord (Ch. 11:15). The death of a loved one, a tragedy which struck so fast, along with the thought that the Lord allowed it to happen, may be eating away at your peace of mind. These are hard lessons and they are difficult to answer without the revelation of God to us in His word. Christians accept the Bible's teaching that they are the workings of a loving Lord who does everything for their good.

Come with me today and visit this grieving home of Mary and Martha over the death of their beloved brother Lazarus. We will soon discover that our lack of understanding may be that we are too self centred. God had a purpose in this illness and death. Lazarus was to become one of the most convincing witnesses to the gospel after his resurrection. His resurrection removed the very foundation of the false house of Judaism, which had such difficulty keeping the people upon their empty traditions. The Jewish leaders decided they must kill the Lord Jesus and they wanted to kill Lazarus too.

This is another of those miracles of our Lord where the Word of Christ and the miracle performed are complementary to each other (John 11:25 and John 11:44).

This is just a little foretaste of the great resurrection day, when all the graves will open and the dead in Christ shall rise first. That will be the demonstration day of our Lord's glorious power. Then faith will be turned to fulfillment and the believer's hope will be turned to reality in the One who raises the dead to eternal life.

When the Lord brought Lazarus out of the grave after being dead four days He **astonished the people and proved with great public accord that He was the Son of God.** This point was stated several times (15,40,42,45).

Lazarus' resurrection caused countless souls to accept the Saviour's deity (Ch. 11:45). Lazarus became a living witness to the supernatural power of Jesus Christ and His gospel. After this miracle the Lord's words were no mere oratory. When Jesus said, "*I am the resurrection and the life,*" His words carried power and weight.

There is no place for unbelief in any of the Lord's statements. This resurrection of Lazarus is an altogether convincing miracle to this day. It speaks to every Bible reader and inquirer into these things. The power of the Son of God to give life is a fact that cannot be denied. It will not go away. What then will you do with the Lord Jesus?

1. THE PROVIDENCE OF THE LORD CONVINCES US OF HIS PERFECT PLANNING

The suggested delay in Jesus' arrival at Mary and Martha's home makes sense when we look at the bigger picture. However, when Mary and Martha were watching Lazarus down into the dark valley of sickness

and of death it was nigh impossible for them to appreciate the Saviour's care and love for their souls. The full details of their fears are recorded for the reader's benefit. But Mary and Martha were filled with despair as they wiped the sweat away from Lazarus brow. There was torment in their hearts as they comforted their brother unto the end of His life.

What must have their real thoughts been when Lazarus was pronounced dead and the embalmers threw the shroud around their brother.

The hours must have passed ever so slowly from the sealing of the tomb until Lazarus' resurrection. For four days and nights they had no comfort from grief and despair. Their Lord was not even with them to console.

However, we know from John's gospel record that the Lord understood all about their sorrow and pain. He knew that he would turn it all to joy in a wonderful demonstration of resurrection power. Their tears would give way to laughter and sorrow of heart to true ecstasy. The ultimate comfort was reserved for the hour when Lazarus would come out of the grave casting off his grave clothes. What joy would then fill the hearts of Mary and Martha! Such shall be our joy one glorious morning when the Lord Jesus comes to perform His resurrection work.

Mary and Martha were both right. If the Lord had been there Lazarus would not have died. No one has ever died in the presence of Jesus Christ. Not even at the cross of Calvary could one die until the Saviour had released His own spirit unto His Father.

We must understand that our loved one who is asleep in Jesus will be raised again. And you will know him in eternity? Mary and Martha didn't need to read the name tag on their brother's arm when he came forth from the grave?

Let this be our comfort when the sunshine of life ceases to shine upon us. We may have a thousand questions regarding our lot in this life, but in eternity they shall all be seen as evidences of the goodness of the Lord to our souls.

2. THE POWER OF THIS MIRACLE CONVINCES US OF HIS PERSONAL ABILITY TO SAVE SINNERS

Who dare argue against the Lord's personal power after He demonstrated His life giving authority to raise the dead? Here is power over the ultimate enemy of our souls. Our Lord overcame that dreaded last enemy in this man's corrupted body.

[1] **There was power in the Saviour's prayer to the Father (42).** The power of God was at work.

[2] **There was power in the Saviour's call to Lazarus - "Lazarus, come forth" (Ch. 11:43).**

Why did the Lord have to call Lazarus by name? If he hadn't called his name all the corpses in the graveyard would have risen up! This was a powerful call to bring a dead man back to life!

Think of the biological factors that were overcome in that miracle, they are staggering:

- How many body cells came together in an instant?
- Were the brain cells brought to life first, or was the heart-beat first?
- How could the coagulated blood which was corruptible begin to flow in Lazarus' veins again?

This was no evolutionary process, but a new creation. If you believe in Christ as the Creator who made the world ex-nihilo (out of nothing) you will have no problems with this miracle.

This demonstrated the power of Christ to call sinners who are dead in sin to spiritual life. The Lord calls and sinners must hear. They must obey and depart from the grave of their sins. This is how you

were converted. The Lord of glory called out to you, “Come forth” and sin’s death-grip couldn’t hold you. Lust, pride, rebellion, depravity and deadness of heart gave way to wonderful life – gospel life. The Lord Jesus is mighty to save. He can save the most incorrigible sinner. He saves from the gutter-most to the uttermost.

3. THE PROOFS OF THIS MIRACLE CONVINCING US OF THE GENUINENESS OF HIS WORK.

[1] Proofs that he was really dead.

Jesus said it.

Martha and Mary said it (Ch. 11:21, 32).

Their friends said it (Ch. 11:37)

No one ever tried to argue against the reality of his death.

[2] Proofs of his resurrection.

Friends of Mary witnessed it (Ch. 11:45).

Friends of the Pharisees witnessed it (Ch. 11:46).

The Pharisees themselves witnessed it (Ch. 11:47).

A great number of people witnessed it (Ch. 12:9).

Our Lord works with great conviction and genuineness. There is nothing phony here. There is no illusion here. His miracles were so attested that it is impossible to resist the evidence.

It takes more faith to disbelieve the facts of these miracles than to prove them.

- They were ploughed into the very life and times of our Lord Jesus.
- They were stamped with omniscience – the Lord’s prior knowledge of Lazarus death.
- They were stamped with omnipotence – the Lord’s power to reverse the work of death.
- They were stamped with eternity – Christ is the resurrection and the life.

Those who hope in Christ will not be disappointed on the resurrection morning. To be asleep in Jesus is to be sure of eternal life with Him. Fear not to trust Him. Fear not to rest in the resurrection hope of the gospel. Do not grieve in bereavement as those who are without hope. If you fear death you must come to Jesus to receive life (1 Thess. 4:15-18).

4. THE PROBLEMS CREATED BY THIS MIRACLE FOR THE JEWISH HIERARCHY CONVINCING US OF THE IMPACT OF CHRIST’S WORK.

[1] They had a people problem.

This is the real answer to the devil’s crowd (Ch. 11:48). The gospel always stirs up people to defy convention in order to seek the will of God above the whims of men.

Lazarus created a problem for the Scribes and Pharisees because he became the chief evidence of the Lord’s miracle working power (Ch. 12:10,11.) We should pray a for few dead souls to be resurrected under the ministry of the gospel today. They will create havoc for the Liberals and the Modernists and for the devil’s crowd at large. Unbelievers cannot argue against the Lord’s converts. They are living proofs that Jesus saves.

All the politics and tricks of the enemy could do nothing (Ch. 12:19). We need to pray for such a mighty visitation of the Lord’s power upon dead souls. The Lord can turn the church from a graveyard into a living witness to gospel power.

[2] They had a prophetic problem (ch. 11v50 –54).

This is what led up to the crucifixion of our Lord. The Lord prophesied his own death (ch. 12:23,24). That prophetic witness was heralded from heaven by the witness of the Father's voice (Ch. 12:28-30). The blind Jewish leaders would soon have the blood of Jesus on their hands. Their unbelief was their ruin. They were blind from their unbelief (Ch. 12:37).

[3] They had a planning problem.

This was finally answered by Judas and Satan (Ch. 13:2). Yes, the powers of darkness were set at work and the hellish scheme was soon in action. The Jews pondered how to arrest the Son of God and put him to death. They were stumped for a plan until Judas, the man of perdition preordained to this wicked work, came groveling to them for their thirty pieces of silver – the price of treachery.

If you want to lose your soul Satan will help you.

If you want to sell the only thing of any worth in eternity there is one who will plot with you now.

But if you would save your soul you must trust in the Lord Jesus and accept Him as your Saviour.

He promises you eternal life and has the power to fulfil His promises. He gives life to believers now and on the resurrection day He will raise us up.

Who is the Lord Jesus Christ? He is the resurrection and the life. Is that true in your soul? Have you trusted in Him to give you eternal life?