

Jesus is... The Resurrection and the Life

John 11:1-45

I The death of Lazarus

- A Hearing the news of Lazarus' illness [Note: There is *no connection* between this Lazarus (of Bethany) & the poor beggar named "Lazarus" is Jesus' parable recorded in Luke 16:19-31]
- B Jesus' response--declaring that "*This illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.*"
- Jesus could say that Lazarus's illness *does not lead to death* in the sense that it did not lead ultimately to death, but it did lead through death to being raised from the dead a few days later. "Lazarus' illness is not for the purpose of death (...it was... a temporary death)... [due to] the raising of Lazarus from death to life. But the event is to be a *sign*." [Beasley-Murray, p. 187]
 - Lazarus' resurrection from the dead convinces the Jewish leaders to act against Jesus, which leads to His crucifixion. However, Jesus' death on the cross ushers in His resurrection which is His glorification. Lazarus' illness provides the catalyst by which the *Son of God is glorified*.
- C Jesus loved Lazarus, Martha, and Mary [of Bethany-- 2 miles (3.2 km) from Jerusalem]
- D Lazarus had "fallen asleep." *Fallen asleep* means "died," as the following conversation (11:12-14) makes clear. The OT equivalent is "*slept with his fathers*" (e.g., 1 Kings 2:10 & throughout 1–2 Kings & 1–2 Chronicles). Death is compared to a deep sleep from which people will one day be awakened (e.g., "*Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake...*" Dan. 12:2) "The implication... should be taken with utmost seriousness... believers are to view death as a sleep from which they shall be awakened through Jesus." [George Beasley-Murray, *John*, p. 189]
- E Jesus waited for two days before going
- So* [v. 6] shows the reason why Jesus *stayed two days longer*: he allowed his friends to go through the sorrow and hardship of the death and mourning of Lazarus because he *loved* them and wanted them to witness an amazing demonstration of Jesus' power over death, thus seeing "his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father" (1:14). The Lord does not always answer prayers as expected. (ESV Study Bible)

II Jesus' interaction with Martha

- A Martha's word to the Lord—"Lord, if you'd been here, my brother wouldn't have died..." (11:21)
- B Jesus' response: "*Your brother will rise again.*"
- C Martha's understanding—"I know he'll rise again in the resurrection on the last day." (11:24)
1. Note: Martha's affirmation of end-time resurrection was in keeping with the beliefs of the Pharisees (Acts 23:8) & the majority of first-century Jews, as well as the teaching of Jesus (John 5:21, 25–29; 6:39–44, 54). Martha misunderstood the full import of Jesus' promise (Jn. 11:23), thinking Jesus was merely speaking of the final resurrection, while Jesus meant much more. (ESV Study Bible)
 2. The "Last day," the "time of the end," "the end of days": For example: "*At the time of the end... [Dan. 11:40] 'At that time...many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, & some to shame & everlasting contempt. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; & those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever & ever...' [Dan. 12:1-3] But [you, Daniel] go your way till the end. You shall rest & shall stand in your allotted place [i.e., be resurrected] at the end of the days.*" [Dan. 12:13]
 3. Jesus affirmed the end-time resurrection of all the dead: "*An hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.*" (Jn. 5:28-29) Note: (1)

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Everyone resurrected—“*all who are in the tombs,*” (2) Two outcomes: (a) “*those who’ve done good to the resurrection of life*” (b) “*those who’ve done evil to the resurrection of judgment.*”

4. When “*This world’s kingdoms become the kingdom of our Lord & of his Christ, and He reigns forever & ever... & the time [came] for the dead to be judged, & for rewarding your servants, the prophets & saints, & those who fear your name, both small & great...*” (Rev. 11:15-18)
5. John wrote: “*I saw a great white throne & Him who was seated on it...I saw the dead, great & small, standing before the throne, & books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they’d done. The sea gave up the dead in it, Death & Hades gave up the dead who were in them, & they were judged, each one of them, according to what they’d done.*” (Rev. 20:11-13)
6. Outcome depends on accepting or rejecting Jesus & His word—(a) Rejecting—“*The one who rejects me & doesn’t receive my words has a judge; the word that I’ve spoken will judge him on the last day.*” (Jn. 12:48) (b) Accepting (believing)—“*Everyone who looks on the Son & believes in him should have eternal life, and I’ll raise him up on the last day.*” (Jn. 6:40)

III The coming future resurrection (John 5:28-29; Dan. 12:2, 13)

- A The resurrection of life (or awaking to everlasting life) for those who have done good
 - 1 Many places in the Bible refer to those who have died as having fallen asleep. *Fallen asleep* means “died,” as the following conversation (Jn. 11:12-14) makes clear. The OT equivalent is “slept with his fathers” (e.g., 1 Kings 2:10, throughout 1–2 Kings & 1–2 Chronicles). Death is compared to a deep sleep from which people will one day be awakened (e.g., Dan. 12:2). ESV
 - 2 “*All who look on the Son & believe in Him shall be raised up on the last day*” (John 6:40)
 - 3 “*Whoever feeds on my flesh & drinks my blood has eternal life, & I’ll raise him up on the last day* (Jn. 6:54)
 - 4 “*All that the Father gives the Son, He’ll raise up on the last day.*” (John 6:39)
- B Resurrection of judgment (awake to shame & everlasting contempt) for those who’ve done evil.

IV Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life

- A Jesus is the present resurrection and life
 - “Jesus [is] revealed through the miracle as the Lord over death.” [Beasley-Murray, p. 200]
 - “The plain meaning of the first clause—‘*I am the resurrection*’—is a promise of the future resurrection of the believer through Christ the Resurrection.” [G. Beasley-Murray, *John*, p. 189]
 - Jesus does not merely say that he will bring about the resurrection or that he will be the cause of the resurrection (both of which are true), but something much stronger: *I am the resurrection and the life*. Resurrection from the dead & genuine eternal life in fellowship with God are so closely tied to Jesus that they are embodied in him & can be found only in relationship to him. Therefore *believes in me* implies personal trust in Christ. The preposition translated “in” (Greek: *eis*) is striking, for *eis* ordinarily means “into,” giving the sense that genuine faith in Christ brings people “into” Christ, so that they rest in & become united with Christ. (This same expression is found in Jn. 3:16, 18, 36; 6:35; 7:38; 12:44, 46; 14:12; 1 John 5:10.) The “I am” statement here represents a claim to deity. (ESV Study Bible)
- 1 Those who hear the Son of God live (John 5:25)
- 2 We were dead spiritually in our trespasses, but God made us alive & raised us up because of our faith (Eph. 2:1,5-6, 8)
- B “*Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live*” – Jn. 11:25

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C “*Everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die*” – Jn. 11:26

1 Believing to have life before death

2 Believing to have eternal life

- *Lives* (in 11:26) refers to those who have spiritual life now (see Jn. 3:36). Those who believe *shall never die*, in that they will ultimately triumph over death. (ESV Study Bible)
- “It is the crucified & risen Lord who is the Resurrection & the Life. In union with Him the believer *has* the Life and is assured of its consummation in the ‘last day.’ ...John 11:26 is positively startling: ‘He who *lives* and believes in Me *shall never, never die*’! Since Jesus is the Resurrection & the Life, Christian existence in Christ is *life before death*! It is not primarily something awaited, but the principle of life in the present, and since it is life in union with the Lord who conquered death, death cannot touch it.” [George Beasley-Murray, *John*, p. 201]

V Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead

The raising of Lazarus constitutes the final & ultimate messianic “sign” of Jesus in this Gospel. This spectacular miracle (recorded only by John) anticipates Jesus’ own resurrection & reveals Jesus as “the resurrection & the life” (11:25). The raising of Lazarus also serves as a final event triggering the Jewish leaders’ resolve to have Jesus arrested & tried for blasphemy (11:45–57). [ESV Study Bible]

A Jesus goes to the tomb of Lazarus

B Jesus wept

Jesus joins his friends’ sadness with heartfelt sorrow, yet underlying it is the knowledge that resurrection and joy will soon follow (cf. 1 Thess. 4:13). Jesus’ example shows that heartfelt mourning in the face of death does not indicate lack of faith but honest sorrow at the reality of suffering and death. (ESV Study Bible)

C Calling Lazarus to come out of the tomb—“*Lazarus come out!*”-- This is the voice of the omnipotent Creator (Jn. 1:3, 10) who speaks, & even Lazarus’s dead body obeys. This illustrates the Lord’s word—“*Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, & is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, & those who hear will live.*” (Jn. 5:25)

D Lazarus came out—“*The man who had died [Lazarus] came out, his hands & feet bound with linen strips, & his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said, ‘Unbind him, & let him go’.*” (11:44) Lazarus was resurrected—recalled to human life, after having died (physically). Later, Lazarus died again & awaits the future resurrection; but his resurrection/recall to human life is a “sign” that Jesus is the resurrection & it foreshadows the believers’ future resurrection (1 Cor. 15)

E Many believing after seeing

F The final “sign” recorded by John--Later, when Jesus entered Jerusalem, “The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb & raised him from the dead continued to bear witness. The crowd went to meet him because they heard he had done *this sign*.” (12:16-18)

V. The Jewish Leaders’ Plot to Kill Jesus

Caiaphas, the high priest, said “...it is better ...that one man [Jesus] should die for the people, than that the whole nation perish.” He didn’t say this of his own accord, but...he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation & not for the nation only, but also to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad. So from that day on they made plans to put him to death.” (11:49-53)

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“Caiaphas had in view the benefit of the death of Jesus for the Jewish people: it would avert disaster for the nation and, by implication, leave the rulers secure.” [G. Beasley-Murray, *John*, p. 198]
Caiaphas proposal--sacrifice Jesus (get him killed) to avoid intervention by the Romans.