

“Lent: Giving up Our Lives”

The Reflection Series

Scripture: John 11:34-44(NIV)

³⁴ And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. ³⁵ Jesus wept. ³⁶ Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him! ³⁷ And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died? ³⁸ Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. ³⁹ Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days. ⁴⁰ Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? ⁴¹ Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid.

And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. ⁴² And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. ⁴³ And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. ⁴⁴ And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

Subject Question: What goal of Jesus’ journey to the cross, does He point to in John’s account of the raising of Lazarus?

Compliment answer: The Ultimate Second Chance in life for you and me.

Big Idea: The goal of Jesus’ journey to the cross, which He points to in John’s account of the raising of Lazarus, is an ultimate second chance in life for you and me.

Homiletical Idea: “An inside job...”

Purpose: I want the congregation to see clearly the real reason why Jesus actually came and lived, died and was resurrected.

Introduction: As the Cross draws closer for Jesus, the scriptures now shifts from Christ to us... why did He really come? How and why does His journey to the cross intersect in our personal journeys through life? It’s not really that hard to understand... nor to see. His goal is to raise up and you and I to new life... to give us individually the ultimate second chance; and more, to infuse us with His power and strength to live out the remainder of our days by, with, and for Him. It’s decidedly and concretely true: the example of raising Lazarus from

the dead is not just a story to display to the world Jesus' supernatural abilities. Nor is it only put forth as proof of His Deity. No, the story of Lazarus is much simpler... for it's your story... it's my story, and it's everyone's story who Christ chooses and cherishes and irresistibly draws to Himself.

(The road less taken... the life less shaken.)

Ground Work: Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary

11:33-46 Christ's tender sympathy with these afflicted friends, appeared by the troubles of his spirit. In all the afflictions of believers he is afflicted. His concern for them was shown by his kind inquiry after the remains of his deceased friend. Being found in fashion as a man, he acts in the way and manner of the sons of men. It was shown by his tears. He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. Tears of compassion resemble those of Christ. But Christ never approved that sensibility of which many are proud, while they weep at mere tales of distress, but are hardened to real woe. He sets us an example to withdraw from scenes of giddy mirth, that we may comfort the afflicted. And we have not a High Priest who cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities. It is a good step toward raising a soul to spiritual life, when the stone is taken away, when prejudices are removed, and got over, and way is made for the word to enter the heart. If we take Christ's word, and rely on his power and faithfulness, we shall see the glory of God, and be happy in the sight. Our Lord Jesus has taught us, by his own example, to call God Father, in prayer, and to draw nigh to him as children to a father, with humble reverence, yet with holy boldness. He openly made this address to God, with uplifted eyes and loud voice, that they might be convinced the Father had sent him as his beloved Son into the world. He could have raised Lazarus by the silent exertion of his power and will, and the unseen working of the Spirit of life; but he did it by a loud call. This was a figure of the gospel call, by which dead souls are brought out of the grave of sin: and of the sound of the archangel's trumpet at the last day, with which all that sleep in the dust shall be awakened, and summoned before the great tribunal. The grave of sin and this world, is no place for those whom Christ has quickened; they must come forth. Lazarus was thoroughly revived, and returned not only to life, but to health. The sinner cannot quicken his own soul, but he is to use the means of grace; the believer cannot sanctify himself, but he is to lay aside every weight and hindrance. We cannot convert our relatives and friends, but we should instruct, warn, and invite them.

Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers

(43) **He cried with a loud voice.**—Comp. John 5:25; John 5:28, and Notes there. These verses lead to the opinion that it was at the moment of the cry, and not before, as some have thought, that life returned. This is the only passage where the word rendered “cried” is used of our Lord. (Comp. Matthew 12:19.) It occurs again in this Gospel in John 12:13; John 18:40; John 19:6; John 19:12; John 19:15.

Lazarus, come forth.—He addresses him as we should address a friend whom we wished to arouse from sleep, by his name, the most familiar of all sounds, and marking his personality. (Comp. John 20:16.) Literally, the Greek means, *Lazarus, Hither, out!* and contains no verb.

There is a fitness in them as addressed to one already lying in the sepulcher. Comp. “Young man, I say unto thee, Arise” (Luke 7:15), and “Maid, arise” (Luke 8:54).

Meyer's NT Commentary

John 11:43-46. *With a loud voice, He cried out*; this was the vigorous medium through which He caused His miraculous power to operate.

The expression **δεῦρο ἔξω** (*hither out! huc foras!* without verb; comp. Hom. Od. θ. 192; Plat. Pol. iv. p. 445 D, v. p. 477; D. Stallb. *ad Plat. Apol.* p. 24 C) includes in itself the resurrection-call, but does not imply that the act of reawakening has been already performed (Origen). Nonnus correctly remarks: **ἄπνοον ἐψύχωσε δέμας νεκουσσοός ἤχώ**. Jesus did not here call out **ἐγείρου** or **ἐγέρθητι** (as in the case of the daughter of Jairus, and of the son of the widow of Nain, Luke 8:54; Luke 7:15), because the words **δεῦρο ἔξω** seemed the most natural to employ in the case of a dead man already lying *in the tomb*. **δεδεμ. τ. μὸδ. κ. τ. χειρ. κειρίαις**] By Basil (**θαύμαζε θαῦμα ἐν θαύματι**), Chrysostom, Euth. Zigabenus, Augustine, Rupert, Aretius, Lightfoot, Lampe, and several others, this is regarded as a *new miracle*, to which is reckoned, besides, even the covering up of the countenance. An arbitrary disfiguration of the fact to the point of introducing apocryphal elements. It is not necessary, with the purpose of escaping from this view, that the aor. **ἐξήλθε** should be understood *de conatu* (Kuinoel); nor to assume that each limb was wrapped *by itself*, as was the custom in Egypt (Olshausen, De Wette, B. Crusius, Maier); but the winding-sheet in which the corpse was wound from head to foot (Matthew 26:59), thus embracing the entire body (see Jahn, Arch. I. 2, p. 424), might, especially as it had to hold no spices (John 11:39), be slack and loose enough to render it possible, after it had been loosened by his movements, for the awakened man to come forth. He was not completely freed from the grave-clothes, till the command **λύσατε αὐτόν** had been given.

(The Road less taken... the Life less shaken.)

A. The Ultimate Second Chance in life for you and me. (Vs.41b-44) *And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. ⁴² And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. ⁴³ And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. ⁴⁴ And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.*

1. The Sequence of New Life in Jesus:

- a. Christ's Compassion: ³⁴ *And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. ³⁵ Jesus wept*
- b. Christ's Acknowledgement: *And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.*

- i. John 6:37-38 ³⁷All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. ³⁸For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.
- c. Christ's Individual Calling: ⁴³And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth
 - ii. Ephesians 3:1 As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the **calling** you have received.
 - iii. 2 Thessalonians 2. ³ But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers and sisters loved by the Lord, because God chose you as firstfruits^[a] to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth. ¹⁴ He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - iv. 1 Corinthians 1. God is faithful, who has **called** you into fellowship with his Son, Jesus **Christ** our Lord.
- d. Our New Life: ⁴⁴And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes:
 - v. Romans 6 We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a **new life**.
 - vi. Philippians 4 ³I thank my God every time I remember you. ⁴In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy ⁵because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, ⁶ being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.
- e. Our New Sight: and his face was bound about with a napkin.
 - vii. Matthew 5 The blind receive **sight**, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good **news** is proclaimed to the poor.
 - viii. Ezekiel 12 "Son of man, you are living among a rebellious people. They have **eyes to see** but do not **see** and ears **to hear** but do not hear, for they are a rebellious people.
 - ix. John 12 He has blinded their **eyes** and hardened and benumbed their [callous, degenerated] hearts [He has made their minds dull], **to keep** them from **seeing** with their **eyes** and understanding with their hearts and minds and repenting and turning **to Me to heal** them.
- f. Our Second Chance. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.
 - x. 1 Corinthians 6 ¹⁹Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;²⁰ you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

- xi. 2 Corinthians 5 *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a **new** creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become **new**.*
- xii. Matthew 4 *And he saith unto them, **Follow me**, and I will make you fishers of **men**.*
- xiii. Acts 1 *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my **witnesses** in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”*
- xiv. 1 Timothy 4 *I have **fought the good fight**, I have finished **the** race, I have kept **the** faith.*

2. The Results of New Life in Jesus:

- a. Spiritual Change: New Attentiveness and Awareness; 1 Peter 1 *For you have been **born again**, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.*
- b. Sociological Change: New Considerations and Compassion; From “Me” centered to “others” centered. Ezekiel 36 *I will give you a new **heart** and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your **heart of stone** and give you a **heart of flesh**.*
- c. Psychological Change. New Perspective and Purpose; 1 Corinthians *“Who has known the **mind of** the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the **mind of Christ**. Ephesians 2 ¹⁰*For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.**
- d. Relational Change: New Friends and Family; 2 Corinthians 2 ⁴*But thanks be to God, who always leads us as captives in Christ’s triumphal procession and uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere. ¹⁵For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. ¹⁶To the one we are an aroma that brings death; to the other, an aroma that brings life.*
- e. Eschatological Change: New Destiny and Destination; John 3. *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. John 14. Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. ²In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*

(The Road less taken... the Life less shaken.)

B. The Ultimate Second Chance... Summary

1. **Hearing:** Revelation 3:20 *Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*
2. **Heeding:** 1 John 5 ¹⁰ *Whoever believes in the Son of God accepts this testimony. Whoever does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because they have not believed the testimony God has given about his Son. ¹¹ And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹² Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.*
3. **Healing:** Ephesians 2 ⁸ *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: ⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

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- C. What goal of Jesus' journey to the cross, does He point to in John's account of the raising of Lazarus?
- D. The goal of Jesus' journey to the cross, which He points to in John's account of the raising of Lazarus, is an ultimate second chance in life for you and me.