

## Expect A Miracle Part 6 - EASTER

Jesus Has Power Over Life & Death

*John 11:1-44*

*Memory Verses: John 11:25-26*

### MANUSCRIPT

#### Introduction (Me, We, & the Struggle)

I hope this morning you've come expecting a miracle. We've seen that Jesus can do miracles in our bodies. Whether healing disease, curing disabilities, or casting out demons, Jesus is sovereign over our bodies and we can trust him to do a miracle in us. He's done it before and he can do it again. And, we've seen that Jesus can also do miracles with nature. He can turn water into wine. He can calm stormy seas, He can walk on water, He can pull coins from the mouths of fish, and he can tell trees to die and they die. There is no miracle that Jesus can't do in us or in this world.

Which brings us to today. Of all of the miracles that we've seen through out the Old Testament; the Flood of Noah, the plagues of Egypt, the parting of the Red Sea for Moses, The Sun standing still for Joshua... and all of the miracles we've seen Jesus perform in the New Testament, none compare to the power to bring someone who has died back to life. Look with me at **Luke 7:11-17**. Here Jesus is walking into a town and as he is walking in a funeral procession is walking out to bury a dead man. Jesus sees the dead man's mother and He knows that she is a widow and that the dead man is her only son and he has compassion on her. He casually walks up to the dead man as he is being carried in his coffin by the pallbearers and says to him "arise." And the man comes back to life. Right there in his coffin. There is nothing more precious to us than life, and here Jesus just casually, without pomp or circumstance, simply tells the dead man to arise and he comes back to life... like no big deal. That's the power of Christ!

Again, look with me at the story of Jairus's daughter. We find this story in **Matthew 9** and **Luke 8** also, but let's read of it from **Mark 5:21-24**, and **35-43**. Here a ruler of the synagogue named Jairus; most likely a Pharisee in high standing like Nicodemus, comes begging Jesus to come heal his little girl. I can tell you with all certainty, if Vera was at the point of death there is nothing I wouldn't do to see her healed. Even if I was a Pharisee who hated Jesus, I would run to him and beg him to heal her! This is desperation! Unfortunately, Jesus is too late and when he arrives she is already dead. That's no problem, because to Jesus death is just like sleep. He goes to the little girl and says, "arise."

Do you get it? Jesus has power so great that he is able to bring those who are dead back to life. He literally has power over life and

death. I don't know if you completely understood what I just said to you. One day we are all going to die. One day our mortal bodies will finally give out. Our hearts will fail, our minds will fail, we will get cancer or some other disease and we will breathe our final breaths. And there are only two things you can do with that information. You can either accept it or you can fight it!

I love the famous poem from Dylan Thomas, "Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night." It's all about the fact that we as humans do not accept death. The opening line says this, "**do not go gentle into that good night, old age should burn and rave at close of day; Rage, rage against the dying of the light.**" We should rave and rage at death! And most of us do. However, we don't know how to rave and rage at death very well, because, well, we are still dying. Here's the most important question you could possibly ever ask, "how can I defeat death?" The answer is clear! Find the one who has power over life and death. Find the one who can call you to arise from death. There is only one. His name is Jesus. **The only way to escape death is to obey the voice of Jesus calling you to arise.**

Today we are going to focus on Jesus two greatest miracles. The resurrection of Lazarus and the resurrection of himself.

#### Teaching (Expand on the Problem, God)

The first thing we need to see here today is that.. **Jesus' Power Over Death Gives Us The Bravery To Die For Him**. Let's look at the story of Lazarus first. There are a few things we must see here. The first is that Jesus had a plan when it came to Lazarus that not many could understand or accept. Let's read **John 11:1-4**. Jesus loves this family. He loves Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. And they love him. They are good friends who have shared in their joy with one another throughout the last couple years. And, though Jesus down plays Lazarus' illness, he is going to die. Jesus down plays it because Jesus, as God, looks at death completely different than we do. Death is relative to Jesus. If Jesus says something is dead it is. If Jesus says something is alive it is. In this case, though Lazarus will be technically dead from a human perspective, he will live again according to Jesus perspective. The illness didn't lead to death but to life. Jesus had to allow his death. Why? So that through his friends death God would be glorified. In this case, God would be glorified through the resurrection of Lazarus, but it shows us something applicable for us when we face the death of others or our own. When we die or others die, Jesus always has a plan for it to be used to glorify God. **Death is always good if used for God's glory!**

Let's continue reading in **John 11:5-8**. When Jesus heard about Lazarus sickness he waited another two days until he was dead. Again, Jesus had a plan. We could either think, Jesus is cruel because he waited and didn't do it the way we wanted him to. Are you willing to wait on God's plan! We also see that the disciples are a little concerned about going back to Judea because it's starting to get real dicey for Jesus. It seems that if he

goes back he will be putting all of their lives at risk. But, Jesus is willing to risk his life, and his disciples' lives in order to give Lazarus back his life.

Let's pick up the story in **John 11:14-16**. Jesus tells them that Lazarus has indeed died and now its time to go. He tells them that he has waited, "so that you may believe." Again, Jesus is planning this miracle to strengthen people's faith in Him; namely his power over death. And then we hear from Thomas who encouraged the other disciples to get up and get going. But notice what he says. "That we may die with him." It all adds up doesn't it. Jesus let's Lazarus die without healing him. Then tells the disciples that it's time to go to him because I'm going to raise him from the dead as to strengthen your faith and immediately Thomas and the other disciples are given a new bravery to die for Christ. Why? Cause they know that **death means nothing when you are walking with the one who has power over life and death!** Thomas and the disciples knew that **The only way to escape death is to obey the voice of Jesus calling you to arise!**

The second thing we need to see today is that... **Jesus' Power Over Death Gives Us Faith To Live For Him**. Then after 4 days Jesus finally arrives to the funeral. Let's pick it up in **John 11:21-27**. Martha and later Mary in verse 32 both tell Jesus, if you were here he wouldn't have died. They both had faith he could heal him, but they lack the faith to know he can raise him from the dead. So Jesus tells them, "your brother will rise again." Martha, a good theologian, believes in the final resurrection when all believers will be given eternal life. Jesus even adds to this truth by saying, whoever believes, though they die, will live. Christians believe this. We believe that our physical bodies will die and there isn't much we can do about that... but our spiritual bodies, our souls will live on. We must fight for that. The only way we can fight for that is to believe in Christ. But Jesus goes a step further. He says, "I am the resurrection and the life." We don't get to heaven by believing in religion or God or by following a bunch of rules. In order to have life we must have Jesus. He adds to this by saying, "everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die." This means, the moment you put your faith in Jesus, that life, never ends! You have eternal life the moment you place your trust in Christ! Get this! **You haven't lived until you have put your trust in Jesus**. And once you do, you will never know anything but life! Abundant life here, and eternal life with Christ after our physical bodies have failed.

How exactly do we put our trust in Christ? Look at what Martha says. First, she confirms that she believes eternal life is only found in Jesus. Secondly, she calls him Lord which means she believes he is God and ruler over her life. Third, she calls him the Christ, meaning she

believes that he is the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies and the Son of God who takes away the sins of the world. In a sense, Martha has already placed her faith in his death and resurrection to give her new life. This is the faith that we must all have in Christ if we are to live forever. In essence, her profession of faith is Jesus calling her to arise. **The only way to escape death is to obey the voice of Jesus calling you to arise.**

The last thing we need to see today is that... **Jesus' Power Over Death Gives Us Salvation Over Sin And Hell**. Let's pick it up in **John 11:38-44**. Again Jesus reiterates that if we believe we will see his glory. Again Jesus reiterates that he is doing this miracle to strengthen the faith of those around to believe in Him. But this time, instead of Jesus saying arise, he says, "come out." Like the widows son, and like Jairus' daughter, when we place our faith in Christ he calls us to arise from our spiritual death. Spiritual death is the death of living in sin and the punishment of sin which is eternity in hell. Jesus calls us to arise from spiritual death. But with Lazarus Jesus calls us to come out. Come out from what? Our spiritual graves! Many of us are living lives without purpose; mundane meaningless lives where we aren't truly alive. Jesus says, come out of that and let me give you true meaning... let me call you to the glory of God and salvation!

Of course, all of this is pointing to the greatest miracle of Christ which was his own resurrection. It's one thing to raise other people from the dead... it's something entirely different to raise yourself from the dead. We see this story in **Matthew 28:1-10**. Look at verses **5 & 6** again. "Do not be afraid for the Jesus who was crucified is not here for he has risen as he said." **The only way to escape death is to obey the voice of Jesus calling you to arise!**

### Application

Jesus said to the widow's son, arise. Jesus said to Jairus' daughter to arise. Jesus told Lazarus to come forth. And Jesus got up and walked out of his own tomb! In Jesus death becomes life! In Jesus you can have a faith to face death. In Jesus you can find faith to live life. In Jesus you can find victory over sin and hell! In him is true salvation over death! All you need to do is place your faith and trust in Him and make him the Lord of your life!

### Conclusion

Do you hear him calling you today to come out of your grave? Do you hear him calling you to arise? Today is the day of salvation! I still like Dylan Thomas' poem, but I would change it a little. I would say this... **Do not go gentle into that good night... without Jesus! Here him calling you arise at the dying of the light! The only way to escape death is to obey the voice of Jesus calling you to arise!**