

I Am the Resurrection and the Life, Part 2

Scripture: John 11:37–46

Code: 43-59

Open your Bible to John chapter 11. When Lazarus died, he was in the grave for four days. But in this sermon series, he's been there 21, and we need to get him out. We've got to get him moving, actually, so he's exhibited immense patience.

But as we come to the text for today in John 11, verses 37 to 44, we're going to be looking at it. So let me read it to you: verse 37, "Some of them said, 'Could not this man, who opened the eyes of the blind man, have kept this man also from dying?'"

"So Jesus, again being deeply moved within, came to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. Jesus said, 'Remove the stone.' Martha, the sister of the deceased, said to Him, 'Lord, by this time there will be a stench, for he has been dead four days.' Jesus said to her, 'Did I not say to you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?' So they removed the stone. Then Jesus raised His eyes, and said, 'Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. I knew that You always hear Me; but because of the people standing around I said it, so that they may believe that You sent Me.' When He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come forth.' The man who had died came forth, bound hand and foot with wrappings, and his face was wrapped around with a cloth. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, and let him go.'"

Throughout the text of John's gospel, we repeatedly discover that the intention of everything that he records is to demonstrate the deity of Jesus Christ. And pointing to His works are the proof. In chapter 5, you'll remember some familiar words. Chapter 5 and verse 36. Our Lord says, "But the testimony which I have is greater than the testimony of John the Baptist; for the works, the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish - the very works that I do - testify about Me, that the Father has sent Me." The very works that He did had no other explanation than that He was divine, and had indeed come from heaven, as He claimed. In chapter 10 verse 25, "Jesus answered them, 'I told you, and you do not believe; the works that I do in My Father's name, these testify of Me.'" Verse 37. "If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father."

We will find this same emphasis in the 14th chapter of the gospel of John. Verse 10. "Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves."

John the Baptist's disciples had some questions about whether Jesus actually was the Messiah, because things weren't going the way they expected them to go. John was imprisoned and Jesus wasn't setting up the kingdom, and so they came to Jesus in Luke chapter 7 and they asked Him, "Are You the expected one, or do we look for someone else? Are You the Messiah, or have we to wait for someone else?" Jesus said this: "Go and tell John this: 'The blind receive sight, the lame

walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have the gospel preached to them.” You go tell John about the works, the miracles.

In the gospel of John, there are seven major miracles that John lays out, out of three years of massive miracles in the thousands, certainly. In fact, at the end of the gospel of John, we’re told the books of the world couldn’t contain everything that Jesus did. But John picked seven that are unmistakable, eyewitness accounts of the deity of Christ as demonstrated in His miracles. None is more powerful, compelling, and memorable than this raising of a man named Lazarus. What you see here is divine power on display, creative power, supernatural power, cosmic power, power that belongs only to God. God is the creator. Christ is the creator. God creates, in Genesis 1. The Lord Jesus creates in John 1. He is the one who made everything that has been made. John says about Him, “In Him was life.” About Himself, He says, “I am the life.”

That is on display here in a way that is really beyond any of the other miracles that John knows. But all of the miracles of Jesus and all the ones that John chronicles are for the purpose that you might believe that He is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, you might have eternal life in His name.

Now, if you go down to verse 25, you have the declaration from the lips of Jesus. “I am the resurrection and the life.” Not that I give resurrection or do resurrection. Not that I give life. I am the resurrection. I am the life. He who believes in Me will live, even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this? And Martha said, “Yes, Lord; I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God, even He who comes into the world.”

What led her to believe that? The words of Jesus supported by the works of Jesus. He claimed to be the Messiah, the Christ. He claimed to be the Son of God, deity in human form. He claimed to be the one who came down from heaven and supported it with powerful, miraculous works, impossible for humans to do. In fact, the works that Jesus did were unique to Him, and He empowered His disciples for a short period of time, the apostles, to do those same works, giving testimony to the fact that they were the true apostles of the Savior Himself.

In the issue of John 11, the raising of Lazarus, divine power is on display. Remarkable divine power. The kind of divine power that stops the progress of decay. Divine power that reverses rigor mortis. Divine power that pours new life into rotted organs, starts a bloodless decomposing heart, beating and pumping fresh new blood to every organ and every limb. The kind of power that creates a brand new body, that creates blood out of nothing and makes it flow fast and fresh. The kind of power that takes sightless, decomposed eyes and gives new tissue, new nerve, and new vision. The kind of power that takes a non-functioning, decomposed mass of brain tissue and recreates it so it can think, and feel, and move, and speak. It’s a staggering of power, of a man four days dead. And as I’ve told you before, there is the record in the gospels of two other resurrections: one of Jairus’ daughter, who had just died; and one of the sons of the Widow of Nain who was on his way to the funeral, which would happen immediately after his death.

So, somebody might say: well, they maybe weren’t dead. This was so close to the fact that they had been ill. Maybe they weren’t really dead. But in the case of Lazarus, he was four days dead. Four days, and is noted by this time, there is a stench coming from his decomposing flesh.

Jesus steps into that situation and raises that man from the dead. Only God has the power to give life. It is ludicrous to imagine that people have that power. There are some bizarre, self-proclaimed healers who want you to believe that they can raise the dead. That has never, ever even been close to being verified. Why does He raise this man from the dead? Why does He do that? To strengthen the faith of His disciples in Him, and they were always struggling with their weaknesses to produce faith in unbelievers who could have no other explanation and would come to the conclusion, hopefully, that Martha came to, that based upon what He did, you have to believe He's Christ, the Son of God, the one who came down from heaven.

He also did the raising of Lazarus to give a preview of His own resurrection, which would come only in a few days. We can assume, probably, that Lazarus may well have been raised, at least in one timeline, on the Wednesday before Passion Week. So it would've been a week and a half before He had raised Himself from the dead. He also did the resurrection of Lazarus to demonstrate a promise He made in John 5:28 and 29 that He had the power of life and one day would raise all the dead in all the graves of the globe; all the people who've ever lived will be raised, some under the resurrection of life, some under the resurrection of condemnation or damnation. He is displaying divine power for all those reasons. And by the way, this is in some ways, a demonstration of the power that He will use to raise your body and mine, which will be, if He doesn't come soon, if He doesn't come in years and years, worse shape than Lazarus'. Whatever is left, and even if nothing is left, He can create, and does create, *ex nihilo*, out of nothing.

Now, we've noticed that John takes a great amount of detail to tell the story, running all the way from verse 1 to verse 57. That's the aftermath, which we'll look at next week. We've already seen the preparation for the miracle in the opening 16 verses, which of course was the story of Lazarus and his sisters living in the town of Bethany two miles east of Jerusalem, around the Mount of Olives, village, really Bethany means house of the poor. Kind of a non-descript little place, but they must've been a prominent family there because so many people showed up for the prolonged funeral.

So we saw the opening of his illness and death, and then from verses 17 on down to about verse 36, where we ended last time, we finally saw the arrival of Jesus. Now remember, when Mary and Martha sent messengers, the one whom you love, the one who's your friend, you have such great affection for, is sick unto death, Jesus delayed long enough for him to be dead and buried. By the time He took a day's journey back to be in the grave four days, and He did it, He tells us why He did it in verse 4. "This sickness is not to end in death." That's not the end. "But for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified in it." He wants Lazarus good and dead and everybody to know he's good and dead so that when He raises him from the dead, it'll bring glory to Himself as well as to the Father. Mutually.

Well, we finally come to verse 37. And here, in this very brief account, we see the resurrection itself. There are no pathological descriptions. There is no attempt to describe any of the phenomenon going on in Lazarus' body or inside the tomb. In fact, everything about this is a very kind of human thing except for one element. There's a lot of people there. Jesus asks them to roll the stone away. When Lazarus comes out of the grave, He asks them to unwrap him. And as you go through this story, it has to strike you that the Lord has always done that. He's always used people to do what people can do. They can't raise him from the dead, but they can unwrap him. They can't steal him out of the clutches of the king of terrors, death, but they can roll the stone away, and that's how the kingdom of God works in the world. God does what only God can do, but what you can do and what I can do, He always enlists us to be involved in, and that's how we work in the kingdom, and we see

that here.

There's something very, in a sense, normal about it. There's something very natural about it. There's something very human about it, as caring people do what caring people can do. But only God can do what God can do. You can see in this, kind of an analogy of salvation. Somebody can, I suppose to say, analogically roll the stone away and let the light of the truth in. Somebody else can kind of unwrap the person who's newly given life, but only Christ can give life. He does the same thing in salvation that you see Him doing here. Maybe that's an analogy that helps enrich it a little bit.

So we come to verses 37 to 44. And again, like so many of these massive, just staggering, stunning miracles, it is understated. There isn't any fanfare here. No angels show up. No trumpet blows. There's not an orchestra. It's not drawn out. Basically, Jesus says two words: the name of the man, and a verb. And it's a command. That's it. And that, that very statement, two words, a name and a verb, literally unleashes the same power that created the universe.

Now, the whole miracle, again, is to confirm the statement of Jesus in verse 25. "I am the resurrection. I am the life." Again, to affirm what He said in chapter 5. "God has given to Me the power of judgment and the power of resurrection, and I will raise all the dead of all the ages to the final judgment." Jesus makes statements of spiritual reality, and then illustrates them in a physical way. "I am the resurrection. Here's a resurrection to prove it." On another occasion in the gospel of John, He said, "I am the bread of life," and then created a meal to prove it. On another occasion, He said, "I am the light of the world," and then healed blind eyes to prove it. Here, He is the resurrection and the life, and He proves it by putting His resurrection power on display.

So let's look at this miracle. It's pretty straightforward and simple, and as you pick up the story, and you remember that when Jesus arrived, verse 17, He found that Lazarus has already been in the tomb for four days. And Mary and Martha were there. They were brokenhearted and they were sad, and they loved their brother, and it was a terrible loss. Martha, when she hears Jesus is coming, runs out to meet Him. Mary, who is the melancholy one, stays home, and all these people are surrounding her, consoling her, and Jesus has a little conversation with Martha in which He declares to be the resurrection and the life, and you remember all of that. And then He asks for Mary. And so Martha goes back to the house, verse 28. "The Teacher is here and He is calling for you." And she heard it, and she got up quickly and was coming to Him.

She didn't come alone. All the people who were with her in the house consoling her, verse 31, got up, thinking she was going to the tomb so she could weep there. When she arrived, of course, she runs into Jesus. They haven't quite come to the tomb yet. Jesus sees her weeping, sees the Jews who were with her weeping, and I told you funerals lasted seven days, and people came over and cried. There were professional weepers, and then there were people who cared, and they would weep. There were professional mourners and wailers and all of that. Then there were the people who really cared. I pointed out: there's something beautiful about, not the professional side of it, but the caring side of it lasting as long as it did. And actually, it went on for 30 days after the initial 7 days.

But Jesus sees all this weeping, and He tells us in verse 33, is deeply moved. Deeply moved in His spirit and troubled. And the language is extremely strong. He is profoundly agonizing because He's lost His friend, yeah. There's the reality of that. He has lost His friend. Someone for whom He had

affection. *Phile*, back in verse 3. But He sees far more than that. He sees sin, death. He sees the reality that everybody's going to die. Every family's going to have a loss. Every relationship is going to be broken up. This is what sin has done not just to this family, not just to this city, not just to this time, but throughout all of human history. The powerful weight of sin. And you're surrounded by people who have rejected Him and do not believe in Him. Not Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, but the rest of the crowd, surely. He sees the impact of sin, and it's really overwhelming. I would say that this is the closest to His experience in the garden of Gethsemane of anything in the Bible, anything in the gospels. 'Cause He feels the power of sin on display in this devastated family, and the extent of the realities of death. And He knows that surrounded by unbelieving people, all are going to die, all are going to suffer the loss of people they care about and they love, and most of them are going to be catapulted into eternal hell. This is a massive burden for Him to bear, and that is why the language is so graphic, as we pointed out last time. He's deeply moved, and He is seriously troubled. So much so that He bursts forth into tears that He can't restrain in verse 35.

So that people say, "See how He loved him!" They can only read it as: this is a profound love for this man. This is an outburst of weeping, and sadness, and sorrow that is cosmic. This is not just limited to the loss of a friend. We understand that. We see that all the time. But this is something way beyond that, and they're trying to figure out what this is. So, they say, "See how He loved him!" A kind of love that they're not used to seeing, perhaps. Not understanding the full reasons for His agony.

Now that gets us to verse 37, and let's look at the perplexity. We'll give you a few P's as we go through here for a few minutes. The perplexity. So, if this is the case, if He is so shattered and so devastated and so broken that He's in the condition that He is in, and it is a serious condition, couldn't He, He who opened the eyes of the blind men have kept this man also from dying? I guess the word has circulated by now. Certainly, these are people who have been there for four days, that they sent a messenger to Jesus at the very time Lazarus was sick, and He didn't come, and He waited two days, and then there's a day back, so a day for the messenger, two days waiting, a day back. That's four days. If He really loved as much as it looks like He loved, and if He has the power that He displayed in chapter 9, the healing of the man who's in his 40's who had been blind and sitting at the beautiful gate. Everybody knew him, and He gave him sight, and he was a stranger. If He could give sight to a stranger that He didn't know, He had the power to do that, couldn't He have healed whatever this illness was, and if He loved him as much as He loved him, then why didn't He do that? Why didn't He come?

There's a perplexity here, and it's an understandable perplexity, given what they have seen. Of course, from Jesus' viewpoint, He operates within the Father's purpose, doesn't He? He knows exactly what's going on. The timing is absolutely perfect. As Ephesians 1 says, you know, God essentially does all things after the counsel of His own will. And in Job 33:13, we read, He gives no account to any of His matters. He doesn't have to tell us the plan. He doesn't have to tell us the duration. In John 13:7 on another occasion with the disciples, Jesus said, "What I do now you do not realize, but you will."

They lived in that but-you-will world. They couldn't figure out almost all of what Jesus was doing, at least in His unwillingness to take over and set up the kingdom. But the time would come when they would understand, when He instructed them after His resurrection.

So it's a matter of divine timing. He knows that. He already knows that this is for the glory of God,

verse 4. God's going to be glorified. He's going to be glorified, so He knows a resurrection is going to happen. The Father has disclosed that to Him. He knows that is the plan. They don't, and they are naturally perplexed.

Well that then leads to, I guess what you'd call a problem. There is a problem. Verse 38. So Jesus, again being deeply moved within. I just need to stop again and say: here's a different word than the deeply moved in verse 33. And troubled. This is a different word. This is a very odd word to use here, 'cause it means to snort like a horse. You have all seen that or experienced when a horse raises up under some agitation and lets out a fierce snort. What a strange word to use. Sometimes it's translated "shuddered." It's some kind of total shaking. Shattering emotion has gripped Him, an indignation over death and sin, and its sorrows, and its realities, which are both temporal and eternal. He stands there in the presence of this reality of death, stands there coming to the tomb in verse 38. And He just shudders, just lets off some kind of snort, some kind of gasp, releasing the agony that He feels.

This is an insight, folks, into the true heart of God toward unbelief and judgment. Verse 38 again. He came to the tomb. It was a cave, as it often was in that part of the world. You go there even today. You will go to a cave that is identified as Lazarus' tomb. When traditional places go back far enough, we say they're probably accurate 'cause somebody actually knew where he was buried and told the next generation, and they told the next, and if it goes back far enough, it's a pretty good idea. If the Orthodox Church or the Catholic Church invented in the 13th century, it's probably not. But if it goes back far enough, I have no idea about this in particular, but it seems to have been a pretty legitimate place. If you go there today, you'll be introduced to this place. You can go down deep into this cave. And typically in those caves, they would put slits in the wall, soft enough of stone there that they can carve flat places where they can lay bodies, and that would be a typical way to do it. No door, so a stone is lying against it. They would have a groove, and they would have a circular stone that could be rolled over, much as we're familiar with in the tomb of our Lord.

So that's what He found. Verse 39. Here comes the problem. Jesus had removed the stone. Now, the stone served a purpose. It served a purpose to keep out animals and people who might, I don't know, be grave robbers and plunder whatever might've been in there. But it also kept the stink in, because the Jews did not embalm, as we have told you. You could compare it, for example, to the Egyptians. The Egyptians literally sucked all the internal organs and tissue out of a body and then soaked it in some kind of liquid combination, and then wrapped it, and that's what we call mummification, which made the body last longer than any other process. But the Jews did nothing at all like that. They just wrapped the body, wrapped the hands, wrapped the feet, wrapped the head in a cloth, and sprinkled spices on it, got it in the grave. And decomposition, as I pointed out last week, happened very, very rapidly, and within four days, it would've been serious, and it would've been oozing green liquid, and the stench would've been nauseating. This is a problem. This is a problem.

By the way, this would've been outside the village some distance for the simple reason, if nothing else, that in Numbers 19:16, it says that if you touch a dead body, you're unclean ceremony, unclean for seven days, and so the Jews didn't want to get anywhere near a dead body. That's another reason there was a stone over the front, and it would've been placed somewhere outside the village.

She's not eager to have that stone rolled away. So Martha, the sister of the deceased says, "By this time, there will be a stench for he's been dead four days." She is naturally doubting. He told her,

“Your brother will rise again,” back in verse 23. She said to Him, “If you’d have been here, he wouldn’t have died.” Mary said, “If you’d have been here, he wouldn’t have died.” They both gave the same speech ‘cause they’ve been talking about it. He said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” She said, “I know he’ll rise again in the resurrection at the last day.” Her eschatology was correct. There is a future resurrection. I know that. He says, “I’m not talking about that. I’m not talking about that. Your brother will rise again now, is what I’m talking about.” Verse 40. “Did I not say to you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?” This isn’t something future. You’re going to see it, if you’ll just believe. You said you were a believer. You believed in Me.

But listen, this is a leap, wouldn’t you say? You’d like to say: I know You’re the resurrection. I know You’re the life. I know You’re the Son of God. You’re the Messiah. You’re the one who came down from heaven. But it’s a big jump from that to seeing this corpse walk out of that grave. We can understand that. We would like to think that if we were there, we might’ve risen to great heights of faith and never had a question about it. But her problem is: she’s got her thoughts on the corpse, rather than the Christ, I guess you could say. So that’s the problem, and she just doesn’t want any unnecessary desecration to take place of his dead body, and certainly nobody to touch it in that condition.

But Jesus says, “Have you forgotten what I promised you?” That’s the promise. So you see the perplexity in verse 37, the problem, he’s so far gone. The promise, verse 40, I said to you, did I not, that if you believe, you’ll see the glory of God? I told you that. You will see a revelation of God’s excellencies. What does it mean you’ll see the glory of God? You’ll see the manifest nature of God. How did you see the glory of God in the garden? Shekhinah glory. How did you see the glory of God in the wilderness of Israel in a pillar of fire and cloud? God manifested His glory. God’s glory came down and the tabernacle entered into the holy of holies. God’s glory came down to the temple. God’s glory was manifest in a number of ways throughout the history of the Old Testament. And then in the New Testament, the glory of God came in a body, the person of Jesus Christ. And on the Mount of Transfiguration, He was transfigured, and they saw the glory of God shining through the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, the ineffable reality of His excellence reduced to light.

Well, God is going to put His glory on display here, only this is going to be by miracle power. You’re going to see His glory not as a shining light; you’re going to see His glory as life itself. The excellencies, the visible display of His invisible perfections, the visible display of His invisible powers. The fullness of His attributes are going to be put on display. Moses says in Exodus 33:18, “Show me Your glory.” What did God show him? Showed him Shekhinah blazing light veiled behind a rock. Here, He’s going to show His glory not in light, but in life, in life. I’ll show you the glory.

You say you believe. If you believe, you’re going to see the glory. Get your eyes off the corpse and on the Christ. Set your heart on the Lord. Wait to see the glory revealed. We need to live in that kind of expectancy. We’re not looking for miracles, but I will tell you this, folks. When you really believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, you see Him display His glory throughout all of your life. I tell people all the time: I live in the middle of a glory display all the time. I’ve never seen a miracle, but I live in the middle of a glory display by the amazing, astounding, incomprehensible providence of God by which He orders every circumstance, every day of my life to reveal His purposes and His will. The complexity of it is more staggering than if He interrupted natural law and did a single miracle. How many miracles does it take to create a complex reality out of all kinds of contingencies of the non-miraculous? It’s what He does every day.

My whole life is a glory display. I just go from one day to the next, to the next, to the next. And if you're looking and believing, you will see the same thing. You will see God in your life. You will see God in circumstances. You will see God working His purposes. That's what He called upon her to look for.

Well, perplexity, then a problem. Then He reiterates a promise, and then there's prayer, verse 41. So they remove the stone. Then Jesus raised His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. I knew that You always hear Me; but because of the people standing around I said it, so that they may believe that You sent Me." Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. He didn't have to say that to the Father. The Father knew His relationship with the Son. He's not asking the Father to do anything. There's no petition there. Some people miss that and they say, well, He asked the Father to give Him the power to, no He didn't. He didn't ask for anything. I thank You that You have heard Me, that You have heard Me. About what? Letting My glory be put on display. I knew that You always hear Me, just in Romans 8, as the Holy Spirit always prays according to the will of God, so the Son always prays according to the will of God. He knows what the Father will do. He knows it's for His glory. Not because of You. I'm not saying this for Your sake, O God. I'm not saying it for Your sake. I'm saying it that You and I are in agreement on this display of heavenly glory. I'm saying this for the people around, that they may believe that You sent Me. Again, the whole point, as always in the gospel of John, is that we understand by these works that Christ has come as God incarnate.

And it's loud. It is loud. He speaks loudly so that everyone can hear. He identifies God as He always does, as His Father. The only time He didn't do that in talking to God was on the cross when He was alienated and sin-bearing and said, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. I knew that, You always hear Me. But for the peoples' sake standing around, I said that we are in agreement on this display of power and glory, that they may believe that You sent Me. The people all know only God can create. There are no evolutionists in first century Israel. No atheists. They all believe in God. They believe in the true God. They believe in the Creator God. They know that He made everything. The fact that Jesus can give life is clear evidence that He is, in fact, God.

So, He's praying, in a sense, publically for the benefit of the people, not for the benefit of God, who is already in perfect agreement about what is going to happen. If He hadn't said these words so everybody could hear, the crowd would not have been able to give God and Christ the appropriate glory for this event. They weren't going to be able to attribute this to any other power.

That leads us to the power at the final two verses. "When He had said these things, He cried out." This is a very strong statement. "He cried out with a loud voice." If you were reading this in the original language, it would read like this: "He yelled in a loud voice with a loud voice." Why the double statement? He is literally at the pinnacle of His voice, and He had a powerful voice, you can be certain. He was a teacher. He taught every day. He taught in the open air, no amplification, except that which was natural. He could speak to crowds of 20,000 people and be heard. A powerful voice. I'm convinced that probably was the most melodious voice ever created. How could it be anything less than that. And with that loud, commanding voice, maybe like the voice of many waters in the imagery of Revelation chapter 1, He yells at the top of His voice without distorting His words and says, "Lazarus, come forth."

There's no possibility of attaching this miracle to anything other than His words, right? No possibility

of attaching this miracle to anything other than His will, than the Father's will, than the perfect agreement. Nobody can create. They're creating, in unison. This resurrection comes as an immediate response to His words. He says two words: Lazarus, and come out, and the miracle happens.

Now listen, He had power. He had so much power He could, He will raise all the dead of all the ages. So if He had just said, "Come forth," that might've been the final resurrection. So He had to put a limit on it. "Lazarus. The rest of you, stay where you are."

"Lazarus, you come out." Can you imagine the pounding hearts? Trying to look in the darkness of the tomb? Verse 44. "The man who had died came out." Talk about an understatement. Man, that just needs some fanfare or something. "The man who had died came out." That's so matter-of-fact. That's so simple and straightforward. But this is God, and for Him, a resurrection is easy. The man came out. It wasn't easy for him to come out. When he was hit with life, and created, the power of that creation surged in his body. He was like an athlete who is just catapulted. Because it tells us, he was bound hand and foot with wrappings. Now, how do you come out if you're bound hand and foot with wrappings and your face is wrapped with a cloth? What do you do? Was he hopping? How did he get out of there? He had the power to be where he needed to be. He came out. The grave had been plundered. The king of terrors had yielded up his lawful captive. The insatiable grave had given up its prey.

We could say with the apostle Paul, "O grave, where is your victory? Grave, where is your sting?" Captivity was led captive. Christ stood as the conqueror of sin, death, and Satan. He, Revelation 1:18 says, has the keys to death and Hades. And He unlocked it for this man, and He will one day unlock it for every man, every woman.

As I said, they were wrapped, and so there he comes out, perhaps each leg was wrapped separate so that he could move. And there standing there stunned out of their minds, as this package stands in the door. And He says, "Untie him, and let him go. Loose him. Let him go."

There's no explanation of anything there didn't need to be. It would've been kind of interesting to volunteer for that assignment, just starting to see what's under there, maybe. And again, He used the people to do what people can do after He's done what only He can do. You remember, He created food, but the disciples passed it out. Here, He creates life, but the people do what they can do. He alone can save sinners. But we can roll away the stones to let the truth in. We can unwrap the new believer. No higher privilege this side of heaven than to be used to roll away gravestones and unwrap grave clothes when He gives resurrection life. Incredible privilege for us.

So there He stands. There He stands. Verse 45 says, "Therefore many of the Jews who came to Mary, and saw what He had done, believed in Him." Good, huh? Wonderful. How could you not? They believed. That's the whole point of this.

Ah, some of them, though, "went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done." They reported a resurrection to the Pharisees. Amazing. Let's bow together in prayer.

Father, as we think about this, we're just in awe of the realities that fall upon our minds, that one day we will inherit eternal life in a resurrected, physical, bodily form. Lord, how wonderful to think about

that, that You put on display here what You will do for each of us who love You and know You. You will give us new life. And all of this is because You died. How amazing it must've been for You, our Lord Jesus, there, at the tomb of Lazarus, with Your glory on display, in stunning form. Very soon, to be nailed to a cross, humiliated, rejected, murdered like a common criminal, and even abandoned by Your Father. But You did that so that You could die in our place and rise in our place, to die our death and provide our resurrection. We're so thankful that You have loved us like You loved Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, and You have made us Your family, and You have given us life, and one day, a full resurrection. And all of this is only possible because our sins have been paid for in full by Your death. That is why we remember the cross. It is there that forgiveness was made. Keep us pure. Use us for the events of the gospel. For Your glory we pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

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