

John, Part 33 — The Revelation of Jesus Christ — Lazarus, Come Out!

We have witnessed several notable miracles and healings during the study of John's Gospel. Now we are looking at Jesus' power over life and death. The events of John 11 precede the Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem and His ultimate death and resurrection. Jesus was offering irrefutable evidence of His authority and power to His disciples.

The chapter begins with Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha, being sick unto death. Mary and Martha were convinced it would be simple for Jesus to heal Lazarus. They had evidence of the Lord's power and authority over all manner of disease, so, they sent for Jesus.

John 11:3-6 NKJV Therefore the sisters sent to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick." When Jesus heard that, He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it." Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was.

John 11:11-14 NKJV These things He said, and after that He said to them, "Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up." Then His disciples said, "Lord, if he sleeps he will get well." However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep. Then Jesus said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead.

When they arrived in Bethany, they were told he had been dead four days.

Listen to the conversation between Jesus and Martha.

John 11:21-23 NKJV Now Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

What Jesus was about to do would bring glory to God.

It is apparent that they did not fully understand Jesus' words. We can recover from many severe illnesses and accidents. Sometimes people say, "I'll never get over that." But we do.

Death is hard for all of us to deal with. Death is usually final.

When Jesus first heard of Lazarus' illness, He told His disciples this was going to bring glory to God. (vs. 4)

What would happen would cause the Father to be glorified in His Son. Any miracle or healing should bring glory to God.

What is the glory of God?

The Bible shows special times when the glory of God was revealed.

- God's glory was revealed on Sinai when He came down.
- After Solomon dedicated the temple, a fire came down from heaven and consumed the offering and sacrifice; and the glory of the Lord filled the temple. The priests were not able to enter the Lord's house because of the glory of the Lord.
- John 1:14 tells us the Word became flesh... and we beheld His glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father.
- Throughout the revelation of Jesus Christ, the glory of God was revealed in His birth, life, miracles, resurrection, ascension, and exaltation.

According to 2 Corinthians, the unveiled glory of God has transformative power.

2 Corinthians 3:18 NKJV But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

The glory of God's presence was revealed to Moses. Moses saw the glory of God at the burning bush and later on Sinai. **Exodus 33:22 NIV God told Moses**, "When my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft in the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by."

God's presence is glorious.

Ezekiel saw the Almighty God and the mighty cherubim.

Ezekiel 1:27-28 NIV84 I saw that from what appeared to be his waist up he looked like glowing metal, as if full of fire, and that from there down he looked like fire; and brilliant light surrounded him. Like the appearance of a rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the radiance around him. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. When I saw it, I fell facedown, and I heard the voice of one speaking.

What is the Lord saying?

- **In verse 4, Jesus told His disciples**, "This sickness was not going to result in death, but the glory of God would be revealed."
- **In verse 40, Jesus told Mary and Martha**, "Did I not tell you that if you believed you will see the glory of God?"

Jesus was going to do something that would bring glory to God. God wants to do things in us that will bring glory to God.

What kind of things brings glory to God?

- Christ's power to save... brings glory to God.
- Christ's power to heal... brings glory to God.
- Christ's keeping power... brings glory to God.
- When Christ delivers the oppressed, bound and afflicted... it brings glory to God.
- His power over Satan, sin, sickness, and circumstances brings glory to God.

When His power is revealed in our lives, it shows His glory.

Lazarus' situation appeared hopeless.

- He had been dead four days.
- They did what they could with his body.
- They have prayed, grieved and wept.
- They called family and friends together to grieve and cry.
- He was wrapped in burial cloths and laid in the tomb.
- The tomb had been sealed with a large stone.

These steps appear to be the end of Lazarus' story.

How can God get glory in the midst of trials, sickness, sorrow, disappointments, and brokenness?

Often when we do not know what to do, God does something that brings Him glory.

Go back to the first statements Jesus made to His disciples before they went to Bethany. John 11:4 Jesus said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it."

What they witnessed did not match His Words. Sometimes it is hard to hold on to Jesus' words.

The glory of God was about to be revealed to the believers. When trials are dark on every hand and we cannot understand, we must hold fast to the Word of God.

Now after Jesus arrived on the scene He had a word of faith and power for Martha and Mary.

John 11:40 NIV84 Jesus told Martha, “Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?”

All of God’s promises are reinforced and validated by His own glory.

2 Corinthians 1:20 NIV84 For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ. And so through Him the “Amen” is spoken by us to the glory of God.

All of God’s promises have their answer in Christ and end in the glory of GOD. Think about that. Every promise ends in GLORY to God. Hold on to that with everything that you face.

Jesus told Mary and Martha, “If you believe, you would see the glory of God.”

But Lazarus was dead and buried and the tomb was sealed. Sometimes that is all we see. **Listen to Jesus:** “Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?” (vs. 40)

What glory is in the grave? The grave holds no promise. The grave holds decay and the end of life as we know it.

What is the Lord going to do that will bring glory?

John 11:17–25 NKJV ¹⁷So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days. ¹⁸Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away. ¹⁹And many of the Jews had joined the women around Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. ²⁰Now Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house. ²¹Now Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. ²²But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You.” ²³Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” ²⁴Martha said to Him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.” ²⁵Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live

John 11:32–40 NKJV ³²Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.” ³³Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. ³⁴And He said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to Him, “Lord, come and see.” ³⁵Jesus wept. ³⁶Then the Jews said, “See how He loved him!” ³⁷And some of them said, “Could not this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?” ³⁸Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. ³⁹Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, “Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days.” ⁴⁰Jesus said to her, “Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?”

Christ was watching their faith. Mary and Martha needed to take specific steps of faith. Will they believe and take action? There is a point in time after a traumatic experience when we reconcile ourselves to what has happened. Look at Mary and Martha’s radical faith! Lazarus had been dead four days!

What do you do when the Lord says one thing and your circumstances say something else? What are we to believe?

Our faith must stand in the absolute truth of God’s Word.

John 11:41–43 NIV84 ⁴¹So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. ⁴²I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me.”

⁴³When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!"

God's glory is going to be revealed to believers today. It is never too late for the Lord to do something. Stop looking at circumstances and turn your eyes to the Lord.

If we live by our circumstances, we will be stuck at the tomb.

Our circumstances do not diminish God's truthfulness. He is the same regardless of circumstance. He does not change, even if our faith fails. He is able to raise Lazarus. We may ask the question today: **"Is God still able?"**

All some people see is the grave and the man in the grave. Our faith can be hindered by our story. Mary and Martha knew that Jesus was able to do miracles. Christ's word was the foundation of their faith and action. More than the crisis, they saw Jesus. Christ's words were all that Mary and Martha needed to stand on and take action with.

They were at the tomb and Lazarus was dead. He could have been healed, but Jesus didn't come. Death has taken and held Lazarus.

Now Jesus was challenging their faith. **He said:** "Mary and Martha, take away the stone." What are they to do? Jesus was saying this to challenge their faith in Him and they need to take action.

Martha said: "It has been four days." Four days does not diminish Christ's power.

Then Jesus said: "Did I not say to you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?" They went over to the stone and started rolling it away from the mouth of the tomb.

Then the Lord of life said in a loud voice: "Lazarus, come out." I don't know what happened in that tomb. I don't know if there is a sound of life coming back into the man who was dead. I don't know if he groaned or if he said hallelujah. By the Word of Jesus Christ, Lazarus came back to life and came out of the grave. Death could not hold him, for Christ had spoken. Jesus' words are more powerful than death. We can trust and live on what the Lord says. The Word of the Lord is powerful and active.

Is the Lord of glory still able to do things that seem humanly impossible?

John 11:40 NKJV Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?"

God is revealing His glory to this generation! We have opportunities all around us for the glory of God to be revealed.

What are you facing? All of your impossible situations and challenges are opportunities for His glory to be revealed.

From the beginning, Jesus knew what He would do. He still knows that there is nothing impossible. He will do something in your life that will bring glory to the Father. If you are going through a trial - get ready for God to receive glory in your life. Nothing is too big for our God.