



Metro Calvary – Roseville CA
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The Gospel of John I AM the Resurrection John 11

Related Topics:

As we have been studying John's Gospel — each week I have walked away from our time in this amazing book of the Bible having **learned** so much about Jesus, and **seen** so much more of Jesus than ever before. I have walked away from each chapter saying — *THAT chapter is the most radical, most wonderful, most amazing look at Jesus* — And then we come to the next chapter! And as we walk into that next chapter it's becomes apparent that we haven't even scratched the surface of the glory and grace and love of God that is wrapped up in Jesus.

In **John 10** we were completely undone; overwhelmed and melted by the words of Jesus — *I AM the Good Shepherd; I lay down my life for the sheep; I give them eternal life; They will never perish; No one can snatch them from My hand or hand of My Father; I and the Father are one* — and THEN we come to **John 11** in which we find Jesus declaring ***I AM the Resurrection and the Life*** — and we see Jesus raising a man named Lazarus from the dead.

I can totally identify with the amazement of Paul

*Romans 11:33 Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!
How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!*

I can totally identify with the Paul's sense of unworthiness and privilege —

Ephesians 3:8 To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,

Those riches are so unsearchable and immeasurable that we will be seeing them unfolded for ETERNITY!

Ephesians 2:7 so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

John gives to us the record of seven signs (miracles) performed by Jesus. John refers to these miracles as signs because the miracles were not an end in and of themselves. They were intended to be like signs that point men and women beyond the sign itself to the very person and nature of Jesus.

Jesus performed many more miracles than the seven in John's Gospel. But John handpicked these seven —

John 20:30 Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Changing water into wine at the wedding feast in Cana	2:1–11
Healing the son of a government official	4:46–54
Healing the man who was invalid for 38 years	5:1–15
Feeding 25,000 people with fives loaves and three fish	6:5–13
Walking on the water	6:16–21
Healing the man born blind	9:1–7

In **John 11** we find the 7th and last miracle (sign) recorded by John. John selected this miracle as the 7th because it was the most significant miracle of our Lord's earthly ministry. It elicited the most intense of responses from His friends and from His enemies. He had raised others from the dead, but Lazarus had been in the grave four days. It was a miracle that could not be denied or avoided by the Jewish leaders.

We cannot overstate the significance of this miracle — As we will see in our study of this chapter — the Bible calls death our *“enemy.”* Paul says this about following Jesus — *“If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable’ (1 Corinthians 15:19).* Here in **John 11** we see that Jesus Christ is the absolute victor over the grave.

This chapter is like a precious diamond — there are so many facets to it. By God's grace we will hold the facets of this chapter up to the illuminating person and

power of the Holy Spirit — and let the Him *shine into our hearts the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus.*

The overriding truth of the John 11 is found in **Verse 25** — *Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life.* Around that incredible **I AM** statement of Jesus is a multitude of details — each of them containing a treasure of truth in regards to Jesus. Let’s read through the chapter in its entirety.

¹Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ²It was Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill. ³So the sisters sent to him, saying, “Lord, he whom you love is ill.” ⁴But when Jesus heard it he said, “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.”

⁵Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. ⁶So, when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. ⁷Then after this he said to the disciples, “Let us go to Judea again.” ⁸The disciples said to him, “Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone you, and are you going there again?” ⁹Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. ¹⁰But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.” ¹¹After saying these things, he said to them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him.” ¹²The disciples said to him, “Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover.” ¹³Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he meant taking rest in sleep. ¹⁴Then Jesus told them plainly, “Lazarus has died, ¹⁵and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.” ¹⁶So Thomas, called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with him.”

¹⁷Now when Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in

the tomb four days. ¹⁸Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off, ¹⁹and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother. ²⁰So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, but Mary remained seated in the house. ²¹Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²²But even now I know that whatever you ask from 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 on the last day.” ²⁵Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, ²⁶and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?” ²⁷She said to him, “Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world.”

²⁸When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in private, “The Teacher is here and is calling for you.”

²⁹And when she heard it, she rose quickly and went to him. ³⁰Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha had met him. ³¹When the Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary rise quickly and go out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there. ³²Now when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet, saying to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” ³³When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled. ³⁴And he said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Lord, come and see.”

³⁵Jesus wept. ³⁶So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!” ³⁷But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?”

³⁸Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. ³⁹Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, “Lord, by this time there will be an odor, for he has been dead four days.”

⁴⁰Jesus said to her, “Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?” ⁴¹So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. ⁴²I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me.” ⁴³When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out.” ⁴⁴The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go.”

⁴⁵Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what he did, believed in him, ⁴⁶but some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. ⁴⁷So the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered the Council and said, “What are we to do? For this man performs many signs. ⁴⁸If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.” ⁴⁹But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, “You know nothing at all. ⁵⁰Nor do you understand that it is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish.” ⁵¹He did not say this of his own accord, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, ⁵²and not for the nation only, but also to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad. ⁵³So from that day on they made plans to put him to death.

⁵⁴Jesus therefore no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went from there to the region near the wilderness, to a town called Ephraim, and there he stayed with the disciples.

⁵⁵Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and many went up from the country to Jerusalem before the Passover to purify themselves. ⁵⁶They were looking for Jesus and saying to one another as they stood in the temple, “What do you think? That he will not come to the feast at all?” ⁵⁷Now the chief priests and the

Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where he was, he should let them know, so that they might arrest him.

In the following weeks we are going to walk through these verses from ground level — we will unpack the details of the account like: The village of Bethany and the role it played in the life of Jesus; the friendship that Jesus enjoyed with Mary, Martha and Lazarus; the love of God Incarnate for this family; the apparently odd and delayed response of Jesus to the desperate plea and circumstances of those He loved; death, burial and grieving in the cultural of 1st century Israel; the response of God Incarnate to all of it; and the response of the people to the work of God Incarnate.

But this morning we are going to launch into our study of the chapter by taking a look at it from 30,000 feet. I pray that we will see from that vantage point how the Holy Spirit instructs us about the very nature of salvation.

“Salvation” is one of those words that have tragically fallen into the realm of cliché. While the average church-goer misunderstands or misuses the word “saved,” the unbelieving world resents the word “saved” because it so clearly implies that they might be lost and need to be saved — need a savior!

I believe that one of the reasons the Holy Spirit inspired John to record this miracle was to help us understand that “salvation” is not religious cliché — it is in fact a tremendous spiritual reality that is nothing less than **the giving of life to the dead**.

We believe that every word in the Scriptures is inspired. The Holy Spirit inspired John to use the word “LIFE” thirty-six times in this Gospel! So let’s take our look from 30,000 feet and ask the Lord to write the truth about salvation on the tablets of our hearts in a life altering way — and speak to men and women about the NEED to be saved.

At the heart of the story is the fact that Lazarus was DEAD —

14 Then Jesus told them plainly, “Lazarus has died,

Mankind looks at the state of planet earth and concludes that the planet and humanity is culturally; socially; politically; economically; and ecologically sick. Mankind believes that by way of education and evolution the patient can fully recover.

TRUTH — Outside of Jesus Christ — the whole of mankind — the societies and cultures of mankind — and every individual — are not merely sick needing to get healthy — the whole of it is spiritually dead. It exists but is lifeless.

***Ephesians 2:1-3** And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ²in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.*

***Colossians 2:13 NLT** You were dead because of your sins. . . . Then God made you alive with Christ, for he forgave all our sins.*

God warned Adam that disobedience would bring death

***Genesis 2:15-17** The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. ¹⁶And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, ¹⁷but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”*

Sin brought **Physical Death** into this world — the separation of the soul from the body. Sin brought **Spiritual Death** into this world — the separation of the soul from God. Left unresolved, sin results in Eternal Death. The Book of Revelation calls that ***the second death*** — eternity in hell separated from God.

Lazarus was DEAD! He had expired — breathed his last. He could not be educated out of the grave. There was no philosophy that could get him out of the grave. There was no system of moral conduct that could get him out of the grave. Lazarus needed a resurrection!

When a person is spiritually dead — existing, but separated from the Life of God — no amount of philosophical or religious education; no amount of moral reform can change their condition! They need new life. Like Lazarus — only Jesus Christ can give him/her life.

So — outside of Jesus we are all DEAD. Unlike Miracle Max’s diagnosis of Wesley in the movie Princess Bride (Mostly Dead) — There are no degrees of dead! But there are degrees of decay!

The Gospels tell us that Jesus raised three individuals from the dead. There was the daughter of Jairus — a twelve-year-old girl who had died while Jesus was on His way to her house (**Luke 8:49-56**). There was the only son of a widow in the village of Nain. He had been dead several hours (**Luke 7:11-17**). There was an

amazing moment when two crowds met. One with Jesus in the center of it and the other with a casket in the center of it. LIFE and Death met head on — and Life conquered death.

John tells us that Lazarus was DEAD — AND that he had Decayed

³⁹Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, “Lord, by this time there will be an odor, for he has been dead four days.”

The point is that all three were dead. One person cannot be “more dead” than another. The only difference lay in the degree of decay.

The unsaved — moral church-goer is not “decayed” like the person on skid row, but he is still dead. The great problem with church-goers who profess faith in Jesus is that they measure their salvation in light of the degree of decay rather than by the reality that they were UTTERLY DEAD in sin. The unrepentant — clean-cut — church-going homeschooling family — is as DEAD in sin as someone living in homosexual sin.

That’s why so often the person who was radically decayed when they were saved is so utterly and completely sold out for Jesus. They are aware of just how dead they were when Jesus saved them.

Lazarus was powerless to change his condition. Those who loved him greatly could do nothing to undo his condition — except Jesus!

The only thing Mary, Martha and the friends of Lazarus could do was weep over his death. It was ONLY JESUS who could give life to him. FIRST — We need to recognize that we are powerless to save ourselves. We are powerless to save our friends and loved ones. ONLY JESUS can give life to the lifeless! I wonder — Do we look at the lost world the same way Mary and Martha looked at Lazarus? Are we urgent for and weeping? I wonder — Do we look to Jesus in the same way Mary and Martha looked to Jesus? Do we realize that we MUST see Jesus working to save? THAT is what prayer is! THAT’S why PRAYER is so important. Prayer is crying out to Jesus for a dead and lost world. It is looking to Jesus.

Why did Jesus raise Lazarus from the grave? Because it brought glory to God (**verse 4**). Because Jesus loved him (**verse 5; 36**). **That** is why Jesus has saved us. We **deserve** the penalty of our sin — the wages of sin is death. But because of His great love, He rescued us.

***Ephesians 1:1-14** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. **In love** ⁵he predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. ⁷In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, ¹²so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. ¹³In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.*

***Ephesians 2:1-9** And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ²in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. **But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us,** ⁵even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— ⁶and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹not a result of works, so that no one may boast.*

THIS IS HUGE — Salvation is not a set of rules; it is life! Life that is FOUND only in Jesus — life that is GIVEN by Jesus and RECEIVED by faith. And once again we come to the reality that life really is ALL ABOUT JESUS!

Notice how Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead — By the power of His word. This is the way He raised the daughter of Jairus

***Luke 8:54-55** But taking her by the hand he called, saying, “Child, arise.” ⁵⁵And her spirit returned, and she got up at once.*

This is the way he raised the widow's son

Luke 7:14-15 And he said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." ¹⁵ And the dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother.

THIS is the way Jesus raises us from spiritual death into new Life.

John 5:24-25 Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. ²⁵ "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.

When those who are dead in their sin hear the Word of the Good News and believe, they pass from death to life — they receive life that is eternal in nature because the life of God is poured into them. The **ONLY** way you end up forever dead — forever separated from God — is by **rejecting** that Word.

The resurrected life of Lazarus is also a great picture of New Life in Jesus.

⁴⁴ "The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

FIRST — When Lazarus was brought from death to life He was bound hand and foot. Though he was raised from the dead he could not enjoy the fullness of his new life while still wearing the burial clothes.

The believer is not brought from death to life so that he can remain in bondage — bound by the graveclothes of the old life. He receives new life from Jesus so that he can walk in freedom. Paul would say — *put off the old man* and *put on Christ* (*Ephesians 4:22; Romans 13:14*).

Jesus then did such a beautiful thing — he invited His followers to participate in the resurrected life of Lazarus. Only Jesus could call him forth from the grave — but Jesus asked them play a role in the working out of this man's salvation. There was something that they could do — they could remove the binding garments of the grave. That is one facet of the beauty of the Body of Christ.

SECOND — He was DEAD and then he was made alive. He was walking in the newness of life! That resurrected life became a testimony to Jesus — who IS the Resurrection and the Life.

⁴⁵Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what he did, believed in him

The great crowd that gathered on Palm Sunday came not only because of Jesus, but also because of Lazarus. In **John 12:11** we are told that Lazarus was causing people to trust Christ — just by living and breathing! The same is true of the person who is saved. Our NEW LIFE speaks volumes to the dead world we used to be a part of.

***Romans 6:4** We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.*

Lazarus was a walking miracle! THAT is what every Christian ought to be! THAT is the privilege and responsibility of every man or woman who has been saved!

THIRD — Following his resurrection Lazarus enjoyed fellowship with Jesus.

In **John 12:1-2** we see Lazarus sitting at the table with Christ — feasting and fellowshiping with the one who had raised him from the dead! THAT is the same reality for the man and woman who have been “saved.” Paul wrote of this in his letter to the Christians in Ephesus —

***Ephesians 2:5-6** even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—⁶and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,*

Lazarus was so amazed at the love of Jesus and the mercy of Jesus that he wanted to be with Jesus. The meal in Biblical times was a deep expression of intimacy. Lazarus wanted to be close to the one who had raised him from the grave! He wanted to express his love and gratitude — and wanted to be near to the source of his new life! The man or woman that has been saved wants to be close to the one who saved them! The moment we are saved we receive the gift of eternal life. But that moment is not the end — it is the beginning of eternal life. It is a life lived in fellowship with Jesus — worshipping Him and serving Him and receiving life and instruction from Him. We are to ***GROW in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior.*** When I was dead in sin I went to church because I HAD to. And as soon as I was old enough to make the decision for myself I stopped going to church. But when I got saved I couldn’t wait to go to church. I couldn’t wait to be with Christians. Everywhere I went — everything I did — I did **with** Jesus; did **for** Jesus.

INTERESTING — Mary, Martha and Lazarus give to us a composite picture of the Christian life — Mary is always found at Jesus’ feet, listening to His Word (**Luke 10:38-42; John 11:32; 12:3**). Martha is a picture of service — she was always busy doing something for Jesus. Lazarus is a picture of how **living in** the newness of life speaks to a lost world, and leads others to Christ. These three elements should be a part of our Christian experience: worship (Mary), work (Martha), and walk (Lazarus).

FINALLY — Lazarus — raised from the dead — not only got to be a living testimony to the Resurrection and the Life, and have fellowship with the Resurrection and the life — he also suffered persecution because of his new life. He was hated because his resurrected life convinced others that Jesus IS the Resurrection and the Life!

John 12:10-11 So the chief priests made plans to put Lazarus to death as well, because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and believing in Jesus.

Many of the chief priests were Sadducees who did not believe in the resurrection, and Lazarus was living proof that the Sadducees were wrong. Those who are opposed to Jesus and those opposed to the Gospel will try to do away with anyone whose life proves that Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life! So as the school year ramps up and you live in the newness of life that Jesus has given to you — don’t be surprised if you come under fire!

Remember the account of Jesus delivering a man from demonic possession (**Mark 5**).

Mark 5:15-17 And they came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed man, the one who had had the legion, sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid....¹⁷ And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their region.

Why would they be afraid of the guy in that condition? When the guy was possessed by a legion of demons he was threat to the entire region. But you know what — when you get saved — when you are clothed and in your right mind sitting at the feet of Jesus — you make your unsaved friends afraid! Because your transformed life proves that Jesus is real, that heaven is real, that hell is real! Now they have to make a decision about Jesus.