

Men's Breakfast - Lazarus A Man Who Died Twice!

1. If you could raise one person from the dead, who would it be? Why?
2. In what different ways do people respond when a loved one dies?
3. Think of a time in your life when a bad experience turned out for good. How did that affect you?

John 11:17-44 ¹⁷ When Jesus arrived, he learned that Lazarus had already been dead and in the tomb for four days. ¹⁸ Bethany was about two miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁹ Many of the Jews had come there to comfort Martha and Mary about their brother.

²⁰ When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed home. ²¹ Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²² But I know that even now God will give you anything you ask."

²³ Jesus said, "Your brother will rise and live again."

²⁴ Martha answered, "I know that he will rise and live again in the resurrection^a on the last day."

²⁵ Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me will have life even if they die. ²⁶ And everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Martha, do you believe this?"

²⁷ Martha answered, "Yes, Lord. I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the One coming to the world."

Jesus Cries

²⁸ After Martha said this, she went back and talked to her sister Mary alone. Martha said, "The Teacher is here and he is asking for you." ²⁹ When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to Jesus. ³⁰ Jesus had not yet come into the town but was still at the place where Martha had met him. ³¹ The Jews were with Mary in the house, comforting her. When they saw her stand and leave quickly, they followed her, thinking she was going to the tomb to cry there. ³² But Mary went to the place where Jesus was. When she saw him, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."

³³ When Jesus saw Mary crying and the Jews who came with her also crying, he was upset and was deeply troubled. ³⁴ He asked, "Where did you bury him?"

"Come and see, Lord," they said.

³⁵ Jesus cried.

³⁶ So the Jews said, "See how much he loved him."

³⁷ But some of them said, "If Jesus opened the eyes of the blind man, why couldn't he keep Lazarus from dying?"

Jesus Raises Lazarus

³⁸ Again feeling very upset, Jesus came to the tomb. It was a cave with a large stone covering the entrance. ³⁹ Jesus said, "Move the stone away."

Martha, the sister of the dead man, said, "But, Lord, it has been four days since he died. There will be a bad smell."

⁴⁰ Then Jesus said to her, "Didn't I tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?"

⁴¹ So they moved the stone away from the entrance. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you heard me. ⁴² I know that you always hear me, but I said these things because of the people here around me. I want them to believe that you sent me."

⁴³ After Jesus said this, he cried out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" ⁴⁴ The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with pieces of cloth, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, "Take the cloth off of him and let him go."



Discussion: There was a Jewish belief that the soul stays near the grave for three days, hoping to be able to return to the body. But on the fourth day it sees decomposition setting in and leaves it finally. This event marks the last and greatest miracle or sign performed by Jesus recorded in John. This is a turning point. Events after this lead to the cross and resurrection.

1. How would you have felt if you were Mary or Martha and you heard that Jesus was about to arrive?

- a. despondent - It's too late.
- b. angry-It's about time!
- c. consoled - Better late than never.
- d. hopeful - With Jesus, it's never too late.

2. What do you learn about Martha from the way she talks with Jesus in verses 21-27?

3. How did Martha misunderstand Jesus? V24

4. How does Jesus stretch her faith by his claim in verse 25?

5. What does Martha's statement (v. 27) sound like to you: (a) Stab in the dark? (b) Hope against hope? (c) Intellectual assent? (d) Active commitment? Why do you think so?

6. How did Martha's response demonstrate both faith and a lack of faith?

What lessons can we learn from Martha's example?

7. How is Mary's greeting (v. 32) like and unlike Martha's?

8. Since Jesus knew he was going to raise Lazarus (11:11), how do you account for his weeping (w. 33-35)?

9. What questions did some people have about what Jesus could have done? V 37

10. If you had been there and saw Jesus crying, how would you have felt?

- a. embarrassed for him - Grown men don't cry.
- b. relieved - It's okay to cry.
- c. mad - He could have prevented this and now all he can do is bawl.
- d. inspired - He really cared.

11. How does Martha's objection in verse 39 contrast with her statement in verse 22?

12. Why did Jesus call Lazarus out by name?

13. Why did Jesus have to call Lazarus out by name?

John 10:9 (NIV) 9 I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture.

Matthew 9:36 (NIV) 36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

Matthew 11:28-30 (NIV) 28 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Romans 12:15 (NIV) 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.

2 Corinthians 1:3-7 (NIV) 3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. 5 For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows. 6 If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer. 7 And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort.

John 5:24-25 (NIV) 24 "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life. 25 I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV) 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

Hebrews 4:15 (NIV) 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are--yet was without sin.

REFLECTION:

1. What means the most to you concerning your future?

- Jesus' promise that believers will "never die"
- Jesus' words, "I am the resurrection and the life"
- the anticipation of seeing Jesus after I die
- the anticipation of seeing my loved ones in heaven

2. How does this story bring hope to your grief and loss?

3. How do Jesus' words and actions in this passage comfort you?

4. Have you seen God use pain to draw a person closer to him? Explain.

5. How has God helped you during a sad or disappointing time?

6. Why is it important to let Christ help you through painful times?

7. How can you share the pain of others who suffer?

8. Have you ever attended a funeral where there was no sense of eternal life, as in verses 25-26? How did you go away from that experience? What difference does this hope make for you?

9. How does Jesus' response to Lazarus' death and Mary's weeping (v. 35) help you to trust him more?

10. On a scale of 1 (none) to 10 (completely) how confident are you that you will live eternally? What evidence is there supporting your level of confidence? How would you live your life differently if you were more confident? 5. What are some "old grave clothes" that still must be shed for you to feel truly free in Christ?

The stark reality is that every person has to die. Many look at death with a sense of fear: "What lies ahead? . . . Is this life all there is?" Sometimes we react by holding on to this life, afraid to lose it and afraid to face the next. But the message of Jesus Christ is hope. Though we die, we will be raised again and live forever with Christ. He is preparing a place for us in heaven and coming back for us. Instead of fearing death, we can live with confidence. Our confidence is in his promise and in his demonstration of power over death. Knowing he is able to raise the dead and that he experienced death himself, we can take comfort in knowing he understands our deepest fears.



Father, thank you for caring about our pain and disappointments. Calm the whirling winds of fear and hurt that threaten our faith. Keep us from trying to cope with our struggles by our own strength and willpower. Help us to release our emotions to you and trust you to sustain us. Thank you for your comforting words of wisdom. Let us receive the healing of the Holy Spirit.

