

## Unbind Him, and Let Him Go John 11:1-46

Story of the death and resurrection of Lazarus.

Mary, Martha and Lazarus were good friends of Jesus. They lived in Bethany just 3-4 km from Jerusalem. Jesus often stayed at their house: Luke 10:38-42

Lazarus got sick, so they sent a messenger to find Jesus. He was somewhere “beyond the Jordan” where he was ministering to many people (Jn 10:42). The messenger arrives and tells Jesus that Lazarus was ill.

--what do you suppose Mary & Martha’s expectations were? Behind their statements about Lazarus’ illness were unspoken expectations. They expected Jesus to drop what he was doing and rush to them.

--what kind of expectations do we put on others and do others put on us?

The Bible records:

- What Jesus said:
  - This sickness will not end in death (vs. 4)
  - Lazarus is dead (vs. 14)
- What Jesus felt:
  - Jesus loved Mary, Martha and Lazarus (vs. 5)
- What Jesus did:
  - Remained there two more days (vs. 6)

A. What would be our reaction? Rush home? Panic?

God is not panicked by our problems; He sees the end from the beginning.

What did Jesus do? Only what He saw his Father do (Jn 9:4) He waited then acted. Jesus waited on His Father to give Him instructions before He acted.

B. Bad things happen that should not happen

When Jesus arrived in Bethany he found a sad situation-mourning, weeping, pain

Bad things happen to us. Parents and loved ones fail us; sometimes worse

We feel pain in our soul, and soul pain is worse than physical pain. Our souls will do almost anything to avoid pain: we adopt attitudes, patterns of behavior, modes of thinking in order to avoid soul pain. Let God

→Remember a hurt you have experienced. We need to face the pain. As long as you continue to hide the hurts and cover them over they will not be healed.

→Reveal the effects and bondage. We are **not** responsible for the things that happened to us, and we must never take that responsibility on ourselves. However, we are responsible for our reaction and for our building of strongholds to protect ourselves. In God’s timing, if we are willing to accept the responsibility, He will reveal our hurts to us.

→Repent and be healed. Repenting and facing the pain is a form of grieving. Listen to what Paul wrote in II Cor 7:9-10:

*I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful (also means grieved), but that you were made sorrowful to the point of repentance; for you were made sorrowful (or you grieved) according to the will of God, in order that you might not suffer loss in anything through us. For the sorrow (grieving) that is according to the will of God produces a repentance **without regret**, leading to **salvation** (Gk-sozo, or healing of the whole person and life); but the sorrow of the world produces death.*

C. Disappointments and unmet needs

Lazarus had died, and God had not shown up. Where was He? Why?

“Lord if you had been here my brother would not have died.”-can you hear the pain of disappointment?

- Blame shifting: it’s your fault, God
- Loss of hope
  - Remember a major disappointment
  - Reveal the effects and bondage

We struggle with unhealed hurts and unmet needs, but we struggle in the flesh (II Cor 10:3). The problem is not with God, the problem is our flesh.

D. God wants to bring a miracle; He wants to reveal His glory (vs. 4). There are obstacles to be removed. Lazarus is in the grave.

- A stone over the tomb: these are strongholds in our lives and other people.
- He is totally wrapped head to toe in burial clothes: bondages; he cannot move or get free.
- A burial napkin was placed over his face: he is blinded; yokes—he cannot see the truth.

E. Jesus calls to Lazarus with a loud voice. Lazarus was bound and blind, he could not move. Yet somehow he (we) still had to respond.

- We must make a decision. It does not matter how bound we are or how hopeless the situation seems: Rev 3:20—we must open the door.
- We need to get desperate; all we need to do is to move toward the voice one step at a time. It was a struggle for Lazarus
- We must face the pain. We need to experience death of the flesh (I Pet 4:1)

F. “Unbind him and let him go.” Jesus commanded the people who were standing there to:

- Move the stone
- Unwrap the grave clothes

He used the people as a part of the manifestation of his glory.

- Jesus brings others into our lives to minister to us. We do not function on our own. We must let others minister to us. There are some things we cannot do or see that others can: James 5:13-16
- Jesus involves us in ministering to others. We must be ready to be involved in ministering to others: Phil 2:4;2:20; Gal 6:1