



"And this is the commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also." 1 John 4: 21

Sunday – August 30, 2020

To Know Christ...

There are at least seven resurrection events in the Scriptures. They are all marvelous and wonderful. There will someday be a resurrection that you personally will experience. This is either exciting, scary, or the great unknown. Do you ever consider what promises have been made that will endure throughout eternity?

In John chapter 11, the Spirit of God shares the situation when Jesus has a beloved friend who had died. Jesus says to His disciples, "**Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I go, so that I may awaken him out of sleep.**" (v11) The disciples take this to mean a literal sleep, but Jesus was speaking of Lazarus' death. Jesus could not say it more clearly in verse 14, "**Lazarus is dead.**"

When Jesus arrives at the tomb, one of Lazarus' sisters is hesitant to remove the stone that covers the entrance to the cave tomb where her brother has been buried. Lazarus' body has been decaying for four days now. She even warns Jesus, "**there will be a stench.**" Jesus had already commanded them, "**Remove the stone.**" Then He encourages them again. (If you want to see the Lord's hand at work, then follow His commands. Then listen and watch!) Jesus then cries out with a loud voice ... "**Lazarus, come forth.**" Listen to verse 44, "**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.'**" Raising the dead was as easy for Jesus, as it is for us to awake someone from a nap (think about v11 again). Now that is POWER over DEATH! Can you imagine those of the group who followed Jesus' command to unbind Lazarus? What would that experience have been like? Knowing Lazarus had been dead four days, would you believe?

There is no promise that we will all be called by name at our resurrection, but there is a promise of a resurrection to all after the earth is consumed; the believer as well as the unbeliever. Look at John chapter 5 verses 28-29, "**Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which**

all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment." Did you catch that? EVERYONE will be raised from the dead, the good and the evil. Everyone is coming back from the grave; however (as Jesus said in Matthew 7:12-14) there will only be a few who find the way to life, and there will be many who are raised to judgement (destruction). Now listen to Jesus (John 5:24), "**Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.**" Notice it is an ongoing action of "hears" and "believes". Whatever we hear from Jesus, we faithfully respond to act upon while here on earth because we know there is an eternal resurrection coming. That is how we pass out of death into life, responding to Jesus' word: Baptism for the forgiveness of sins, joy in trials, faith in adversity, forgiving when offended, loving our enemies and showing grace when wronged (to name a few).

What is our motive in seeking to fulfill the Scriptures in our life ... the resurrection of the dead, passing out of death into life? When we hear His voice, to respond now, so that when He calls us from the tomb, there will be the promise of the resurrection of life, because our deeds are imitating our Savior, the Life Giver, the one whom death could not hold. We will all listen then, but will we listen now? Even when we think it is difficult or hard? Eternity hangs in the balance!

- Carey Terry