



Jesus' Last and Greatest Miracle, Part 2

Pastor Jon Duncan

Kick Start:

What was the most memorable verse or thought from Sunday's message?

Main Point:

For those sitting on the fence about Jesus or simply going through the motions of faith, today is the moment — examine your heart, claim Jesus not just as a miracle-worker but as your Lord and Savior, and let his unfathomable love for you be the reason you finally surrender everything to Him.

Summary:

The greatest miracle meant to prove everything still wasn't enough to change some hearts! But for others the raising of Lazarus resulted in a greater faith among them. Martha affirms her faith and discovers that the resurrection is not an event, it's a person—Jesus the Author of life. Mary fell weeping at His feet, discovering a Savior that didn't wait at a comfortable distance from grief — He absorbed it, carried it, and wept in the middle of it, out of indignation for a fallen world entangled in sin-caused sorrow and death. Even as the religious leaders rejected Jesus and plotted His death in response to this miracle, Jesus moved forward in love, becoming the very sacrifice Caiaphas unknowingly prophesied.

Message Outline:

I. Martha's Grief and Confession of Faith

Jesus tells Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he dies, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die." Martha was focused on the future resurrection "on the last day," but Jesus redirected her to Himself — reminding her that eternal life isn't just something that happens later, it's found in knowing Him now. Jesus keeps turning "whats" into "whos"— shifting our focus from future events to a present relationship with Him.

John 11:17-27

Talk About It:

1. What does Martha's response to Jesus tell us about her faith?
2. What do you think is the difference between hoping in a future event, like heaven or the resurrection, and hoping in a person, Jesus Himself?
3. In your own life, do you find yourself more focused on what God will do someday, or on who He is to you right now? What might it look like to shift that focus?

II. Mary's Grief and Shared Lament

Martha then calls her sister Mary, who comes to Jesus with the same words: "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." While Martha engaged Jesus in dialogue, Mary falls at his feet in raw lament. Their different approaches reflect different personalities, but both express deep sorrow. When He saw her weeping "Jesus wept." Although one of the shortest verses in the Bible, it carries enormous weight. This was not Jesus getting swept up in the emotion of a crowd, but a genuine, deep expression of grief — the response of someone who loves fully, feels pain deeply and is angry at sin and death itself.

John 11:28-37

Talk About It:

4. When you're going through something painful or confusing, does it comfort you to know that Jesus is not distant or unmoved by your suffering? Why or why not, and what makes that easy or hard to believe?
5. Have you ever been in a season where you felt like God didn't care about what you were going through? How does the image of Jesus weeping at the tomb speak to that feeling?
6. How does it change the way you view Jesus to know that He wasn't just sad at Lazarus's tomb, but also angry at the brokenness sin causes?

III. Lazarus: A Foretaste of What is to Come

Arriving late, Jesus put on a public, supernatural display, validating his messianic identity and sparking faith in many people. His late arrival resulted in temporary grief, but produced tremendous spiritual impact and brought God greater glory. The raising of Lazarus is a picture of salvation. It's not simply about one man returning to life but about God's glory being revealed so that many might trust in Jesus and take part in the everlasting resurrection and live forever.

John 11:38-44

Talk About It:

7. How does Jesus' prayer in John 11:42 demonstrate His relationship with the Father, and what can we learn from this about our own prayer life?
8. Lazarus being called out of the grave is a picture of us spiritually dead before Christ called us to life. Just as Lazarus couldn't raise himself, we can't save ourselves. What does it mean to you that your spiritual life began because Jesus called you, not because you figured it out on your own?
9. Thinking about your own faith journey, what was the moment — or season — when you first sensed Jesus "calling" you? How has understanding salvation as something He initiates changed (or could change) the way you relate to Him?

IV. The Plot to Kill Jesus

Even after witnessing the miraculous raising of Lazarus, the religious leaders chose to reject Jesus and began plotting to have Him killed — not because they didn't believe the miracle happened, but because they were afraid of losing their power and position. They even used the word “signs” — the very word they associated with the coming Messiah — yet still chose rejection.

John 11:45-57

Talk About It:

1. What does this tell us about how people can see clear evidence of who Jesus is and still walk away?
2. Heart Question: Is there any area of your own life where you sense Jesus asking for more than you've been willing to give? What would it look like to surrender that to Him?
3. Heart Question: 2 Corinthians 13:5 challenges us to examine ourselves to see if your faith is genuine. What does your life really say about what you believe about Jesus?

Make It Practical:

It's Time for a Resurrection

By Tony Evans

When you go to a restaurant, someone will give you a written description of what they have to offer. You can read the menu for yourself. Sometimes you may salivate just scanning the menu because it looks so good. But you won't be satisfied to leave the restaurant after merely reading the menu because you don't go to a restaurant just to read.

When a waiter comes to your table, he will likely proclaim parts of the menu to you. He will walk through and exegete it for you. The waiter will tell you what different terms mean and how stuff is made. He may even give you his personal opinion about what he likes to eat. But you will not be satisfied by his words because no one goes to a restaurant to hear somebody else preach about it.

You go to a restaurant to taste and experience what it has in store for you. Therefore, you will not be satisfied until you have partaken of all it has to offer you, until you have tasted it fully.

God longs for us to taste what he offers. He wants us to experience that he is the great “I AM” (Ex 3:14). Reading about him is good. Hearing about him is good. But if you leave this life without having deeply experienced God, then you may have known a nice truth from a distance, but you will never have known all that he can do for you. You will never know the power of hearing God say (like he did in John 11:43 when he called Lazarus from the grave), “Career, come forth. Marriage, come forth. Health, come forth. Relationship, come forth. Hope, come forth. Future, come forth. Family, come forth. Finances, come forth. Joy, come forth. Peace, come forth. Significance, come forth.”

Whatever is dying in your life can be called forth. Jesus can call even dead things to life. And when he does, you won't need somebody else to tell you how good God is because you will have experienced him for yourself. You won't need somebody else to tell you how great God can be because you will have seen him for yourself.

God longs to be more than just theology on a shelf. He wants to be real to you right now. To accomplish this, sometimes he allows us to get, or even puts us, between a rock and a hard place. He lets something die for the express purpose of letting us experience a resurrection. Because God knows that when we see him for who he really is, we will never see life the same way again.

Prayer Points:

- Pray that we would truly understand the depth of Jesus' love for us and allow it to transform our daily lives.
- Ask God to help us live in the reality of being spiritually alive, focusing on the "who" of our faith rather than the "what."
- Seek guidance and opportunities to share the good news of Jesus' gift of salvation with those around us.
- Request strength to face the week with the assurance that God has already won the battle over our struggles.
- Pray for the needs of the group.