NOTES ON JOHN 11:32-44

AUDITORIUM LESSON, SUNDAY MORNING
Glasgow, Kentucky, November 12, 1967

INTRODUCTION: The narrative of the raising of Lazarus is unique in its completeness. Four scenes are to be distinguished. They are:

1. The prelude to the miracle, Verses 1-16.
2. The scene at Bethany, Verses 17-32.
3. The miracle, Verses 33-44.
4. The immediate issues of the miracle, Verses 45-57.

As a background for a better understanding of the lesson had in mind fortoday, it would be good, I think for us to have a look at the family involved: There are three members in the family and they are:

1. Lazarus: He was stricken with a mortal disease. It may have been a fever so common to that country.
2. Mary: "It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair." John 11:2
   Of her Jesus said,
   1. "Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial for her. Matt.26:13; Mark 14:9. Of her Jesus also said,
   2. "She hath done what she could." Mark 14:8
3. Martha: Martha evidently had the chief care of the home in Bethany, John 12:2.
   1. Jesus had come to their home and "Martha was cumbered with much serving." Luke 10:40
   2. Martha complained of Mary to Jesus, "dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me." Luke 10:40
   3. A word picture of ourselves today: "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her." Luke 10:41-42

There are many wonderful lessons to be gathered from the story of the death of Lazarus. In this lesson I have selected three topics that come to light in reading this woderful story of life, death, and life after death. The topices are:

1. JESUS WEPT. Under this we consider:
   1. The occasion of Christ's tears.
      1. The personal sorrow for the death of his friend Lazarus.
         1. Some justification in the statement of the Jews when they said, "Behold how he loved him!" Verse 36
      2. There was his sympathy for the grief of the bereaved sisters.
         1. His affection for the deceased as well as for the sisters. Rom.12:15
      3. His consciousness of the power of sin.
         1. It was sin which brought death into the world with all its woes.
   2. Significant lessons from Christ's tears.
      1. They assure us that we have in him a feeling Friend. Heb. 4:15
      2. They teach us a lesson of sympathy, that "we should weep with those that weep." Rom. 12:15
      3. By contrast they remind us of that state where "all tears shall be wiped away from all faces." Rev. 8:17; 21:4.
      4. He wept when he came near the city: Not until then. Verses 33-35
         1. If we will not come near the miseries of our brethren we will never weep over them.

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(Auditorium Class, Glasgow, Kentucky. Sunday November 12, 1967)

1. TAKE YE AWAY THE STONE. John 11:39, 41. We are to remove the stones of:

   1. Indifference. How is indifference produced?
      1. By the engrossing work of life. Seeking material things first.
   2. Ignorance.
      1. We roll this stome away by imparting Bible knoweldge, compelete Bible knowledge to the passersby.
   3. Scepticism. Disturbing doubt.
      1. Lord don't take that stone away, he has been dead four days and by this time he stinketh. John 11:39
      2. Two courses open to doubters:
         1. They may open their minds to their friends who will teach them God's truth,thus removing the stone of doubt. Or,
         2. Their friends may do as many do, treat them as lepers, leaving them with their doubts, and a stone is placed over both.

2. LOOSE HIM, AND LET HIM GO. John 11:44 Why do this?

   1. The grave clothes belonged to a life left behind.
      1. Many professing a new life still walking around in the old grave clothes.
      2. Raised from the dead (spiritually) they must walk a new life, (Romans 6:3,4).

   2. His every movement would be restricted by the grave-clothes.
      1. Men converted, especially those converted late in life, often find themselves hindered by the "grave-clothes" of old habits.

   3. Why should we do this?
      1. The Lord has bidden us to do so. "Loose him, and let him go" addressed to the people.
      2. As a body is prepared for burial, we may have helped to bind these "grave-clothes" upon him.
      3. By our coldness of unbelief we may help to keep the "grave-clothes" upon him.

   4. "Loose him, and let him go," Suggests the following lessons.
      1. Faith cannot reach the corpse unless willing hands roll away the stone.
      2. So, FAITH believes that Christ can rasie the dead. OBEDIENT FAITH rolls away the stone. EXPECTANT FAITH looks into the darkness, and REJOICING FAITH takes off the graveclothes.

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