## 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, <u>Verses 33<sup>±</sup>44</u>. 4. The immediate issues of the miracle, <u>Verses 45-57</u>.

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. Neb. 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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JESS HALL, MINISTER

100 MAPLEWOOD PLACE GLASGOW, KENTUCKY

RESIDENCE: 651-5409 CHURCH: 651-5001

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Sunday

- 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" uupon 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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JESS HALL, MINISTER 100 MAPLEWOOD PLACE GLASGOW, KENTUCKY

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