

K-029 Resurrection

by Art Katz

The resurrection is a living reality that transforms our lives, giving us hope and confidence in the face of death and suffering, and reminding us of God's power and love.

Duration: 59:15

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 10:27, John 11:21, John 11:25, John 11:35, John 11:38, John 11:41

Topics: "Resurrection"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares a story about a woman who was struggling in life and seeking salvation. He describes her physical appearance and emotional state, highlighting her desperation. The preacher then transitions to discussing the human tendency to be drawn to emotional experiences, particularly in times of mourning. He questions the significance of death and the excessive grief that often accompanies it. The preacher also shares a personal experience of feeling sadness and unease before a speaking engagement, but witnessing a powerful transformation in the audience after delivering a challenging message. He concludes by stating that sickness and death can ultimately serve to bring glory to God.

Transcript

I've really been looking to the Lord for the perfect choice concluding word, and He's not given it to me with a ringing certitude, and kept me suspended in the evening hours as I looked to Him for this, but I think this is it. I was just musing as I was sitting in a chair, My Lord, I thank You, Lord, for speaking anything through this ignorant man. I just marveled at my ignorance and my ineptitude.

You would be stunned if you ever really knew the extent of it. Great, glaring gaps in my theological understanding. I don't think I could put two doctrines together.

I was a lot more clever as an atheist than I am as a believer. God has controverted the whole character of my life. Would never dream ever to have entered a high school classroom without being prepared to the teeth.

Charts, diagrams, questions, preparations yea long. A real student, a real scholar, a real studier, a real preparer, and now everything has just been turned topsy-turvy. Of the moment, in weakness, in ineptness, in ignorance, believe in God.

I hope you're not tired of that, and I hope you're not thinking that this is just my little pat way of beginning a message. But you've got to be persuaded and convinced about the resurrection of Christ, that we might all come with one voice to say with our brother Paul, For me to live is Christ. And if we compliment him one more time, and think that it was his Jewish ingenuity, his natural courage, his endowments of brilliance, or any such thing that accounts for half the New Testament, or the establishing of the church in the ancient world, or countering Jews in the synagogues, we have wholly missed the glory of God.

He was a man who eminently counted all things as dung. He meant all things. He meant every natural endowment.

He meant his brilliance, his intelligence, his rabbinical upbringing, his all. I want you to turn with me to John the 11th chapter, a little episode which I have not begun to understand till now. I think God is reserving some of these episodes till now.

John the 11th chapter, reading from the Amplified. Now a certain man named Lazarus was ill. He was of Bethany, the village where Mary and her sister Martha lived.

This Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair. It was her brother Lazarus who was now sick. So the sister sent to him, saying, Lord, he whom you love so well is sick.

When Jesus received the message, he said, This sickness is not to end in death, but on the contrary, it is to honor God and to promote his glory, that the Son of God may be glorified through it. Hallelujah. When we sang tonight, To God be the glory, I could barely contain myself.

This sickness is not to end in death, but on the contrary, it is to honor God and to promote his glory, that the Son of God may be glorified through it. Let's pray together. Precious Holy God, this weakness, this ineptness, and this ignorance, precious Lord, this zero, null, nothing, may it be to promote the glory of God and to honor the Son.

May everything, precious God, that comes out of our mouths and from our hands and bodies and lives be only to promote the honor and the glory of God. Bless, precious God, now the breaking of this word. Be yourself the expositor, precious God.

And by your great spirit, teach us the eternal, powerful, central truth of resurrection, that we might live by it to promote the glory of God. Seal now this final speaking according to your own pleasure and will. To God be the glory.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

They were his dear friends and he held them in loving esteem. Therefore, even when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he still stayed two days longer in the same place where he was. To steal a phrase from my wife, how do you like them apples? How many of us facing the same situation, a dearly beloved friend, sick unto death? Therefore, because he is dearly beloved, we would remain two days longer where we are.

I'll tell you, children, that it contradicts every evangelical rule. It staggers the mind even of unbelieving mankind. It has not a shred of anything that resembles normal kindness and humane consideration.

It contradicts, it boggles the mind of the world and it must have astounded also the disciples of Christ. Therefore, he stayed two days longer where he was because he loved her. I wonder how many of us would have been Johnny on the spot.

Aren't we always? There's a need, bang, we're there to meet it. Ready to lay on hands, ready to pray, a storm. We will not tolerate sickness for a moment.

We know our kingdom rights, right? Right. I told your brother Bob that he doesn't have much tolerance for mystery. He's precious, sound, absolutely fundamental and right on.

I've never heard a thing from his mouth that could ever be questioned. I approve of this life entirely. In fact, I just might as well interject so long as I'm on the subject that God has really done something in my heart in this short time here, in this trip.

I really feel an enormous bond, a real welding together. I think it's more than the kind of thing that an occasional speaker feels passing through. You've learned to accept my peculiarity and I've learned to love and admire, deeply esteem what God is working in you.

And I think that we need each other in the wisdom of God and somehow I think he's going to use us together for purposes that lie ahead. Hallelujah. But I'm the one who has a real love for mystery.

I love the word, mmm, yummy. This guy's all nuts and bolts, right on. Hallelujah, we need it.

But I'll tell you there are times and there shall be increasingly such times in the days ahead when God may surprise us all. He just may pull a little something that is not in the evangelical rule book. It just may seem even to contradict his word and his way but of course nothing ultimately contradicts it.

We're going to glimpse things, children, that are going to stagger us and I'll pray that in the body God will have sown here and there those who have a reverence and a hush and a certain kind of peculiar affinity for the mysteries of God, the peculiar, unusual, unconventional dealings. I think that the greatest glories are going to come from that. We certainly need deeply to be grounded in the basic truths of God, know and appreciate and stand upon our kingdom rights.

But I'll tell you that there shall be certain sicknesses coming that are not to be prayed for that shall promote the glory of God. I hope Bob won't be around when they surface. He would have been the first to rush and lay on hands and demand.

Children, you know what we're describing here? In this high priest, above all high priests, what perfect and impeccable obedience to God the Father means. How would you like to know that within a stone's throw, within reach, is one lying on a sick bed, saturating the sheets with his sweat, his moans and groans permeate the air, his face has a pallor nigh unto death. To be sick is a wretched condition.

It is utterly and totally discouraging. It's a form of very death itself and if it is carried to its ultimate logic, it is death. We know what it means to have a sick headache.

You're dying! What would you say then if you knew that there was a friend languishing in this condition and he was within access and reach, barely crossed the river and you did not go to help him. You remained yet two days longer where you are and you allowed your friend to languish unto death. Some friend, huh? The scripture doesn't say it but I have a little sneaky suspicion of the kinds of thoughts that

must have coursed through the minds of Jesus' disciples.

Maybe there were a few murmurs and whispers and a few looks, one to the other, that they could read. Hey, if the master goes now to Bethany, he's had it. Man, he came within inches of getting stoned the last time and if he goes this time, he's a dead duck.

No wonder he's remaining two days longer where he is. Chicken. Moral coward.

Preserving his own skin and allowing his friend to die. You know what priesthood means, children, in the last analysis? Impeccable and unswerving obedience to God. Not only when the world shall not understand you but even God's people.

And not God's people only, general rank and file, but the most intimate, close, trusted, dear and esteemed friends. Except there's a man who'll stand at the Lord's side and put his sword on his side and go in and out of the camp and slay everyone, his neighbor and his friend and his brother. He's not yet God's consecrated priest.

Jesus had to run the risk of wholly offending, if not alienating, men in whom he had invested three and a half years of his life. They may have been totally disappointed in what seemed to them the moral cowardice of their master but he didn't offer them a shred of explanation and he didn't give it to Lazarus either. I can just see when Mary and Martha came into that sick room to look at this man writhing in his discomfort, hot and cold spells, the stamp of death already on his person, looking up at them with expectancy, have the master come? Making their little excuses and under their breath and snorting and trying somehow to pacify him.

Well, we've told him that the message has gone out. He'll be here momentarily hanging on to a thin thread of hope as death approaches. Expiring, gasping, sucking for air and the master never arrived.

Jesus allowed him to die without an explanation. He was a friend of Lazarus and he loved him dearly. You know what I suspect? That it worked both ways and Lazarus was a friend of Jesus and he loved him dearly.

And what do the scriptures say about a friend? What love is willing to lay down your life for a friend? I wonder if Lazarus died in a terribly agitated condition. I wonder if he groaned and moaned and excruciated and beat his chest and cried out to a God who had forsaken him and a friend who had forsaken him. I wonder if he died at rest.

Interesting when they finally left and went in the direction of Bethany after that interval in the perfect timing of God. Perfect. I wonder if they understood what Jesus meant when he said in the 11th verse, Our friend Lazarus is at rest and sleeping but I am going there that I may awaken him out of his sleep.

I guess a friend of Jesus in the last analysis is one who can die without explanation. I'll tell you that God is doing less and less explaining for me. More and more inexplicable dealings of God.

Half the time this afternoon spent with Bob was a discussion of why we are in Minnesota, what we're doing there. It seems illogical and unrelated to my calling and try as I could, I don't know how well I communicated what I thought God's purposes were. And I'll tell you it's only recently that I have first begun to glimmer what are the purposes of God in our being there and it is now almost a year.

My wife has bucked like a bronco leaving her 17-room house in New Jersey. Her bric-a-brac and all the things that she loves and are dear to her feminine heart. Those in the ministries to the Jews have given us dirty looks and there's a little underground murmur going around that Katz has copped out and has left from where the action is and playing Boy Scout games in the sticks and God has not given me explanation.

And I'll tell you what children, I'm expecting in the end times that we should not expect explanation. I can't think of a condition where devoutly to be desired so to love Jesus, so to be his friend that we could languish and be sick and be tried unto death without an explanation and still be at rest sleeping. Jesus said, for your sake I'm glad that I was not there in the 15th verse.

It will help you to believe, to trust and rely on me. However, let us go to him. And as they came in the 21st verse, Martha said to Jesus as he approached the town of Bethany, she came running, if you had been here my brother would not have died and even now I know that whatever you ask from God he will grant it to you.

And Jesus said, your brother shall rise again and Martha replied, I know that he will rise again at the resurrection on the last day. Jesus said to her, I am myself the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes and adheres to and trusts and relies on me, although he may die, yet shall he live.

And whoever continues to live and believes, has faith in and cleaves to and relies on me, shall never actually die at all. Do you believe this? It might be a question that the same Lord should also address to us because so many of us are like Martha's. We don't even wait for him to come, we're running to meet him halfway.

And the first words out of our mouth, although it seems a question, is really an accusation and an insinuation. If you had been here, my brother would not have died. Don't you believe in the resurrection? Sure I believe in the resurrection on the last day.

Pert, right, correct, full of right on doctrine. But I tell you children, that there's believing and believing. There may come a moment in our lives that parallels something that saints like Richard Wurmbrandt and others have experienced.

Prison camps, solitary confinement, torture, psychological and physical, where a man who was once a theologian and had written books on doctrine, in the midst of his duress, could not remember a single doctrine, couldn't quote a single scripture, forgot every hymn that had ever been sung, and clung to his sanity by the thinnest strand of connection to the living God. You believe that man could be brought to such a condition? I can't think of anything that has been made a greater mock than faith itself. Every great word has suffered abuse in our generation, none more so than faith itself.

Can you think of a more cruel phrase than the three great faiths? What a bunch of hokum. What a bunch of nonsense. Three great religious establishments, maybe, but it hasn't got a cotton-picking thing to do with real faith.

And even the word in the minds of most believers has got to do with giving assent to certain doctrines. But is there a faith that will enable us never to die? You read the conclusion of every gospel in the scriptures and you'll see the staggering condition of the unbelief of the disciples themselves about the resurrection of Christ. They locked themselves in behind closed doors, they were affrighted and they were terrified when

they saw him, and thought that they had seen a ghost.

And they would not believe the women who had seen him when he arose from the dead and thought that they were hearing old wives' tales. And it says in another gospel that when he came, they saw him, but they believed yet not unto joy. There's believing and believing.

Our belief has never really been tested in the resurrection. We have given assent to it, as have thousands and millions before us, generation for generation. But I'll tell you that our generation shall be sorely tested on this point.

Do you believe this, that if you cleave to me and trust, you shall never see death? I don't know about you children, but I have no intention of ever seeing death. I'm not making any provision for it. I'm not expecting to grow old gracefully.

I'm not expecting to diminish in activity. I'll tell you what, 12 years ago, life came into me that is both abundant and eternal. I am never expecting to see death or to make any provision for it.

He's the life of my life. And what could be more pitiable than us who believe and cast ourselves upon him, believing that in moments, excruciating and fearful moments, beyond our wisdom, beyond our strength, beyond our expertise, beyond our knowledge, beyond our experience, that if he not be the resurrected Christ, in whom is the fullness of God, the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, we perish. Would you believe that? Yes, I believe that there's a resurrection on the last day.

You want to know something, children? There's not another chapter in the Bible that contains the verse, Jesus wept. Aside from the description of Gethsemane, there's not another place in the New Testament accounts that describe the anguish of spirit of Jesus as in this chapter. Look at the 33rd verse.

When Jesus saw her sobbing, and the Jews who came with her also sobbing, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. He chafed in spirit and sighed and was disturbed. And he said, Where have you laid him? And they said to him, Lord, come and see.

Jesus wept. And the Jews said, See how tenderly he loved him. But some of them said, Could not he who opened the blind man's eyes have prevented this man from dying? And Jesus again, sighing repeatedly and deeply disquieted, approached the tomb.

I have never before understood this. And I think I'm only at the beginning of understandings. And I want to study and understand and have revelation of any scriptures that have to do with the Lord of glory, the Holy One of Israel, being deeply disquieted and being chafed in his spirit and weeping.

I'll tell you children, it breaks my heart. I can't stand to consider it. And if there's anything that's keeping me straight and on the straight and narrow with the Lord, it's the fear that I might ever offend his precious heart and cause him sorrow.

And there's a fellowship on earth so deeply impressed with this sense. It's the same one that I described the other day. The Sisters of Mary in Germany.

You know they have a peculiar notion that Jesus sorrows still. They have a peculiar notion that he grieves still. They have a foolish understanding that he weeps still.

That when he looks down upon his people and he's in the midst of them, he is still chafed in the spirit and disquieted. And I think it is for essentially the same reasons. People were having a good old winging of a slobbery mash over the death, the premature death of a young man.

A whole crowd of Jews were there sobbing and watching Mary and Martha and following them to the tomb for the great finale. There's something about human nature that loves a good cry. There was no TV in those days, no amusement.

And what could be richer and schmaltzier than coming to the funeral of a young man taken prematurely. Oh, they were waiting for the emotional climax. Maybe the two sisters would break down and sob and cast themselves upon the stone that covered his tomb.

They were making a whole lament about death. Couldn't this man who opened the blind man's eyes have prevented this one from dying? Jesus wept. Let me ask you, what in heaven's name is so calamitous about dying anyway? What's the whole shmeat about? What's all this wailing and bemoaning and beating one's breast and clutching hair if you had been here? Lord, if you had been here.

But let me ask you a question. If he is Lord, what cotton-picking difference does it make where he was? No wonder Jesus said about a Gentile man who said, Master, my servant lies sick, but I'm not worthy that you should come under my roof. Merely speak the word and it shall be sufficient.

And Jesus turned to the Jews who were about him and said, I have not found so great a faith in all Israel. How many of you have felt abandoned, sick unto death, where is the Lord? The clock is ticking away and he doesn't come like Sir Galahad to your rescue. He allows you to die.

But this is for the glory of God. Would you do it? Would you trust him? Would you rest and be at peace and sleep? Or would you rather murmur and say, if you had been here, how come you allowed me to suffer this with my wife? How come this breakdown in our marriage? How come this excruciating condition? How come this thing in my body? How come this inexplicable sickness? How come the loss of my fortune? How come you made me look like an ass and a failure and a nincompoop before your people and I choked and stammered and had not a clever word to speak and there was no anointing and no unction?

How come when we went to City College in New York and 85% Jewish in that first gospel outreach, which you yourself had called us to months before when the Spirit of God came down and we wept like babies when we met with the InterVarsity kids and knew that God was calling us to the first penetration of the Jewish mainstream, how come when that day came after months of prayer and fasting and every sacrifice and every preparation, when we came into that crowded room that crackled with resentment and bitterness and anger by Jews with their yarmulkes on their heads and their Van Dyck beards looking and shooting daggers at us with their eyes, how come when you allowed us to come with expectancy that you were going to speak with unction and power as you did at Harvard University and stunned men who came to jeer and make sport and left them silent in their seats, how come you didn't do it before your own Jewish kinsmen to whom you had called us?

How come when we opened our mouths the most lame, inept, pathetic dribble fell to the ground? How come there wasn't a smidgen of unction on it whatsoever? How come I knew I was a dead duck from the moment I opened my mouth and that there was no remedy for it and I had only to press on and persevere and suffer it? How come? If you had been here, how come you allowed me to experience that

unspeakable mortification and shame when the moment that I finished my pathetic and lame remarks that Jewish rabbi got up and tore me to shreds and made me to look like an ignoramus and a jackass coming with a King James Bible, a Gentile Bible and try to persuade Jews of medieval myths and old wives' tales that have cost them in bloodshed and smashed children's skulls in European ghettos for all these centuries?

How come? How come when that rabbi stormed out and slammed the door in the room, shook with the power of that man's personality that you allowed other Jews to get up and continue where he left off, that raked the flesh right off my bones? How come? And how come, Lord, that when it was all over, the most agonizing afternoon of my life, suffering the abuse of my own people who told me that I was worse than Hitler because Hitler only wanted their bodies and I was seeking to steal their souls?

Who looked at me with venomous anger and bitterness and hatred in their faces? How come, Lord, that the worst and the most cruel blow of all, the most cutting and killing, was to have to look in the faces of my Christian colleagues and see their terrible disappointment? How come, Lord, that I could read so clearly what their faces said? Cats, we thought you were an anointed vessel. Cats, we had heard about Harvard.

We thought you were going to really speak to this people, your own people. What's the matter, buddy? Don't you know how to pray? Got secret sin in your life? Couldn't you fast? How come, Lord, I had to see their faces and feel the spikes driven into my spiritual life and I could not answer them a word? How come, Lord, you let me lay like a dead dog for three weeks in my house in New York and not able to lift my head and lick my wounds like a cur? How come that you didn't speak from heaven and say, this is my beloved son in whom I'm well pleased? How come you didn't give me a little pat on the head and say, well done, faithful servant? If you had been there, Lord, I would not have died. And you know what I know now, children? He was there all the while.

Always is. He'll never leave us nor forsake us. Our dear brother got up earlier this morning after the morning session and gave you a word of explanation, lest you be disquieted and chafed in your spirit.

And it was a good word, solid, needful. What was the issue I've forgotten now? Remind me, what was it? Mental illness and we have victory in Jesus and we have a sound mind, right? And that's true. Hard to believe that God would ever allow vexation in the life of a believer.

Disquiet, chafed spirit to such a degree that a woman would almost seem to have lost her marbles and suffer the unspeakable reproach of having to be brought to the office of a worldly psychiatrist. And there while the spittle was forming at the corners of her mouth and she could not even give a coherent statement, something broke and the whole thing lifted. And she was perfectly sound and witnessed to that doctor the marvel that was performed right before his eyes.

How come, Lord? How come, Lord, that night in Monroe, Louisiana, the last of three nights of meetings, those fierce speakings in which I prophesied that the audience would decline night by night and grow smaller and that was fulfilled. How come that last day, Lord, I started to feel sad in the afternoon and as it came later toward the evening I was sadder and sadder still? How come I chafed in my spirit and was disquieted and I had no explanation? How come that when I came to the meeting and the worship was already taking place and people were happy and having a great time in the Lord, how come that I was going down, down, down rather than up, up, up? How come that when I came to the platform to begin to speak that I was practically doubled over as if I had been punched in the solar plexus and gasping and sucking for air, choked and spluttering? And how come that man leaped up and gave that prophetic word

that you had something to speak that night that was not pleasant to hear let alone to deliver and that that word just crushed me and I just poured out like water wondering if I would ever collect myself together sufficiently to speak? And how come, Lord, that when that heavy word finally went forth and the invitation came that that dwindling audience lifted up quietly their little theater seats and went down on their knees on the concrete floor in a commitment unto death that the sadness broke and lifted and there was joy unspeakable? How come? This sickness is not unto death. This is to promote the glory of God.

And we saw just how much sacrifice earlier today, how much shedding of blood, how much copious flowing of life, how much hat to pieces sacrifice, how much blood and gore stupefied priests were required, how much excruciating waiting before the glory of God fell. Children, you want to see the glory of God at the end of the age? It's going to require inexplicable things from us in which He will not explain, in which you're going to feel abandoned of the Lord. If you had been here, I pray in that day, we'll not be like Mary and Martha, calling Him Lord and not understanding the fullness of that word, upbraiding Him and reprimanding Him for failing to be there because He did not act in accordance with our anticipation and left us to inexplicably suffer and die.

In the 40th verse, Jesus said to her, Did I not tell you and promise you that if you will believe and rely on Me, you should see the glory of God? In the previous verse, He said, Take away the stone. And Martha, the sister of the dead man, exclaimed, But Lord, by this time He is decaying and throws off an offensive odor for He has been dead four days. He stinketh, I think it says in King James.

Someone who knows something about physiology said to me that up to three days, by the use of chemicals and expertise, a body can be essentially preserved. But on the fourth day, no matter what the chemicals, no matter what the technique, the processes of dissolution and corruption set in. The body becomes absolutely corrupt and is on the verge of dissolving.

He stinketh. You know what, children? The Father only required from Jesus three days in death. But somehow something was required from Lazarus that was extra.

And I looked up what the name Lazarus means. You'll never believe it in Hebrew. It means helpless.

You very rarely find a Jewish man like that. We're a bunch of big knockers, I'll have you know. We've been around and we've got the university degrees and diplomas and certificates from B'nai B'rith to prove it.

You'll very rarely ever find a helpless Jew. And you know what I think? It was a man willing to be helpless in sickness unto death to promote the glory of God. You know what I was saying to the Lord as I sat there tonight? I said, for crying out loud, something like that, couldn't I just finish these few days with a little vim and vigor? Couldn't I just give it a little razzmatazz and just delight the cockles of Bob's heart? End on a positive note.

Why must I feel so weary and enervated and emptied and blah and uninspired and inept and stupid and ignorant? Because I've called you to be helpless. It promotes my glory. That's why.

But Lord, I was a big knocker as an atheist. Man, I used to be slapped on the back and chaired through the marketplace. I had it all together.

That was the way of the world. This is the way of the kingdom. By now he stinketh.

Can you see Lazarus in that tomb? He died without explanation and he went into death with consciousness still intact. But he was a well-informed Jewish man and he knew that three is the length of time before resurrection. And I can just see him in that last day watching the clock, so to speak.

Tick, tock, tick, tock. Two days and eleven hours and fifty minutes in the tomb. Ten more minutes to go and surely he shall hear that voice.

Deep calling unto deep and he shall be released from the bonds of death. Nine minutes to go. Eight minutes to go.

Seven minutes to go. Just like a guy I described to you earlier today waiting to be called on to speak, clutching his Bible in his hands hoping by osmosis something would come through the covers. Listen, children.

Every act of true service unto God is unto death or it's not true service. Real prayer is dying. Fasting is dying.

Real service is dying. Real witness is dying. Are you talking about the cessation of consciousness? No.

I'm talking about the suffering. I'm talking about the excruciatingness of it. I'm talking about languishing.

Tick, tock, tick, tock. Waiting for life to come and it does not. One minute to go.

Clutching to the last shred of faith. Sixty seconds. Forty-five.

Thirty. Fifteen. Ten.

Five. Four. Three.

Two. One. Zero.

Doomed to eternal confinement in the tomb until that day. God in his wisdom allowed Lazarus to languish beyond three days more than was required of the Lord himself. You know what somebody said to Richard von Braun in one of those communist prison camps? When he was told to be patient and to endure the sufferings, he said, I have suffered more than Christ.

Jesus never had to make communion with urine and human excretion. Dear children, are you listening to the Spirit of God? I tell you that there shall be some among us in this room that shall face a day when we shall think ourselves so abandoned of God. There shall not be a smidgen of conscious presence.

There shall not be an encouragement of any kind. Things shall be required of us without explanation. We shall be to the end of the limits of our faith, our experience, our knowledge to promote the glory of God.

And I'll tell you that I have a suspicion that in that day God is going to remind you of this foolish message. This is an end-time message which I have never understood before this. So they took away the stone and Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, Father, I thank you that you have heard me.

Yes, I know you're always here and listen to me, but I have said this on account of and for the benefit of the people standing around so that they may believe you did send me, that you may believe me your messenger. And when he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And out walked the man who had been dead, his hands and feet wrapped in burial clothes and with a burial napkin bound

around his face.

And Jesus said to them, Free him of the burial wrappings and let him go. Upon seeing what Jesus had done, many of the Jews who had come with Mary believed on him. They trusted in him and adhered to him and relied on him.

I'll bet more Jews were saved that day by the coming forth of a stinking corpse than have been saved before or since by all the ingenuity of Jewish missions, methodologies, techniques, literature distribution, rallies and every such thing. He didn't speak a word. He didn't have a message.

He didn't witness verbally. He didn't proclaim anything. He simply went deep cold unto deep out of the bowels of death, came forth.

He was willing to be buried with his hands and his feet and his face wrapped in burial cloths. Phew! I can't stand to be confined. I'm claustrophobic.

I can't stand congestion. How would you like to be put in a constricted place? How would you like your life to be brought into a winter of decline and contraction? I had one of the greatest secretaries going. She still is.

Those who know her will acknowledge. She was a superb, charismatic saint. The ultimate in secretaries.

Efficient, mature, deep, tremendous prayer warrior. She was heads and shoulders just about over every saint you would know. But she told me one day, Ott, the Lord is calling me to leave you.

You're the heart of the operation. Everything revolves around you, that office, the concern for the family, your maturity, your strength, your support, your encouragement. The Lord called her to Germany to a German pietistic fellowship that you can't believe.

Talk about discipline. She's the one who gets up now at 5.30 in the morning and works all the day long in the laundry. A girl with exquisite gifts.

Man, if they knew what they had there, they would get her out of that sweatshop at once and put her behind a typewriter or have her write music or play the guitar or sing or teach every day in the laundry. She can't even converse because she's living in a land whose language she does not know. She doesn't have a free moment day and night.

She's under supervision or in relationship with other women. And she's a former Catholic and she can't stand liturgical religion. She loves that wonderful freedom of charismatic worship.

But three times a day at the prescribed hour, they have certain kinds of prescribed Lutheran-type worship. It's so Catholic, it makes her sick. God has cut her off at the pass and there's no place to run.

She said, I can't even get a chocolate bar. Talk about the ultimate indignity. She's a girl who loved to go out for a Chinese meal or a hamburger even.

You know when the pressure gets tough and the tensions, you can always go out on the town for something. Wholly constricted, she's in the crunch of God. And when I saw her last, she was a glory.

You know what I suspect, children? God is going to be cutting many of us off at the pass. You know what she said, Art, for the first time I realized that that chocolate bar and the opportunity to go out for a Chinese meal when I wanted to was a form of escapism. And now that my life has been contracted and bound in with Him, she said, I'm writhing and screaming.

It's like coming off of drugs. It's like withdrawal. I did not realize to what extent I was attuned to the world and its blandishments and pleasures.

She didn't have to go there. She had a choice to go also to the Sisters of Mary and she loved it much better. I told you how beautiful their worship is and those women are of a much different kind, much more free, much more spontaneous, much more evangelical.

The community where she is now is contemplative. She had a choice of two things and she chose the thing least pleasing to her own flesh and felt that that was God's will for her. And she's been in a virtual tomb all these months.

How many of us would be willing so to do? By now he stinketh it's the fourth day. Hey, Kat, shouldn't you be in New York where the action is? I'll tell you, children, there's a reproach even in the nostrils of Christians where if you'll submit yourself to the contraction of God, willing to be closed in with Him, you'll stink in the nostrils of many. How would you like to be bound up in your hands and your feet and your head? Can't go where you want? Can't do what you want? Can't speak what you want? Waiting incessantly, patiently for the calling forth of that one who is the Lord of all, that that would promote his glory.

And when that call came and he was loosed, many Jews believed. They saw the glory of God. And I think that this is a key to the revelation of God's end-time glory through saints who will be willing to have their lives contracted crunched, hemmed in, cut off, silenced, bound, entombed.

It's not for everybody. It's for those willing to be helpless. How many of us would be willing to be Lazarus's helpless friends of the Lord, deserted in sickness and abandoned in death, bound up, inactive, unused, and stinking? I couldn't think of a worse horror for this fellowship than what I'm now describing.

Could you? Whoo! Man, you guys would die if the Lord, all of a sudden, called, finish. If he gave you the spurt of a season of life and you enjoyed it and saw fruitfulness, all of a sudden, the same God would bring that precious thing into contraction and death. Are you willing to bring your defects and your vices and your bad moods and your lusts into the grave? How would you like to bring the thing which God himself has given into death? That death should no longer have any dominion over it.

Children, I'm speaking like a fool. I hardly understand myself what I'm saying. I think it has a prophetic ring to it.

We're going to see it increasingly. God has given us a season to exhibit ourselves and to sport ourselves and to move by his life and to do for him and to see fruitfulness. But I think that before the end comes, to promote his ultimate glory, he's going to call us to a discipline and to an obedience, into a priesthood of impeccable obedience, staying two days longer where we are, that when he shall call us forth, though we are a stink to many, there shall be a glory.

What's life or death anyway? It wasn't too long ago I was invited to a funeral hall. I'd never been to one. We Jews closed the casket.

But somehow Christians leave it open and people come and bask and look at it. And I sat by the front seat. It was an unusual thing for me.

And I watched a stream of people coming up, guts hanging over their belts, burping their way right from the supper table to the funeral parlor to the mortuary, excuse me. You notice how we've coined little euphemisms to take the sting out of death? Morticians, mortuaries, used to be undertaker. And I listened to the little pleasantries that people would say.

You know what I thought about? I was looking at a woman immobile in death, not so much the flutter as an eyelash, a very precious saint taken prematurely in her thirties. At the height of her life, at the height of her glory, brilliant believer. Everyone loved her.

Her husband was a lout, an unbelieving clod who could have such a wife as this and yet not believe. And the Lord inexplicably took her life. You know what those believers thought? She was going to be resurrected.

And they even had a suspicion that I was going to be the one that God was going to use. I looked at the immobility of that woman. Isn't that what death is? Utter stillness, utter silence, not a move, not a flutter of an eyelash, not an emanation of breath.

And as I saw these big adults bending over and making their obsequious remarks to the husband of the deceased, you know what I thought to myself? Hey, just who's more dead or alive anyway? What is their life? How many meals have they ingested? 10,000, 20,000, 50,000 in 30, 40, 50 years? How many times have their clothes needed to be washed? How many times in and out of the dry cleaners? How much space have they occupied, air consumed, watered, drunk? What is life anyway, I thought. Certainly it's not in this physical, biological, physiological activity coming and going, doing and spending, having and getting. Certainly it's not the noise, the commotion, the clutter, the debris that we've accumulated after so many years.

Life is this only, children. Are you ready? That which promotes the glory of God. That's it.

It has not to do with waving our arms or leaping or jumping or shouting or filling the air or breaking the silence except that that sound, that jump, that leap, that activity promotes the glory of God. And if it shall please God that His glory shall be promoted through your silence, through your immobility, through your helplessness, will you allow it? There's a precious theme here. I'm not sure that I have grasped it but I'm drooling over it because it seems to me so deeply to be the way of very God Himself.

The Father did not think it too much to require of His Son that that which was born sinless and pure be brought into death that there might be a greater revelation. How willing would we be to take that which was born from above in us and bring it into contraction and death to promote the glory of God. The 12th chapter of the 11th verse says because on account of Him, Lazarus, many of the Jews were going away, were withdrawing and leaving the Judeans and believing in and adhering to Jesus.

Many were saved out of death by one who submitted to it. It's death which worketh in us and life in them. What happened when you suffered that excruciating agony and those rabbis cut you to pieces and you lay like a cur for three weeks licking your wounds and God did not explain anything? Well, I had a phone call.

Did I tell you about this last time? Three weeks later I had a phone call with a woman whose voice was so thin I had a strain to hear it. Mr. Katchi said, I'm a Jewish woman who has read your book and I have

certain questions. Might I come over and speak with you? I said, dear lady, I'm not able to help anyone.

I'm helpless, is what I was saying. But I said, if you have no other alternative and you want to, you can come. And so she came.

You never saw a more pathetic wreck in your life. So emaciated, so thin, she was almost transparent. Her veins were popping out everywhere.

Deep, dark rings under her eyes. She had been battered from pillar to post by life. Nervous wreck, compulsive chain smoker.

Sitting on my couch and snubbing out one cigarette after another asking questions until she snubbed out the last cigarette and the last question was, what must I do to be saved? And I told her, she bowed her flared little head and clutched me by the hand with her bony hand. Word for word like a child followed me in a prayer that brought her from death unto life. You ought to see that woman today.

Talk about evangelist and missionary. Man, she's up and down the stairs of an apartment house in Queens. Literature, New Testament, Ben Israel's.

She's a little dynamo in a Jewish neighborhood for God. Saved out of death. I remember I walked into the door that night and I took her coat off out of the closet and I was putting it over her frail shoulders and I said, by the way, I said, how is it that you came to me? Where did you get the book? How did you have these questions? Oh, she said, three weeks ago my son who was at City College came home with your book.

He insisted that I read it because he said that a man came to the school today and it was unlike anything he had ever seen, he said. He was so enormously impressed because that man just simply stood up, softly spoke his convictions and when he was finished he was mercilessly attacked and torn to shreds. And he said he had never seen such a demonstration where the man did not answer back his accusers a word.

I'll tell you children there'll be days when the glory will be so great in response for our obedience we'll not be able to contain it. We'll see whole pools of men who have come to jeer and to make sport as I've seen it in Harvard. Radicals, filthy orgyists, insurrectionists, Satanists coming to see the freak who believes in Jesus and is Jewish.

And you'll come exhausted and you'll lay down your crumpled corduroy jacket and you'll open your mouth believing that this is unto death and whew, there'll be an eruption of life out of your mouth that shall stun and mesmerize and fix men in their seats with such centrifugal force you would think that they were being pulled off a runway by a powerful jet. And when you hear the words pouring out of your mouth the most profound and biting and incisive commentary on the human condition that you've ever heard there'll be no question in you what the source of it is. And when you're finished you'll see men stunned, silent and not one single man who has the nerve to ask a question or to be a wise aleck or to jeer because they know for a fact that God and you'll say simply Jesus said that my sheep will hear my voice and I invite as many of you who have heard it out of this Brooklyn accent to bow your head and follow me in prayer.

And you'll expect maybe two, three or five and you'll be amazed at the chorus of voices that you'll hear. It sounds more like hundreds. And indeed you'll lift your head when the prayer is finished and the room will be filled with the manifest presence and the glory of God.

And you'll look as you'll scan the room you'll see men weeping, trembling, shaking, stunned clutching their mouths, holding their chest as the Spirit of God has just come into them. And you'll not know what to do you've not been prepared for such an eventuality and you'll just say simply let's praise the God who has saved us. And you'll see the same men who came to give you this standing with their hands over their heads weeping and praising God at Harvard University the citadel of witchcraft and Satanism.

It'll be a glory! But there'll be other days when you'll not see it. Are you willing to suffer the one as well as to enjoy the other? Are you willing to be dense, helpless hid with Christ in God until His life be revealed? Lazarus, come forth! Will you wait till then? Even if it's four days and you stink with reproach? Will you wait till then though you've been bound in your mouth and you're a terrific speaker bound in your hands and your feet and you want to go, go, go? Wait for the perfect moment of God that many might believe on Him when they see His glory. I'm going to give you an invitation children I've not given one, have I? Got your seatbelts on? Oh, you precious children.

I'll tell you this without flattering you. You're probably one of the most impressive audiences of young believers upon whom I have ever laid eyes. I have not heard such a torrent of choice and holy utterances and prophecy as I've heard come out of your mouths in these days.

The quality of worship, the look in your faces, your evident integrity and hunger for God and willingness to serve is apparent! You've got precious things in you that have come from above holy, sinless and pure. How many of you would like to take it and submit it without explanation unto death if He shall require it that it might reveal His glory? I'm going to give you an invitation children this is not for everyone. This is not for everyone.

If I suspect anything I think that this has got to do with the ultimate end time greatest revelation of the glory of God.

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