

Gospel of John (Study 23 of 24, Chap 11 Cont)

by G.W. North

The sermon explores the significance of Jesus' raising of Lazarus, emphasizing the importance of love, understanding, and divine timing in ministry.

Duration: 53:59

Scripture: John 1:1, John 5:19, John 5:30, John 5:39, John 11:32, John 11:35, 2 Peter 1:21

Topics: "Christian Life"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the story of the raising of Lazarus from the dead, which is considered one of the greatest miracles performed by Jesus. The preacher emphasizes the importance of understanding the deeper meaning behind this story and how it relates to our own lives. He highlights the significance of our position in God and encourages the audience to seek a true understanding of the scriptures, not just a superficial knowledge. The preacher also warns against the subtleties of the enemy and the need to be vigilant in our faith.

Transcript

Let's pray. Father, we thank Thee for these precious times, when we don't gather to learn so much as gather around Thee, and we bless Thee, Lord. Father, one sense, one glimpse in the heart of Jesus, and it's worth all the Bible schools in the world, that we confess unto Thee, Lord, be in our midst this morning, and pity me as I speak to these dear people, and grant unto them love and sympathy and understanding, and all the joy of knowing Thee.

Here, Father, we take Thy precious book into our hands again. Oh, Lord, where would we be had we not got it? And we bless Thee, for just as holy men of old wrote as they were moved by the Spirit, God, that we, being holy in our hearts, should understand Thy urgency and Thy tremendous love, unspeakable, that gave us the book and gave us the privilege of being saved and of being called the sons of God. Lord, we bless Thee for this.

The multiplicity of Jesus is all that Thou art after, Father, to replenish Thy heavens with the true saints, and grant unto us the knowledge of this deep, inward, and unshakable, as it is in Thy heart, that we may be a copy of Thine own. Amen. Amen.

Well, this is our last time together, isn't it? I shan't be able to get up to the presentation day. I don't know, I think I'm booked to be abroad somewhere. So I've instructed Eric, isn't there, Derek, isn't it nice to be able

to instruct him? You can't, can you? But next year, would he please arrange the prize or whatever it is, giving day, and we can get it fixed.

So if you come back again next year, I'll be here, I hope. But let's get through this year, shall we? In John, as you know, we left it in the 11th chapter, I believe. And I know that I reminisced and sort of rather preached and taught anything yesterday.

I hope you'll forgive me. But former classes have loved it if I've told them stories. But I've been telling Derek stories all breakfast time.

So when you get him on here and say, what were the stories he told over breakfast? One of these times, well, I tell you, you can know them all easily. Just ask Dot for tapes that started somewhere back in what time, and they're more or less all on them. But let's move on together, shall we, in scripture.

If I do divert into a story, it's because it's the last time. Well, the last morning. In this marvelous chapter, because it is, it's the, I think, I would call it the greatest miracle that Jesus did, except the miracle of his own birth and his death and resurrection.

Those miracles accepted, but then he is a miracle being. Quite natural to him, you understand that. This story of the raising of Lazarus is very, very, very wonderful.

And you must note, or I hope you have noted, that it comes at the end of his life. He doesn't start off by raising people from the dead. Just please note, if you're thinking about being in a miraculous ministry sometime, he doesn't start off by raising somebody whose body has been corrupting in the grave for four days.

He starts off by merely turning water into wine. In other words, Jesus progressed, keep it clear. Hadn't he power to raise people from the dead in the beginning? St. Cain of Galilee, oh yes.

But the folly of men is that they want to keep blasting off in great power, like a rocket. But when the rocket gets up there, where there's no atmosphere to speak of, it glides with ease, you understand that. It's the great blast off at the start to get the thing into its orbit.

A big thing to bear in mind. And that's all because, you will remember, in chapter 5, you find the Lord saying like this, he could only do the things that his father showed him to do. You remember I told you about, or take the chapter 5, we noted this when we went through the me telling you, it's the scripture telling me and you, that he started off by just giving a man healing in chapter 5, before that he'd done one or two things, not much.

He did lots of miracles, but he didn't just come to do miracles. And he had come to be the word of God, not the work of God, if you will just get the meaning of that into what it portends. The word, not the work.

Of course he was the work of God. He was the son of God through Mary, that was God's work. But to see this, the word, and he said in John chapter 5, he couldn't do anything except the father showed him.

Now you remember that. And the father showed him to do a simple thing first, turn water into wine. And then he progressed through works to this.

In chapter 11. Just keep it in mind. Most people, we say it about men, we don't say it about ladies, that they're boys in men's trousers, we don't say that about you ladies, but that's what it is.

You must remember that David refused point blank to wear Saul's armour. You just remember that. If only we would do something simple like scrubbing a floor in Jesus' name for someone, instead of trying to work miracles, we'd show that we hadn't got a big head on our shoulders.

Perhaps if I told you a story, I'll start an awful one. I started in Christian things in a church to which I went when we'd removed from London when I was just 13 years of age. It was a church out in the country, chapels they call it.

And, oh, that's where I did some speaking, right from an early age I could talk, don't worry about that. It's this. I learned by this that if they wanted the fire lit on Sunday mornings, a long time before everybody... I did it.

It had a garden. If they wanted the garden dug, I did it. How many of you men have done that kind of thing? I'm not boasting.

I want you to see God works according to a pattern. He does that. When his son at 12 years of age could have put four sons up in the heavens if he wanted to, he had the power, and he wanted to be preaching at 12 years of age, God said to him, his father said, you go back to the carpenter's bench for another 18 years.

You learn to do your carpentry job and do it perfectly. He didn't tell him he was going to start him at 30. He could have been chafing at the bit, as we say, at 12.

Just remember, just keep things in proportion in your own mind and in imaginations about yourselves. You won't go far wrong. If they wanted somebody to teach infants, I could teach them.

If they wanted somebody to preach on a Sunday morning, I could do that. If they wanted a leader for the young people's work, I did that. If they wanted, at that time, a solo singer, I could do that.

Do you understand? But I also dug the garden. I also went down and helped in doing the man's, he-man's job. Do you understand? Jesus started like that.

God didn't say, no, somebody just died in Bethany. Bethany was in existence when he was 30 years of age. Jesus said, now go and raise him, or something like that.

Do you understand? Please do. Don't try and be like him, or him. Of course, you've got some woman like her.

Just be yourself. Don't overstretch. Just go steadily.

So Jesus was started on a wedding feast. And turning water into wine. And disappearing.

And letting somebody else take credit for it. Not him. He didn't say, here, now you'd better be fair about this.

It was me that turned that water into wine. Understand? Learn to be like Jesus. Before attempting to do Jesus' works.

It's a big thing. Ambition can be a deadly enemy. Aspire to scrub floors and dig gardens.

Oh, where I can preach. Preachers could be two a penny, if you know what I mean. You've got to be in the will of God.

I read a book once, that you wouldn't read today. Long time ago now. And I learned this expression.

It's on several tapes, I suppose, as I've been around. It's this. God's preference is scrubbing fools.

They're his favourites. Just remember. Of course, that upsets all the ladies.

Ladies don't even scrub now. Or do they? I don't know. They have a Hoover.

Here's the thing, beloved, for us to see. Please take it in. It's humorously stated.

But the truth of it is so vital. Well, anyway. Listen to the one who said he couldn't do anything.

And his father showed him. And it was father who showed him to do what we were talking about yesterday morning. That when he heard that Lazarus was dead, he deliberately stayed where he was.

He didn't go rushing off. Oh, I must get to Lazarus quick. Get a donkey for me to ride on or something.

He never let human affections, for he had a human affection for that family. Always remember he was human. Never let that affect him.

Now I could stop and talk to you a long time about that. But he didn't go dashing off to people's needs. Especially his favourite.

Because Bethany was undoubtedly his favourite home where he stayed. He didn't let that come into it. So get yourselves clear on these almost banal things that don't seem to matter much.

And you'll be stepping in the footprints of Jesus. He could suddenly have appeared on the scene of it. But he didn't.

He was a baby first. It's so marvellous to learn these things It's alright then. The 11th chapter, where we are, or were, yesterday morning and want to go on today.

Remember this. I drew your attention to the fact that Jesus loved these people. Martha, Mary and Lazarus.

And you know, I want you to know that they loved him. Now that's where you will find your biggest difficulties. Not so much among the people that hate you, because you can say but the people that love you.

Just remember that. They loved him. He loved them.

He made their home his headquarters for the last week of his earthly life. Did you know? He went to and fro from Bethany to the temple, back to Bethany, into the temple again for his last teachings and so on except, of course, for the upper room, which was his very last day. I told you, that was the day I would like to have been in, if I could have done before his death.

Okay. He loved. Now listen to this.

It's very subtle. Watch your heart. And that's what I'm interested in.

I know it must go into your ears and I hope into your brain and head. That's what I'm saying. And I hope it makes a mark on you.

I think that's what all the lecturers hope. But, beloved, it's your love that settles it. Always your love.

And that's where you check. Now listen to the human. Here it is.

Verse 37. Some of them said, could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused, he had the power, have caused that even this man should not have died. And the result of that was Jesus' growth.

Now you watch that. In yourself. Just watch it.

He couldn't have loved them. He couldn't have been through. He couldn't have been.

He has his power. Why didn't he cause that Lazarus shouldn't die? The subtlety of the enemy. These are the, it's the subtle things that will affect you most.

The most subtle creature on earth was the serpent and he got into the garden and ruined it all. Watch the subtleties. Don't indulge in them.

If you can possibly keep yourself garments clean about it. You know, he had to bear so much suffering inwardly and he never begged pity of anyone because they didn't love him. And through the sheer ignorance all around him.

As I pointed out, even Martha and Mary. If you'd have been here Lord, it wouldn't have happened. Just watch it.

It's a very subtle attack on them. The devil uses it. And you let him do that once or twice in your life and you'll be away to the woods.

You've got to see and this is the whole purpose of having the Holy Ghost in you. That it should make you to rise above all those things. Sooner or stand up, fight.

I don't mean literally. That. And you have to bash and stand up and fight and faith, you know, Lord Stimson used to write a good fight of faith and all this business.

But see, it's the things that go on in your heart and in your home that I know nothing about. You see. The inward things.

They're the biggest things of all. Alright. Having said that and brought you to what I am quite sure is the gravel and the real truth, the real foundation of all these things.

Your position in God. That's the thing that counts. We can go on and cover it with the details if you like.

This is the heart, the very bones of it all. Do you know, I really have said enough and we could dismiss the class to make you see what it's about. So you see what's enwrapped in this print about the story of raising lasses from the dead.

It's all there. The inner battle that went on. Of course Jesus never turned it into a battle but it is a battle in us.

He just obeyed the Father and paid the price in groans and everything. Nobody understood. Not even Mary.

And Mary had more understanding than any of them. Did you know that ladies, cheer up, I'm on your side. It was Mary that anointed him against the day of his burial.

Nobody else did. Not one of his disciples. She understood against the day of my burying.

Has she kept this? Nobody else equaled that amongst the lot. The favoured many. You see, you understand me.

You must, I said something complimentary to you ladies the other day about your refined edition of humanity taken from the man and you are and never lose that and don't you ever get coarse and vulgar in your position. And don't allow anybody else to. And don't get sweltheaded.

But you are that. Don't you betray your position. You remember this.

That you have possibilities in you that are usually beyond men. I know, I'm not talking about the physical possibilities of course. A bit different.

It's either something you understand or else you don't. And that's why the devil attacked the woman first. And then Adam got the blame for it.

It's called old Adam, not old Eve. This inward state of ours. Just keep it.

Don't hide behind it. Don't try and be anything else. But what you are, are sweet and wonderful and understanding and absolutely built that way in your inward emotional states.

Ideal she would have been Eve if she hadn't just blown it. I've got to be careful because I could talk along this way a lot. And I think it would be illuminating to you as well.

But I know that everyone in this room being of an age understands what I'm talking about. You're not qualified to be out of the fourth grade in school if you don't understand this. God wants us to get this background of living and understanding more than knowledge of words on paper called the Bible.

Because it's all it is. It's only words on paper. Oh, God inspire you.

Yes, yes, yes. But in your hand and possession it's ink on paper. And thank God for it.

John said in that same John 5 Jesus said, he said, search the scriptures to do it. And he once said to a very clever man, what do the scriptures say? How readest thou? He didn't say, do you read? Or what do you read? He said, how do you read? And it's that how that will bring you into a place of proper ministry. Not say we'll read John something.

And when you preach you'll even read it. I hear you don't understand it. That's before you start preaching about it.

You've got to learn how to read the Bible. And that is when God the author of it through those men has done something in you by His Spirit. Please never gabble it.

It's so wonderful. And God wants us to be in this tremendous position. Look at verse 35.

Where does it occur? It's the shortest verse in the Bible. Jesus wept. Not that I believe in versification.

I don't. But nevertheless it is in that verse. Verse 35.

When? It was after Mary verse 32 came where Jesus was. And said, Lord the voice from the ground if thou had been here my brother had not died. She testified of her faith in Him.

That was a testimony. But she also testified that she hadn't got a clue what the will of God was. For He stayed away because His Father never showed Him to go.

He went in God's time. These are all little things. But now you know what I meant when I said at the beginning I'm not really interested in whether you get a paper at the end.

I'm only interested in your soul state. That's all I'm interested in. And I believe that God is very loving and understanding.

That's all He's really interested in. So you see beloved, what it's all about I hope you do. I hope you do.

It was after Mary had been. Martha comes back from seeing Jesus being this kind of woman note the types of women, people there are types of natures, type of development of your soul states and everything else. Martha goes if you like galloping excuse me I'm exaggerating on that she goes out to see Him.

Now Mary Mary was bound up in her misunderstandings bound up in her secret griefs she couldn't go, she stopped she didn't say wait for me Martha I'm coming and Martha comes back and she says the Master's come He's calling for thee wasn't that lovely Do you get the full value out of reading that you should do you ever stop like that and say now wasn't that lovely because that's all He's concerned about He doesn't care whether you know this that the other as long as you love Him love Him with understanding not just how I love Him it's a great oh I can dissertate on this beloved it's the secret of all ministry you men are you listening all women it's the secret of all ministry love it's the secret of all God's giving He's so loud that He gave you read it it's so I get beside myself I wonder

at my dull mind in understanding so little of God He's calling for you Mary His heart's calling for you you know don't you you may be in your grief wrapped up in your little world of events that are happening to you and God so loved the whole world that He gave His Son don't aspire on this greatness will you it's only love that understands you understand your mind doesn't understand not as a generic source of it your mind comes into line and we've got a mind we can't avoid having it but it's something called the heart of you that understands and understanding is not knowing knowing is a different word understanding comes from suffering love love that suffers then you will be in the realm of understanding you're not I'm educating you I hope in the mental realms differently from all the

other lecturers I know but I said in the beginning this is why I think God gets me to come you must understand that put it down understanding comes from love suffering and never forget it Jesus didn't weep on the cross but He wept when Mary said what she said He shed His blood just think there used to be a hymn once because we don't sing hymns anymore we have an old red thing flashing on the wall perhaps not here we think they're very modern do away with the hymn books all stand up like this and that they are just but there used to be a hymn which had Jesus shed tears as well as His blood I can shed blood this morning not in the same sense that Jesus shed it if somebody cut me I might yelp with pain I wouldn't cry I hope I wouldn't anyway that's the thing they said behold how He loved Him

but He wasn't weeping for Lazarus do you understand there would have been crocodile tears as my mother used to talk about them because He knew that in a few minutes He was going to raise Him from the dead anyway see they don't understand other people don't understand perhaps you thought He wept because He loved Lazarus so much then why didn't He stop Him dying He could have done He knew He was going to raise Lazarus He was on a great work a demonstration from God and Heaven He was engaged in that just keep it clear in case you got caught up with modern emotional stuff but don't afraid to be be afraid to be emotional if it be right Jesus wasn't ashamed to weep but not for the stupid reasons that are merely human or humanistic that they talked about see how human He was He was being most

divine but then I shouldn't be preaching about it should I but I want to tell you, you never preach if you don't teach at the same time never you're preaching, I know they divide it up and they take the Greek word this is hermeneutics and this is something else it's all cut and dried done up in bundles of fire like buying a bunch of flowers and you've decorated your mind with a lot of knowledge but those flowers soon fade in God's sight you and I have got to be able to impart yourself I want to impart Jesus you can't if you can't impart yourself together with Him do you understand not that imparting yourself is to be the real issue or the first thing but you're a living, warm being, sentient you've got to be able to do that keep your feelings out of your preaching you'll be as useless as

a quad don't pride yourself you'll not do for God I don't mean to say you've got to be weeping about every black beetle that crosses your path I don't mean that believe it you've got to be a human being Jesus was a human being and nothing disproportionate about you so God wants us to grow now listen at that time Jesus was still in verse 30 at the place where Martha met Him and you'll have to meet Jesus just where everybody else has to meet Him do you understand He's calling for you Mary calling for you you call Lazarus afterwards don't worry about that, that's why He's come now how about you living ones oh I'm weeping about my dead brother I've met him in the course of ministry I'm not imagining anything you see where it is He's still at that place where the woman said Martha I believe

when He said I am the resurrection and the life I'm not death I haven't come to associate myself with I've come to associate myself for, not with I'm not associating myself with your if I may put it, He wouldn't put it this way trust me to have this kind of mind your ignorant weeping for He had said it, listen really do learn to read the Bible bury your old self in it and then rise up anew and you'll understand it here it is Martha says to Jesus in verse 21 Lord if thou had been here my brother had not died but I know that even now whatsoever thou would ask of God, God will give it thee Jesus said unto her thy brother shall rise again Martha knowing so much with her Jewish background says unto Him I know that He shall rise again in the resurrection of the last day Jesus could have said

unto her I am the first and the last the last day is here if I am here how about that you just keep it in mind I'm the first and the last the last day was there with her she didn't understand but no excuse for you, you say you were baptised in the Spirit and what not cause none of these men, neither Martha either was full of the Holy Ghost when you're full of the Holy Ghost it means that you're in the primary level of learning to be like God when the Holy Ghost comes only He can make you like it was only He that made Mary like she was, that was with child to bring forth the blessed Lord Jesus only He Jesus came from the Father through the Holy Spirit and then He was called Jesus on earth when He was born army I'm afraid there's so little knowledge of this and understanding God grant your

heart two great big hands that you can gather it all into your bosom and know what it's about He won't proceed any other way with you than He did with His own Son that He had to be born of the Spirit through

Mary and you must be born of the Spirit He doesn't proceed any other way it's not an illumination of mind trust that to come it is life by the Holy Ghost now beloved I really deserve a rap on the knuckle I've been preaching but I love preaching, I want to die preaching would you like that? oh I don't mean now at the moment that is if I die of course but I know that He shall rise against His martyr in the resurrection at the last day that might be a thousand years hence I want my love brother Lazarus now why did you let him die? he would have had to have confessed if they had asked him

it was implied in what they said to him they did deliberately not come when you don't understand what's happening according to your beliefs and according to what your mind tells you you learn to lie on his bosom and love him you learn to do that that's the hardest thing to do it's easy to stand up and say I believe, I believe but you stand up and say I love, I love God loves you know very sort of a matey, nicey, cautious I love you with the love of the Lord I know some people sing like they might have a cymbal full of it if you know what I mean I'm not being critical but that's the way it works out love has got to fill you got to be you you and love must be one as Jesus and love are one this is what it's all about he was the first born and the greatest but he's only the first born among

many brethren shall I tell you scripture says that do you believe that you can be born of God to that extent it will never be like my mother on earth was not a virgin that will never be but in the things of the spirit you've got to be born of the virgin Holy Ghost keep that clear for remember both male and female came from God God is virgin you understand marvellous, this is why he can offer us salvation from all sin because he's virgin marvellous only this glorious triune born God could ever be God you must have had lectures on this trinity I suppose don't know whether it was said like that but that's the truth it's so marvellous and I could preach about it all the day long but but do see this I wanted my brother now why did you let him die if you'd been here Lord he wouldn't have died

what held you what held you back I didn't come deliberately I didn't come Martha I wonder what she thought then poor Martha she couldn't understand when Mary couldn't understand you remember when they got to the grave verse 38 Jesus groaning in himself came to the grave it wasn't because Lazarus was dead Lazarus was not dead do you understand not to Jesus here it is coming to the grave weeping both Martha and Mary were thinking they'd talked about it in your home together obviously wonder why he didn't come wonder why don't he love us anymore here's the thing once you get this revelation of Jesus Christ you'll have no real troubles there'll be somebody die you might die you might break a leg on a bus you might have toothache I don't know what tragedies in your family it's good for you to

know there are no tragedies in the family of God here then is the marvelous thing we will measure God by ourselves instead of hoping to catch a glimpse of ourselves measured by God now if you say you're filled with the Holy Ghost I don't whether you go whiz bang crash because you say you've got great big power or something or whether you say God your heart will expand out of it all you say let it all come Lord let it all come anything to make me like thy son this is the big thing beloved when I get to heaven I don't want you to be better than I am in that sense if you know what I mean or greater in this I want to keep going on pressing for the prize I want to be like Jesus do you well I'm telling you one of the ways this is why this acid test is put last in the Gospels he didn't expect

you to take it in your stride at the beginning water into wine will do you for a start wonderful took nothing harder for him to raise lashes from the dead than to turn water into wine nothing nothing he can move mountains cast trees into the middle of the ocean if he wants disciplined thinking is very very wonderful

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