

**JOHN 11:28-44**  
**“BUT LORD, IT STINKETH!”**

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to John chapter 11 as we continue our in-depth study of the Gospel of John.

As we have seen in our study of John chapter 11, a friend of Jesus, Lazarus, was very sick and Mary and Martha, his sisters, sent word to Jesus to come quickly.

When word came to Jesus about Lazarus, he was already dead but only Jesus knew this. And yet he waited two days before going to the home of Mary and Martha and by the time He gets there Lazarus has been dead now for four days!

And as Jesus gets close to the home of Mary and Martha, Martha comes running towards Jesus and kind of gives Him a rebuke. If Jesus had only come sooner, maybe her brother would not have died!

And remember what Jesus said to Martha, “**... ‘I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?’**” John 11:25-26.

That is what we will be looking at this morning in our study, the evidence of our faith –  
***DO YOU BELIEVE?***

For most of us, that is not a problem, at least we don’t think it is a problem.

When things are going well, when we are healthy, wealthy and prosperous, not a care in the world, of course we believe!

But what about when our health is not good?

What about when we lose our job?

What about when we lose our home, our car?

Do we still believe all that God has said, all that He has promised us?

I think it is here where we struggle.

I want to share this with you because it does illustrate a good point about belief and how easy it is when you are not in the middle of a situation. You may have heard this story before, but it truly does drive home the point.

We are told,

In college I was asked to prepare a lesson to teach my speech class. We were to be graded on our creativity and ability to drive home a point in a memorable way. The title of my talk was, "The Law of the Pendulum."

I spent 20 minutes carefully teaching the physical principle that governs a swinging pendulum.

The law of the pendulum is: A pendulum can never return to a point higher than the point from which it was released. Because of friction and gravity, when the pendulum returns, it will fall short of its original release point. Each time it swings it makes less and less of an arc, until finally it is at rest. This point of rest is called the state of equilibrium, where all forces acting on the pendulum are equal.

I attached a 3-foot string to a child's toy top and secured it to the top of the blackboard with a thumbtack. I pulled the top to one side and made a mark on the blackboard where I let it go.

Each time it swung back I made a new mark. It took less than a minute for the top to complete its swinging and come to rest.

When I finished the demonstration, the markings on the blackboard proved my thesis.

I then asked how many people in the room **BELIEVED** the law of the pendulum was true.

All of my classmates raised their hands, so did the teacher.

He started to walk to the front of the room thinking the class was over.

In reality it had just begun.

Hanging from the steel ceiling beams in the middle of the room was a large, crude but functional pendulum (250 pounds of metal weights tied to four strands of 500-pound test parachute cord).

I invited the instructor to climb up on a table and sit in a chair with the back of his head against a cement wall.

Then I brought the 250 pounds of metal up to his nose.

Holding the huge pendulum just a fraction of an inch from his face, I once again explained the law of the pendulum he had applauded only moments before, "If the law of the pendulum is true, then when I release this mass of metal, it will swing across the room and return short of the release point. Your nose will be in no danger."

After that final restatement of this law, I looked him in the eye and asked, "Sir, do you believe this law is true?"

There was a long pause. Huge beads of sweat formed on his upper lip and then weakly he nodded and whispered, "Yes."

I released the pendulum. It made a swishing sound as it arced across the room. At the far end of its swing, it paused momentarily and started back.

I never saw a man move so fast in my life. He literally dived from the table.

Deftly [Skillfully] stepping around the still-swinging pendulum, I asked the class, “Does he believe in the law of the pendulum?”

The students unanimously answered, “NO!”

- Ken Davis, *How to Speak to Youth*, pp 104-106

As funny as that story is, many Christians do the very same thing with the Word of God, what God speaks to them about.

They say things like “*Yes, I believe you Lord!*” until the 250-pound metal ball comes swinging towards them and they run for cover.

What does that prove?

It basically shows that they don’t believe.

Now we all have done that from time to time, but my prayer this morning is that we would really trust God and His Word in our lives.

That we would grow and no matter if things are going well or a 250-pound metal ball comes swinging our way, we will stand strong in the Lord, trusting in Him!

I have called our study this morning – “***BUT LORD, IT STINKETH!***”

You will see why, and it is what Martha said to Jesus!

I have broken down these verses we will be looking at this morning into the following points.

***MARY’S RESPONSE – JOHN 11:28-32***

***THE COMPASSION OF JESUS – JOHN 11:33-38***

***ARE YOU SURE – JOHN 11:39-40***

***LAZARUS COME FORTH – JOHN 11:41-44***

So with that as our introduction, let's begin reading in John chapter 11, beginning in verse 28 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study the Gospel of John and look at this topic – ***“BUT LORD, IT STINKETH!”***

## **JOHN 11**

### **VERSES 28-32**

After Jesus is done speaking with Martha, He tells her to go and get Mary.

And the response of Mary is awesome. She is told that Jesus is looking for her and what does she do?

She does not say to Martha, ***“Go and tell Jesus that I am a little busy right now, but I will get there when I can!”***

That is not what she does. We are told here in John 11:29 that, **“As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly and came to Him.”**

My prayer is that when the Lord calls, I am ready to get up and go and follow Him, obey Him and not make excuses why I can't.

We are also told that Martha called Mary **“secretly”** because of the danger involved.

What I mean by that is they knew that the Jewish leaders were out to arrest Jesus, so Martha did not want everyone to know that Jesus was there.

Also, I think she wanted to give Mary some alone time with Jesus, she did not want the other people to follow her there. But that is not going to work.

So as Martha tells her sister, Mary, that Jesus is coming, Mary runs out to meet Him and the mourners in the house think she is going to the tomb to wail over the death of her brother Lazarus. That just makes sense.

And keep in mind the Jewish superstition that they held onto. Lazarus was dead for four days now, and they believed that the fourth day the spirit left and there was no more hope.

And here is the fourth day and the body of her brother, Lazarus was decaying and there was no hope that he would be revived.

What else was she going to do? Where else was she going to go?

Mary is not running to the tomb, but to see Jesus! What a great lesson that is for us, to run to Jesus!

And when Mary meets Jesus, she falls down at His feet and she worshiped Jesus.

That is interesting because of all the pain, the sorrow she was feeling at this time, it did not take her away from worshiping the Lord!

And that can be difficult for us as we are going through difficult times, that we can become angry at God, distance ourselves from Him.

That is the worst thing you can do. Mary did what was right, she ran to Jesus to be comforted by Him.

But how many times do we run to the world, look to the world for help, for comfort in the situations that we are facing!

The only peace you will find for whatever you are going through is the peace that Jesus has for you. It is a perfect peace in Him. Not an absence of storms or problems, but a peace through those storms of life!

Now, in saying all that, as Mary comes to Jesus, she said these words to Jesus, “**Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.**”

Think about that for a minute. These words that she spoke were very similar to Martha’s.

Is there a difference?

It is hard to know because we don’t know how she spoke these words and thus, did she also rebuke Jesus for His tardiness?

Again, we don’t know.

It may be that Mary just spoke with words of affirmation, we are not sure, but I tend to lean towards that because of her posture of worship towards Jesus.

The other thing is that Jesus did not rebuke her or correct her. So, again, I think these are words of affirmation, that she truly believed that if Jesus would have gotten there sooner, her brother would be alive! Not rebuking Him, but just the reality of the situation.

So here we have seen – ***MARY’S RESPONSE!***

As we read on, we will see – ***THE COMPASSION OF JESUS!***

We will see how Jesus responded to what Mary had said.

### **VERSES 33-38**

Here we see the compassion of Jesus towards Mary and Martha.

It says that He “**groaned in the spirit.**” And when it says that Jesus “**groaned in the spirit**” it literally means “*to snort like a horse.*”

Why was He filled with so much anger and indignation that it made Him snort?

It wasn’t over the death of Lazarus because He was going to raise him from the dead.

Then what in the world could it be, why was He so angry over this?

I believe it was over the devastating effects that sin has upon people, the consequences of sin. The pain, the suffering, the hurt when a loved one has died and as Jesus saw this with Mary and Martha, He wept.

G. Campbell Morgan put it like this. He wrote, ***“The whole situation was that He stood in the presence of death. Death was the outcome of sin. All the wrath of God surged through Him in the presence of the whole of human misery, resulting from human sin, and issuing in death and the breaking of hearts. He was moved with indignation.”***

Death is the result of sin entering this world and it is not how this world was created in the beginning. Only after Adam sinned did the second law of thermodynamics begin and things began to wear down, move from order to disorder – ***DIE!***

Now when Mary and Martha wept it was a loud wailing but for Jesus, tears flowed down His face as He quietly wept for all that sin had done upon the lives of the people.

Morris explains the weeping of Jesus like this, ***“That used here (and here only in the New Testament) points rather to a quiet weeping. Jesus did not wail loudly but He was deeply grieved.”***

You see, there is an important contrast between the tears of Mary in John 11:33 and the tears of Jesus spoken of in John 11:35.

When Mary wept it was a loud wailing. When Jesus wept it was a quiet weeping. He understood what He was going to do, but, like I have said, He is broken over what sin has done in this world. Death is something that all of us face!



Now, in comparing Mary and Jesus Barclay points this out for us as he wrote, ***“We must remember that this would be no gentle shedding of tears. It would be almost hysterical wailing and shrieking, for it was the Jewish point of view that the more unrestrained the weeping, the honour it paid to the dead.”***

That reminded me of Italian funerals when I was a kid. The loud wailing, crying that went on for two or three days!

Now, for the Jewish people it was a little different. Yes, they would wail and cry very loudly, but they would also hire professional mourners.

And the wealthier you were the more you could hire, and they believed it this was a sign of deep love and respect for the departed. That is what was going on here in John 11:33, this group of professional mourners following Mary.

Now when the people saw Jesus sob, I believe it was these professional mourners, when they saw the tears flow down His face, they said, **“See how He loved him!”**

For these Jews, in their minds, they too saw the arrival of Jesus as being too late.

In other words, ***“Too bad, now there is nothing that He can do! If He had only come sooner!”***

Make no mistake about it, the timing of Jesus is never too late, but it is perfect!

Now I can honestly say that I don't always understand this.

What do I mean by that?

I think many times the Lord should have respond sooner. That He should do this or do that. And my problem is that I can only see what is before me while the Lord sees everything. He knows what is going to happen before it happens and thus, He knows what is best for our lives!

But if He doesn't do what I want, does that change who He is, my perception of Him? It shouldn't because He is God, and I am not! He can do as He pleases, and it is perfect!

Spurgeon wrote, *“Suppose that Jesus is willing to open the eyes of the blind, and does open them; is he therefore bound to raise this particular dead man? If he does not see fit to do so, does that prove that he has not the power? If he lets Lazarus die, is it proven therefore that he could not have saved his life? May there not be some other reason? Does Omnipotence always exert its power? Does it ever exert all its power?”*

That is a very good point. Remember, in Ecclesiastes 3:11 Solomon tells us, **“He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end.”**

You see, life apart from God is empty, it is futile, there is no real meaning to it.

But once you place God back into your life you find the meaning, you find that abundant life! And God takes the things we go through, and He makes them beautiful in *“its time”* or *“His time”* not our time!

I think this fits in with what Paul said in Romans 8:28, **“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.”**

I may not *see* how something is going to work out for good.

I may not *feel* how something is going to work out for good.

But I can **“know”** that whatever I am going through will work out for good because I am the Lord's and I trust His Word in the situation I am facing!

Yes, He makes all things beautiful in His time!

Make no mistake about it. What we see here – *THE COMPASSION OF JESUS*, we also see in our own lives if we are willing to look and receive!

So now Jesus comes to the tomb where the body of Lazarus has been placed. The body of Lazarus has been there for four days now and listen to what happens next!

I have called these verses – *ARE YOU SURE?*

### VERSES 39-40

Keep in mind, even to this day they don't embalm the dead but they bury them the same day that they die, as is the case here.

Now what I want you to focus on in this section is Martha's response to the words of Jesus when He asked them to roll the stone away from the tomb.

Martha said, "**Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days.**"

John 11:39.

I like the way the King James Version puts this verse, "**Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.**" John 11:39.

Now Martha did believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah. She did believe that He is the Son of God. And she also believed that He is here now, but she didn't believe that Jesus could do anything about this condition of Lazarus, that He could raise him from the dead.

Why do I say that?

Because of her words to Jesus, that the body of her brother would stink by this time and the words of Jesus in John 11:40, "**Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?**"

When did Jesus say that?

A short time earlier, back in verses 25-26 where we read, **“I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?”**

Yes, she did say she believed these things, but her actions and her words now spoke contrary to what she said earlier.

I wonder how often we do that in our own lives?

What has God spoken to you about that you just can't believe? In fact, you may think the situation stinks!

Why do we respond like that?

Because when the Lord tells us to roll away the stone, to expose the situation, we doubt Him, we may be afraid to step forward and try, we may not like what we find.

The problem is, unless the stone is rolled away, you will not see the glory of God in that situation!

Now the thing is this. Does God need us to roll the stone away? Can't He do it Himself?

God does not need us to roll the stone away, He can do it Himself very easily, but He wants us to grow, to learn to trust Him, to take those steps of faith, even though the situation may stink!

Paul put it this way in I Corinthians 4:2, **“Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.”**

What happened here?

They did roll the stone away and God brought back to life that which was dead, Lazarus, and we will see that as we close this morning.

But let me ask you this. What about you this morning?

Maybe it is your marriage relationship, it stinks, and you have just given up!

Maybe it is your child or children, they are so far from God, they are so rebellious, and you are ready to give up because you are tired of this stinky situation, it is more than you can handle.

Or maybe at work, the people around you are abusive, unkind, or your boss is unfair, and you just hate the smell, it just stinks, and you just want to quit!

Or maybe it is in ministry, things are not going the way you wanted them to go, things are not working out, it is beginning to stink, and you are ready to run instead of rolling the stone away!

As you look at these situations you just don't see any life, it looks dead and there is no hope for this issue.

Wherever you are at, whatever you are going through this morning, don't give up, don't quit, roll the stone away and see the glory of God.

The Lord said in Jeremiah 29:11, **“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.”**

Do you believe that?

I bet you do during the good times, when things are going well for you. But what about during the bad times, when things are not going like you thought they would?

You see, it is especially true in those difficult times, when things seem so dark, when they seem so dead, when they just plain stink!

You see, God does not always answer in our time, as quickly as we would like, in the manner we think He should, but I will say this, He does have a perfect time to act and a perfect plan for our lives as we have seen in Him raising Lazarus from the dead.

What God is asking us to do is to roll away the stone, expose those issues, no matter how smelly they may be, and see the glory of God, see how He will bring to life those things that seem so dead right now!

Remember the story of Noah in Genesis chapter 6, how God told Noah to build a boat, an ark.

Now for many, they read that, and they think it is not such a big deal, but it was.

This ark was 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high with a total volumetric capacity of 1,400,000 cubic feet and that is equal to the volumetric capacity of 522 standard livestock railroad cars.

It had three decks each about 15 feet high and it took Noah and his boys 120 years to build this thing, sounds like one of my building projects!

And keep in mind that they could not load up the truck at Lowe's or Menard's with all the supplies that they needed. This was all hand constructed!

Not only that but can you imagine the ridicule from those walking by this work of Noah. This ark was not built by water, and it had never rained on the earth until the flood waters came upon the earth.

So day in and day out people walked by seeing this boat, *"Hey Noah, where's the rain?"*

He could have become very discouraged, even doubting what God told him, what God said for him to do. Can you imagine, 120 years of this ridicule!

But for Noah, he continued on in the work and in Hebrews 11:7 we are told, **"By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith."**

In other words, he rolled the stone away, did what God told him to do, and yes, it was not easy, all the mocking that was going on, it must have stunk!

But look at the glory of God that was seen in his obedience as he and his family were spared, he brought that ark to life, you might say, to save them while the rest of the world died!

It was through the family of Noah that the earth was then re-populated and from him the Messiah would come.

For Noah, the question was, *“Do you believe?”*

And the answer is simple, he did believe, and we see that demonstrated by what he did, built the ark. His actions showed that what he believed he did!

In the book of Numbers Moses sends twelve spies into the land of Canaan, the Promised Land, a representative from each of the twelve tribes of Israel, and two of those twelve men were Joshua and Caleb.

Now the promise that God gave to Moses, and he shared with his people was that the land of Canaan was theirs, God was going to give it to them.

So as the spies went into the land, spending forty days there, they reported back to Moses the good news and the bad news.

In Numbers 13 we are told, **“Then they told him, and said: ‘We went to the land where you sent us. It truly flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. Nevertheless the people who dwell in the land are strong; the cities are fortified and very large; moreover we saw the descendants of Anak there.’ . . . ‘There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.’”** Numbers 13:27-28, 33.

In other words, the land is great, but we can never defeat the people of the land, they are like giants.

The answer to the question, *“Do you believe?”* is *“No, we do not believe!”*

They took their eyes off the Lord and His promises to them, and they then placed them on the situation, they were unwilling to roll the stone away and see the glory of God because the situation, in their eyes, stunk and they were not going to step in it!

There was death before them, and they could not believe that life could arise out of this situation!

Now let me clarify something here, ten spies came back with this report, but Joshua and Caleb did not come back with a negative report, only good news in what they saw.

We are told **“Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, ‘Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it.’ . . . But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes; and they spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying: ‘The land we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. If the LORD delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, “a land which flows with milk and honey.” Only do not rebel against the LORD, nor fear the people of the land, for they are our bread; their protection has departed from them, and the LORD is with us. Do not fear them.”** Numbers 13:30, 14:6-9.

Do you see that? They were willing to roll the stone away, even though the situation did not look good through the eyes of man, it may have stunk, but they were willing to step forward because they believed in the promise of God!



I think the problem comes when we doubt God and His promises to us, when we lose perspective of things.

Yes, things may look dead, they may stink, but Jesus can bring to life those things that may seem dead to us!

It is as Paul said in Romans 4:17, “**. . . God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did.**”

So for us, I think what we need to do as we go through situations like this, when we begin to doubt, that we roll the stone away, we obey the Lord, trust in Him, get the correct perspective of things, looking at them through the eyes of God instead of our own eyes.

How can we regain that perspective if we lost it?

In John chapter 12 we see Mary anoint the feet of Jesus for His burial; she believed that He would be raised from the dead, something that the apostles did not even get at this point.

How could she see these things? Because she spent time at the feet of Jesus and as she did, she saw things that others couldn't see, she had a proper perspective of the situation.

When you are struggling in seeing Jesus clearly, having a correct perspective of a situation, I bet you are not spending time with the Lord, in His Word, in prayer, in fellowship with other believers, you may not go to church, and you have all kinds of reasons why you are not there.

And you continue to struggle. Now some of you may be offended by that, but that is not my intention at all, but think about it. What is your perspective of the situation? Are you spending time at the feet of Jesus?

Asaph, in Psalm 73 had the same problem, and he felt the situation he was in stunk! It was not fair! He saw the prosperity of the wicked. He saw that they die painless deaths. He saw them have easy lives. He saw them boast of all their evils. They were very proud. They even mocked God thinking if He is real, He can't do anything to them.

On the other hand, Asaph was a godly man, was sick, not wealthy, life was hard, it was painful, it was unfair, and it stunk!

Now, do you think he had a correct perspective of the situation?

Not at all.

First of all, when we are going through tough times, we tend to look at others, especially the ungodly, the unsaved, and we think they have it better, but they don't!

Secondly, we are looking at things from a very narrow perspective and not seeing it through the eyes of God with an eternal perspective!

How did Asaph get the correct perspective?

Listen to what he said in Psalm 73:15-17, **“If I had said, ‘I will speak thus,’ Behold, I would have been untrue to the generation of Your children. When I thought how to understand this, It was too painful for me - Until I went into the sanctuary of God; Then I understood their end.”**

You see, he had the wrong perspective at first and that did not change until he went into the house of God and then he had an eternal perspective of the situation.

Do you see how important that is?

We may know all the theological issues, we may be able to quote all kinds of Scriptures, but as we move away from God, we will lose that perspective and we will not apply those things to our lives, we won't believe.

Danish sculptor Thors Walden created a life-size granite carving of Jesus.

This is a fascinating statue, the way he sculptured it because when you stand next to this statue, you can only see the body of Jesus, you can't see His face no matter how hard you try.

Now that can be very disappointing, but there is a sign placed next to this statue that reads:

***If you want to see the face of Jesus,  
You must sit at His feet.***

You know what, as you sit at the feet of this statue, you can see His face perfectly. I think that is very true in our own lives, if we want to see Him clearly, we must sit down at His feet so we can receive from Him!

It is as David said in Psalm 32:7-9, **“You are my hiding place; You shall preserve me from trouble; You shall surround me with songs of deliverance. I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye. Do not be like the horse or like the mule, Which have no understanding, Which must be harnessed with bit and bridle, Else they will not come near you.”**

You see, we need to keep our eyes upon Jesus, face Him in fellowship you might say, and He will guide you, He will direct your steps, all you must do is believe and roll the stone away and see the glory of God!

And do you know what happens as we obey the Lord?

David said in Psalm 40:3, **“He has put a new song in my mouth - Praise to our God; Many will see it and fear, And will trust in the LORD.”**

As we obey Him, His joy will flow from our lives, we will have a bounce in our step and a song in our heart as the Lord puts us on display for others to see so they too may receive what we have, Jesus!

Perspective is so important, as David said in Psalm 3, a Psalm that was written as he was fleeing from his son Absalom who tried to and did for a time usurp the kingdom from his father, David.

Can you imagine how he felt as his own flesh and blood did this to him?

Can you imagine how hopeless the situation must have seemed to David.

The despair as he thought about this as he was on the run, his own son wanting to kill him.

The situation was dark, it seemed dead, lifeless, in fact, I think I can safely say, it ***STUNK!***

But David says in Psalm 3:3-6, **“But You, O LORD, are a shield for me, My glory and the one who lifts up my head. I cried to the LORD with my voice, And He heard me from His holy hill. I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the LORD sustained me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people Who have set themselves against me all around.”**

He looked to the Lord for protection, for guidance, for encouragement and in the end, God brought David back into the kingdom and dealt with Absalom, he died in battle for his rebellion!

That situation for David that looked dead, lifeless, hopeless, it just stunk, now came back to life as he walked by faith and trusted in the Lord!

Don't negate the truths of God because of what you see as this story shows. We are told, People refuse to believe that which they don't want to believe, in spite of the evidence.

When explorers first went to Australia they found a mammal which laid eggs; spent some time in water, some on land; had a broad, flat tail, webbed feet, and a bill similar to a duck.

Upon their return to England, they told the populace of this, and all felt it was a hoax.

They returned to Australia and found a pelt from this animal and took it back to England, but the people still felt it was a hoax.

In spite of the evidence, they disbelieved because they didn't want to believe.

- J. McDowell, Answers to tough questions, under "miracles"

In this world it can get tough, it may seem hopeless, lifeless, and it just stinks at times to the point where you just don't want to believe, you just want to give up!

Don't go down that path but roll the stone away and see the glory of God, what He wants to do.

I can't tell you that immediately your situation will be resolved, but I can tell you that God will give you His peace as you go through those times. He will strengthen you. We can have the victory if we look to Jesus!

Jesus said in John 16:33, "**These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.**"

Let's sit at His feet, receive from Him and then put our faith into action by rolling the stone away and seeing God bring to life these things that we thought were dead, stinky!

You see, our peace is found in Jesus, as we walk and live in this world we will have tribulation, but look to Him for that peace, for that life that is only found in Him!

Remember our story that we opened up with, the Law of the Pendulum.

As that 250-pound ball comes swinging down upon you, don't run away, don't flee or hide, but believe in what God has said in His Word, trust in Him because the Law of God will supersede the Law of the Pendulum, and we know how true that is!

It is as Numbers tells us of the Lord, **“God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?”** Numbers 23:19.

Remember what Jesus said to Martha, **“Do you believe this?”** He is asking you the same thing this morning! Do you believe?

When God tells us to go forth, to roll away the stone, don't say to Him, ***“Are you sure?”***

Walk by faith and roll that stone away and see the life that God will bring to those dead, stinky situations we face in life!

As we read on listen to how this story concludes this morning as we look at what Jesus said – ***LAZARUS COME FORTH!***

#### VERSES 41-44

Remember what Jesus said to them, **“... ‘roll away the stone.’”** John 11:39.

They told Jesus, ***“Are you kidding me. It is hot out. Lazarus has been in the tomb for four days now, and can you imagine what this is going to smell like! You roll the stone away; we are getting out of here!”***

Now they did not say that but notice what they did.

We are told, “**Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was laying. . .**” John 11:41.

As you can see, they stepped out in faith and rolled the stone away. And I’m sure at this point, the smell was not pretty.

But that walk of faith on their part. The Lord called them to do this, and they stepped up and my prayer again is that when the Lord calls, I am ready to go forward and not only ready, but I do go forward. And I am sure you feel the same way!

Also, I want you to see that here in the middle of this stink, this mess, death, we see Jesus in communion with the Father.

May we not let life’s circumstances, the stench of death that may be around us, keep us from communion with the Father!

As I have said, it is easy to do, loose that fellowship with God the Father as things become difficult. We can isolate ourselves from God, from His Word and from brethren.

Not only that but as Jesus spoke to the Father, He did so loudly so the people could hear Him.

Why did He do that? Yes, so they could hear, but there is more to it than that.

He did it so that when Lazarus does come forth, they will believe that Jesus is from the Father!

That is what Morris wrote regarding what Jesus was doing here, the loud voice He spoke with.

He wrote, *“The loud voice was not, of course, because a loud voice was needed to make the dead hear. Probably it was in part at least, so that the crowd could know that this was no work of magic, but the very power of God. Wizards mutter their incantations and spells (cf. Isaiah 8:19). Not so the Son of God.”*

Think about this for a minute. They smelled the smell of death and now they are going to see the miracle of life!

May we display our faith openly, take those steps of faith loudly so when God brings forth the miracle, others will see it and come to faith in Christ!

And as Jesus speaks forth these words He speaks to Lazarus as if he were alive, why?

As Paul said in Romans 4:17, **“... God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did.”**

You see, He can bring to life the dead and thus, as He called, Lazarus came forth!

Why did He call Lazarus by name?

Some speculate and it may be true, that if Jesus only said, *“Come forth!”* all the dead would be raised. An interesting thought but I think Jesus wanted all to see that this was a call to Lazarus alone!

Now please understand that this was not a resurrection because Lazarus is going to die again, but it was a resuscitation!

One day we will be raised in glory, as Jesus was, when we get our resurrection bodies at the time of the Rapture.

That day is coming!



Now, how can we apply this to our lives today?

Does it apply to our lives today?

I think it does, there is a spiritual application to this.

We can see in our own lives and in the lives of others that Jesus raises the dead, in a sense.

Yes, some He raises physically, and they will die again like Lazarus.

But more importantly, He raises those who are spiritually dead back to life as Paul tells us in Ephesians 2:1, “**And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins.**”

That was the ministry of Jesus. To raise those back to life who were spiritually dead, and it is still the ministry of Jesus today through the Holy Spirit!

Remember what Jesus said in John 10:10, “**. . . I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.**”

And what we read in John 11:25-26, “**. . . ‘I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?’**”

Jesus is not speaking of just physical life here but spiritual life, that eternal life that is only found in Him.

Apart from Christ we are like spiritual zombies because we are dead in our trespasses and sins!

Everyone who is not in Christ, not a believer is dead, spiritually speaking. And they are in these dead bodies bound by the grave clothes they are wearing, the grave clothes of sin that has them in bondage and they are prisoners of Satan!

And here comes Jesus able to raise the spiritually dead back to life again!

Look at what is taking place here.

Lazarus comes forth and yet he is wrapped in grave clothes.

If that is true, how did he come forward?

Some say that he glided over the ground, I seriously doubt that.

I think he was hopping out of this tomb and Jesus tells those who rolled this stone away to, “... **‘Loose him and let him go.’**” John 11:44.

Yes, it is the Holy Spirit that brings people to saving faith, but we get to share our faith, roll that stone away you might say and then we can free them from the bondage that they have been in, or we can disciple them!

Now you may feel inadequate to do that, to disciple someone. You may not feel qualified to disciple someone. You may not feel that old in the Lord to disciple someone.

That may be very true but listen to what the blind man that Jesus touched and how the religious leaders were coming against him, and his response was very simple, “... **‘Whether He is a sinner or not I do not know. One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see.’**”

John 9:25.

That is the story of every one of us. We were blind but now we see. And we might not know a lot, but we do know that we were blind and now we see, and we can share that with others, what Jesus has done for us!

As I close this morning, I know that some of you are going back to the problems you had the week before, some of you will face new problems.

How are you going to face those things?

Yes, the situation you are in, the situation that you are facing seems dead, there is no life to it, it just ***STINKS!***

But the One who has given to us a new life can give life to those things that seem dead in our life, that stink. But we must come to Him, we must obey Him and roll that stone away, you might say.

As impossible as it may seem, all things are possible with God!

The focus of your faith must be Jesus and not the solution to the problem and not the problem. He is the One who can raise the dead!

Don't be focused on some program, some doctrine, as right as it may be, be focused on Jesus!

And I will close with this, and I want you to remember our story that we opened up with, the Law of the Pendulum.

As that 250-pound ball comes swinging down upon you, don't run away, don't flee or hide, but believe in what God has said in His Word, trust in Him because the Law of God will supersede the Law of the Pendulum, and we know how true that is!

Remember what Jesus said to Martha, "**Do you believe this?**"

He is asking you the same thing this morning!

Do you believe?

If you do, then roll the stone away!