

## **THE RESURRECTION OF LAZARUS**

### **Part 4**

#### **“The Ministry of Loosing”**

**John 11:44 (HCSB) “The dead man came out bound hand and foot with linen strips and with his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Loose him and let him go.”**

**The phrase “let him go” is identical to Jesus’s words at his arrest when he said to the soldiers, ‘let these (my disciples) go their way’ (John 18:8) ;**

**So ‘*Loose him and let him go his way*’ would be a better translation here...**

***Free him to take the path God has called him to!***

**Lazarus was resurrected, but he wasn’t free to go!**

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**Now, I note two things at this point in the story...**

**First, we see that at Jesus’s own resurrection, He unwound His own grave-clothes, not needing the help of any man.**

**But at Lazarus’s resurrection, Jesus did the resurrecting, while He called others to do the freeing—Lazarus needed others to help set him free!**

**Jesus could easily have walked over to Lazarus and unwound the grave clothes Himself, but He chose to call others to do it.**

**He looked out at the stunned crowd who had just seen a dead man resurrected and commanded them, "LOOSE HIM" so he can go his way.**

**I'm sure that at first no one knew who to make the first move, but finally someone stepped forward, then a few others, and with trembling hands they removed what had him bound.**

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**This is a powerful illustration of a New Testament truth for the church:**

***Jesus resurrects people out of the grave of sin and saves them, but He calls the church to play a role in freeing them to walk in God's will!***

**There are some here today longing to live resurrected lives.**

**You've been born again; you've risen from the dead—But you're still tangled up in burial clothes.**

**So let me point out 2 ways the body of Christ can loose people to live resurrected lives, free to "take the path God has for them."**

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**I. Forgive them**

**There is power in releasing someone from guilt and shame through forgiveness.**

**ILLUS: dad**

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**Far too often, while a person may know that God has forgiven them, they struggle to feel forgiven and received by the church.**

**One day while Jesus was teaching, a woman caught in adultery was brought to Him and thrown at his feet.**

**None of her accusers, however, could claim to be free of their own sin, so they walked away.**

**But her real freedom came when the Son of God said, "Neither do I condemn you, go and sin no more" (John 8:11 NKJV).**

**In forgiving her, Jesus set her free to GO and DO and BE what God's plan for her was.**

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**When you think about it, Jesus was always setting people free so they could "GO in freedom to walk in God's will!**

**\*He told the 10 lepers, "GO, show yourselves..."**

**\*He told the paralyzed man after healing him, "take your mat and GO home."**

**\*He told the horribly demon possessed man of Gadara after setting him free, "GO home and tell what great things the Lord has done for you!"**

**Over and over, Jesus set people free to GO, DO and BE what they couldn't do until they were free.**

**LISTEN: When we refuse to let someone GO thru forgiveness, we are in a very real way keeping them bound.**

**So Jesus says to all of us regarding those who need our forgiveness—"Loose them, and let them go!"**

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**A SECOND way the church is called to loose people is by...**

## **II. Truth spoken in love**

**Paul told the Ephesian church, "Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ" (Ephesians 4:15 NLT).**

**Not just Bible truth, but truth salted with love.**

**The story is told of a man who received a call from his wife just as she was about to fly home from Europe. "How's my cat?" she asked.**

**"Dead," he replied.**

**"Oh, honey, don't be so honest. Why didn't you break the news to me more slowly? You've ruined my trip."**

**"What do you mean?"**

**"You could have told me he was on the roof. And when I called you from Paris, you could have told me he was acting sluggish. Then when I called from London, you could have said he was sick, and when I called you from New York, you could have said he was at the vet. Then, when I arrived home, you could have said he was dead. In other words, you could have let me down easy."**

**The husband had never been exposed to such protocol but was willing to learn. "OK," he said. "I'll do better next time."**

**"By the way," she asked, "how's Mom?"**

**There was a long silence, then he replied, "Uh, she's on the roof."**

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**The church is called to loose people from bondage by the power of Bible truth.**

**Bible truth is ABSOLUTE, UNIVERSAL TRUTH...**

**It is Truth that is true in every time and place for all people, and never changes or adapts to suit others.**

**This was the truth Jesus taught and that the Bible is filled with...**

**Moral, ethical, spiritual, irrefutable, absolute truth about God, the human race, creation, the devil, eternity, heaven and hell.**

**The Bible is a book of truth undiluted, unpolluted, and unstained by the world or the devil.**

**It is truth without the tiniest percentage of falsehood.**

**It is truth straight from God's throne to you and me, an untarnished love letter of the pure words of God.**

**And at the center of the entire volume of Scripture is Jesus—the way, the truth, and the life—and the testimony of His sacrifice on the Cross for us...**

**Paul wrote, "How true it is, and how I long that everyone should know it, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—and I was the greatest of them all" (1 Tim. 1:15 LB).**

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**Jesus said that God's truth, Bible truth, including the Words He Himself taught, and the truth of His death on the cross—has the amazing power to set people free.**

**“You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32 NKJV).**

**But not the kind of freedom many of the Jews expected the Messiah to bring—freedom from Roman tyranny.**

**And not the freedom some in our day think of—to do what you want, when you want, the way you want.**

**The kind of freedom Jesus spoke of is freedom from the worst tyranny of all—bondage to sin.**

**Paul wrote that when a person got saved they would have the testimony, “Having been set free from sin, I became a servant of righteousness” (Ro. 6:18).**

**Catch the connection between truth and freedom!**

**Jesus said, “If you stick with living out (the truth of) what I tell you, you are my disciples for sure. Then you will experience for yourselves the truth, and the truth will free you” (John 8:32 Message).**

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**And that’s where the church comes in...**

**It’s the church’s calling to loose people from their old grave clothes of bondage by ministering the truth of God’s Word in a spirit of love.**

**Some churches beat people up with a heavy Bible, but a balanced church will minister God's truth with a velvet glove!**

**ILLUS: gravy**

**Paul wrote to young Pastor Timothy, "...focus on reading the Scriptures to the church, encouraging the believers, and teaching them" (1 Tim. 4:13 NLT).**

**We're to speak God's truth to one another in love——When we're in struggles, when we have failed, when we're battling to grow in Christ Jesus, the solution is truth seasoned with love.**

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**In closing, Jesus's word to all believers is, "Loose people and let them go through the power of forgiveness, and by ministering God's truth in love!"**

**Mention CR**

**Let someone go today! Loose someone today!**



