

# John 11:1-44 || I Am the Resurrection and the Life

## La Mirada Christian Church: "Believe" Sermon Series

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[A lightly edited transcript from the live message]

Wow. Good morning. Woo! I could just sing that song on hard repeat. That is awesome. I sought the Lord and he heard. It's really, speaking of hearing, that's really echoey. Whoever's in charge of that. The Holy Spirit's really moving. All right. Good morning. Good morning. My name is Jennifer Richmond. I'm a lifeboat pastor here at La Mirada Church and our senior most holy reverend, Pastor Joe. What? That's what I call him all the time. And the first lady of the senior most holy reverend. Okay. Oh, I'm getting a little crazy. All right. Glad you guys could enjoy the break this week. God is good all the time. And we've got a great church. We've got a great team. We've got great leaders. And thank you, Galen, and the worship team for leading us to the throne this morning. That was beautiful. All right. All right. What would you say is the most difficult thing about being a Christian? I don't have to think long about that question for me. It's timing. I believe in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. I believe that he took that sea that he created and he parted it, and his people walked out on dry land

They left Egypt as slaves, and they got to the other side as free people. I don't doubt any miracle or sign recorded in the Bible. God can. I believe he did. In spite of that, I come back to this issue. I do. I'm just being honest. timing. And it's not a head issue. It's a heart one. I know his timing is perfect. When God delivered his people from slavery out of Egypt, the first thing he gave his people was a, I know the calendar. I know the timing. Thank you for doing that. I believe I do, but the way I thought it would go or the timing of how I imagined and how I hope things would be He isn't always lining up with what God seems to be doing or not doing, I believe. But God seems absent, silent, slow. And all the verses that I've memorized and all the truths I do believe, and I'm being really honest here, they don't always feel comforting. Because when it comes down to it, I really just want things the way I had imagined them. The way I had hoped that they would be. My college roommate, she wouldn't have died in a tragic accident on a missions trip

My dad would have been healed. He wouldn't live 20 years crippled and eventually dying from multiple sclerosis. My mom would have beat cancer. And my friend Ted wouldn't have died just a few days ago. Suddenly, unexpectedly. And that's where I find myself this morning, even as I stand here in front of you. Someone who finds herself truly believing, but, and so, and providentially, in God's perfect timing, here we are. And we're at the 11th chapter of the gospel of John, where we're going to consider this I believe but issue. And I pray and I've prayed that like me, you too will move from I believe but a little closer to I believe and. And this is the greatest miracle of Jesus apart from his resurrection. And it's the last public sign and miracle recorded in John. And this moment marks the end of Jesus' public ministry because after this, he will no longer walk openly among the Jews. So let's pick up here where we left off last week. We're in the final weeks of Jesus' life before the cross

And John has brought us sign by sign and I am statement by I am statement to this point in his gospel with one goal in mind that we might what? Believe. leave. And although there are more signs and statements, so many more, in fact, that John writes that if every one of them could be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books. How poetic, John. And how true. Jesus had been in Jerusalem for the Feast of Dedication, Hanukkah. That's past. But they, loudaioi/Ιουδαῖοι, can you say that word with me? Good job. Good job. loudaioi/Ιουδαῖοι. These are the Jewish leaders. They were trying to kill him. They're so mad. If you don't know what that aside was for, I listened to it a couple weeks ago or every single message. Anyway, they're trying to kill him. He's now across the Jordan River where John used to baptize. You might remember this is where John opened his gospel when we first met John the Baptist. These things, the things that John testifying about Jesus took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing

Jesus went away again across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing at first. And there he remained. And if you just flip right back in your Bible or swipe if you're on your phone or something to John 10:40, it says it right there. And you can see it on this map where that blue dot is. How could I make that big enough? I wasn't sure if I was going to show it. It's kind of big. You can see on that map right there where that blue dot is. and though we're going to kind of do this path where you see the red there on the screen. So now a certain man was ill. Lazarus was his nickname.

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And this is on the next slide. Hope, hopefully I got my slide order for right on you. Yeah. Certain man was ill. Lazarus, his nickname Lazarus is actually Hebrew word and it's El Azar, El God Azar helped. How appropriate for our story today. God help. God is my help. A certain man, Lazarus, ill, Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. It was Mary who anointed the Lord with one man and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill

Remember, there are two Bethanies. It can be a little confusing. I put the blue dot and the red dot, so remember, Jesus is on the blue dot right now. Remember, there's two Bethanies, and this little family, they live in the red dot, Bethany, all right and this little family they live near Jerusalem Bethany like Bethlehem house of bread Bethani means house of the poor or house of the afflicted and randomly it also means dates. House of dates not like going out on a date but like eating dates it's interesting what it means but it's interesting that John gives us all this detail detail about Mary being the one who anoints Jesus you might be wondering did we miss that story like why is he saying as if we would but I already know. Actually, it's coming up. He's going to get to it. John writes his gospel way late. He writes it in 90 AD after Mark had already been written, Matthew, Luke, and that story was already in circulation. He kind of just assumes his readers, that's us, have heard about Mary's anointing Jesus, even though he doesn't even write about it

So the next chapter, we're going to get to that in a couple of weeks. So Lazarus, other sister is Martha. You remember her? She's the one who was distracted when she was entertaining in her home while Mary was at the feet of Jesus. Martha, Martha, remember that? Jesus tells her, your sister's doing the right thing. She's doing the best thing. She's sitting at my feet. She's learning. That's in Luke 10, if you want to look that later. So it's these sisters who send this urgent message. The sister sent to him saying, Lord, he who you love is ill. The sisters stay in Bethany. That's the red dot Bethany, red dot Bethany, where their dying brother is. And they They send this messenger to find Jesus and give them their message. And notice that the message is just a statement. It's just a statement. It's not even a request. Lord, he, no name, just the one whom you love, is ill. They must have known that for Jesus to come close to Jerusalem would have been dangerous because the Jews have made it really clear they want him dead

So the message is simple. It's desperate, but just a statement. And it's just leaving it up to Jesus, really, to take the action. When he gets the message, he says something that should sound familiar to us because it's the same reason that he gives about the man born blind back in chapter 9, the glory of God. But when Jesus heard it, he said, this illness does not lead to death. How many of you read this story before? How many of you know how it ends? It does lead to death. Jesus needed to read the Bible. Maybe he didn't know that. It does, it's going to lead to death, but it's not the kind of death that they're ultimately thinking of. It's for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be, what? Glorified through it. Jesus says what's not going to happen and what is going to happen. One, this illness won't lead to death because God is going to be glorified and the Son of God is also going to be glorified. What's Jesus' mission? That God and the Son of God are glorified. This is hard to hear. I mean, really, this is hard to hear

I know it because it was hard for me to hear. There's got to be at least one other person that feels like that's a little hard to hear. But Jesus' mission, listen, Listen, listen, Jesus' mission wasn't to heal everyone. It wasn't. It was this. The word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory. Glory as of the only son from the father, full of grace and truth. If the gospel you're preaching can't be preached in a concentration camp where people are dying grotesque, horrifying deaths, it's not the gospel. faithful. Jesus didn't come to heal everyone in this life. He came that he might be glorified and his father will be glorified. And we're going to get to that because that's pretty awesome. So as much as it pained Jesus, he was fully human. He was focused on his mission for our good and for his glory. And that's a fact that we read in print on the screen. It's in the pages of our Bible. It's in our hands. You can't even memorize it, but it can sting. It can sting, especially if you walked in this room today and you're hurting because of sickness and death, and it's around you and it's heavy

So I think John is aware of that sting when he made sure to include this next statement. Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So in the message, the two sisters sent, Lazarus is only named as the one who loved by Jesus,

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that love is the Greek word *phileo*, the human, warm love of a friend. Here, though, this love is *agape*. You don't see it in your English because the Bible was originally written in, I didn't phrase it the way you do. The New Testament. I didn't say the New Testament word. Greek, it's very good. Timing, timing again, back to the timing. Wow. This is the divine love, and it has to do, *agape* love, with embracing God's will. John affirms that Jesus loved them. The next thing that you would expect is action based on that love. We know that Jesus can heal from a distance. He's already done that back in chapter four with the official's son. In fact, John tells us that miracle was Jesus' second sign. Mary and Martha would have known about this. Maybe it had even come to mind. Jesus did it before

Maybe he'll do it again. We think along those same lines before. We think about, okay, what do I know to be true? What can he possibly do again? He did this. Maybe he can do that. That Jesus will simply speak healing and they'll see life come back into their brother as he's fading away. Considering how dangerous it was for Jesus to come near Jerusalem, maybe this would even make sense. Or maybe Jesus loved these three, so he'll drop everything. He'll just come right away. I know I would do that. I love people. I hate to see people in pain, suffering. I try to help out. I try to bring healing. If I would do it, how much more would Jesus? So what happens next? Remember, it's out of love, out of *agape* love. It's God honoring. It's God glorifying love. Instead of dropping everything, instead of healing from a distance, when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed. And not just for a moment or a day, but two days longer in the place where he was. This gets our attention. It got mine. We, I want a Jesus that moves when I call

I want a Jesus that goes and responds and fixes and heals and touches and speaks. I want, we want. an active on my behalf in the way I imagined he should act, Jesus. But in this moment, Jesus stayed. It's actually one word in the Greek, *eh-mei-nen/ἔμεινεν*, *eh-mei-nen/ἔμεινεν*. He stayed, *eh-mei-nen/ἔμεινεν*, right where he was. Jesus let that messenger travel all the way to him. And it was about 20 miles, a full day's trip. Jesus gets the message and rooted in *agape* love and for the purpose of God's glory, we've been told, he stayed right there in the other Bethany, the red dot Bethany across the Jordan for two days. How could it be good for Jesus to choose staying. Over healing, remaining, over ending suffering? Why would God allow someone to suffer if he could just prevent it. And he could. I believe that. You remember the last time Jesus remained somewhere for two days? It's also in chapter four. Before he goes and does the long distance healing of the official's son, before that miracle, he had remained with the Samaritan woman in her village

Same word. For two days, two days. What happened? John says that many more believed because of his word during that time, during those two days. And while John tells us what happened in that Samaritan village, this time we have no idea what Jesus is doing for those two days. Just this, two days passed, 48 hours, and the sun sets and the sun rises and the sun set and the sun rose again. Jesus stays. Then after this, he said to his disciples, let us go to Judea again. The disciples said to him, Rabbi, you know, the Jews are just now seeking to stone you. Are you going to go there again? He literally just said he was. So if they had a Bible, maybe they could have just turned back the page over and read. He literally just said that. They picked up stones to stone him and they sought to arrest him. It's the whole reason why they ran the other Bethany across the Jordan. They might have reasoned this was why Jesus even stayed for the two days. I mean, fear of death by stoning. But now they're questioning him

Is this a good idea now? And instead of I'm ready to heal Lazarus or check on Mary and Martha or anything, anything at all related to the now two day old message, passage or the obvious risk of heading back to Judea, Jesus answers with a cryptic proverb. Are there not 12 hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble because he sees the light of the world. But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles because the light is not in him. I totally, I figured that out right away. Okay, Jesus. He reminds them of an obvious truth, really. There's light during the day. There's darkness during the night. 12 hours, 12 hours, and he's making a spiritual point. Nothing will happen that is outside the plan of God. Light enables walking without stumbling. But without that light, me, he's saying, you will stumble. So now we go, while you have the light with you, I'm on the Father's time. And that time is now, not 48 hours earlier. And Jesus knows now what no one with him knew. Osiris had died by now

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Now, it took a day for that messenger to urgently come to him. Two days, Jesus holds off. He remains. And now Jesus lets his disciples know what only he divinely knew and what he had planned to do. Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him. The disciples said to him, Lord, if he's fallen asleep, I mean, who likes to be awakened from a nap? No one. Let his body heal. He will recover. cover. Now, Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought he meant taking a rest and sleep. You know, euphemisms like this for dying are common in Jesus' time, just like they are today. Fallen asleep was a common one. Left this world, you might say. Departed, passed away. Euphemisms for dying. But Jesus talks about awakening his friend as if he's just waking him up from a nap. And even his disciples take it literally. And Jesus then has to really make it clear. Jesus Jesus told them plainly, Lazarus has died, but let's go to him. If you're following along, that would have made sense, maybe. Our friend, he isn't asleep

He's dead, but let's just go anyway. Except that's not what Jesus said. We train the kids in Sunday school. Hey, that's not what the Bible says. Like they're supposed to yell at us if we leave stuff out, make sure they're really listening. You guys can do that too. Feel free. Joe would probably love that kind of interaction. Don't do it on my Sunday. Do it on his. All right. Jesus told them plainly, Lazarus has died. And for your sake, I'm glad I was not there. So that you may believe. But let's go to him. What? I'm glad I wasn't there? That's unexpected. I wish I could have been there. That's what we want to say to a friend. But Jesus' mission, once again, is glorifying God so that they would believe. leave. Anyone else saying this, anyone else saying something like that would sound cool. God wasn't there. But Jesus is love. Jesus loved Lazarus. And they're all going to need this moment. They need to strengthen their belief. Jesus knows this. The disciples must have been stunned, confused, maybe hurt, maybe fearful, thinking about heading back to Judea, But somehow inspired by these words, Thomas speaks up

So Thomas, called the twin Didymus in Greek, said to his fellow disciples, Let's also go, that we may die with him. Okay, wow. Ironically, Thomas, yes, the same Thomas who later doubts Jesus is risen from the dead, doubting Thomas. He gets this right, ironically. Let's go, that we may die. Even though he doesn't really grasp what he's actually saying. Because raising Lazarus from the dead is going to cost Jesus life. This is it. He's going to be that close. And we're just a straight shot down now, the rest of John, all the way to the crucifixion and resurrection. Jesus is going to die. Eventually Thomas will. He doesn't know that, of course. They know the threats of death awaited in Judea and literal, actual death now does as well. Lazarus is dead. All the disciples, even bold Thomas, are going to run when it's Jesus' death on the cross. us, that we may die with him. Man, those words must have echoed in Thomas's mind. You think of Peter denying Jesus and the words that must have echoed in his, but Thomas had these words to say as well

And so Jesus and the other disciples, they go to the other Bethany, the red Bethany, the one that's closer to Judea, to danger, to death, walking in the light because they are with Jesus. Now, when Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. It's interesting, in Jewish tradition, when someone died, they believed that the spirit remained around time, lingered and hung out with the body for three days. It's not a biblical understanding. The Bible doesn't teach that. But this is what they believed then, and many Jews believe it to this day as well. So Jewish law at the time actually required burial on the day of a death burial. Ariel. And then six days after that, they would have mourning in a time period still observed to this day called Shiva, sitting Shiva, it's called. Took a day for the message to get to Jesus. Two days, Jesus lingers, remains, we know that. And a day for Jesus to travel to Bethany. Lazarus is dead. Already been placed, wrapped up in that tomb. Family and friends, they're all there mourning

They would hire professional mourners. All those would have been there. They would have been weeping and wailing loudly, even playing the flute and some harps. Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off. And many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother. So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him. But Mary remained seated in the house, Martha, the older of the two sisters, is true to her nature. She's on the move. Mary, also true to hers, is seated and remains in the house. And when Martha comes out to meet Jesus, we can feel for her when she says this to him, Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. Deep breath. But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give it to you. I don't know why you

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weren't here, but I do know I have to believe if you had been here, Jesus would be alive. Martha shows beautiful faith and still disappointment in the way it all happens. She expresses her confidence in Jesus and that God would hear

And whatever Jesus asked, instead of affirming this or even explaining his delay. Jesus said to her, your brother will rise again. And that's good news. And it's as if Martha is sharing the kind of comfort you or I might give to her. There, there, Martha. He'll rise again. And that's comforting. Sort of. It's not, though. He's not with me. I want him with me. I don't want to lose him. And it's true. And she's right when she says, I know. I know. He will rise again in the resurrection on the last day. Good job, Martha. good theology. Hope is out there. I know it's coming one day. She's careful not to get her hopes too high and she sticks with what she knows. My brother is gone, but one day, one day, hope out there. Listen, I think it is possible that our theology can keep hope just close enough to be accurate, but not too close that we really live in joyful, confident expectation of what we have right in front of us. And Jesus jolts her into this reality, standing right before her resurrection. Life is not one day out there

Life is standing right before her. I am the resurrection and the life. Martha needed to grasp, and her grief is what you and I need to grasp today. Listen, listen. Jesus is saying the resurrection isn't just something I do. It's who I am. I am the resurrection and the life. I am standing right here before you. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live. And everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. The most important statement followed by the most important question. Do you believe this? She's thinking about Lazarus and Jesus is talking about himself. And Martha answers the same answer that you and I must give today. And I'll say this also. We might think that this is the right answer to begin a relationship with Jesus, but it's so much more. It's actually the answer that you can and should give in the middle of your grief, in the face of death. even after you have accepted Jesus as your Lord because that's exactly where Martha was. She was already a friend of Jesus and she confessed this in the middle of her grief

Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the son of God who is coming into the world. It's the only response to grief and loss, to pain and suffering, to the longing and the waiting and the disappointment in this world. Surrounded like we are by death. Yes, Lord, I believe, I believe. Martha says yes, even though she hasn't grasped all that her confession meant. She knows what she needs to do next. When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in private, Teacher's here, and he's calling for you. And when she Mary heard it she rose quickly and went to him now notice something it doesn't say anywhere that Jesus was calling for Mary. Say that. But I think the natural, exuberant, uncontainable response, once we believe and reaffirm our belief beyond doubt, is to get others to do the same. And so naturally, Martha wants her sister to have the same belief and the same hope. Now, Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha had met him. Did you see that? You know, Jesus could have followed Martha and come to Mary himself, but just like he has remained in the other Bethany, literally the same words, he remained in the place where he was

It's a small detail, but I think it's interesting to see Jesus holding the timing in his hands, the place in his hands, the people in his hands. Instead of going, he waits for Mary to come out to him and with her and the rest of the with her, the Jews with her. When the Jews who were with her in the house consoling her saw Mary Mary, rise quickly and go out. They followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there. Now, when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet saying to him, Lord, Lord. You had been there, my brother would not have done. She came, saw, she fell at his feet. She says the same thing her sister had said, if you, then my, and how many times have you said that to God? How many times have I said that to God? Oh God, if only we have in mind how God could work, even should work things out. And it's natural to say, if only, which is really just saying, all right, Lord, here's how I imagine and hope things would turn out if only you had the same mind as me

And there Mary is at the feet of Jesus, the same feet that she will anoint in a few days. No doubt, tears falling on him as she weeps. And it's an incredibly emotional scene when Jesus saw her weeping. Kalio, this is uncontainable, audible grief, audible weeping. And the Jews who had also come with her, also Kalao, weeping, he was deeply moved. One

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word, embri-me-sato. Can you say that? Embri-me-sato. Moved with anger is what this means. The idea of a snort, like an angry horse at war, roaring with rage and indignation. He's not simply moved, not Jesus. He's moved in his spirit, and he's greatly troubled, greatly troubled, taraso in the the Greek, to set in motion what needs to remain at ease, causing inner perplexities, vibrational anger, and energy inside of him. Jesus is roaring with righteous anger at the grip that death has. How dare you, death? The sting, the present victory. And he is so mad. He's furious with indignation. An indignation that only God Almighty really can have is. Overcome with this agitation at his deepest level, this humanity

Jesus, even though he's overcome by the futility of the sadness around him, he's able to ask a question that in his divinity he knew the answer to. Like God asking Adam in the garden, where are you? When he knew full well, Jesus asks, and they answer, where have you laid him? They said to him, Lord, come and see. I believe Jesus heard their answer and stood trembling with the sound of the wailing all around him, the reality of the grief weighing on him. And in just a few short days, the weight of all of that will be upon him on the cross. Not just the grief and the longing and the brokenness of this world, but the sin and the separation of this world will wail around him. and weigh upon him. And in the reality of that grief weighing on him, he breaks open in tears for Jesus. And John writes simply, Jesus wept. When we were kids, because the answer to a Bible trivia question, what's the shortest verse in the Bible? John 11, 35. Jesus wept. But now with life and with grief and with loss and with prayers that I've cried out, I've even wailed out to heaven

This isn't the shortest verse as much as it is the heaviest. And at this moment, the people were impacted as well. And some said, see how he loved him. How little do you know. God so loved the world that he gave his only son. Of them said, could not he who opened the eyes of the blind also kept this man from dying? I mean, right? How typical. Moved by his emotion to sympathize with him and still questioning Jesus. Honestly, I might be critical of their response if it didn't sit so close to home in my own heart. Ouch. Oh, Jesus, I see how much you love. I know what you've done, the amazing and the miraculous, But in the face of my personal losses, I asked the same, you did this. Why couldn't you also do that? And my, I believe, but heart, heart in me that believes, but it just groans. Then Jesus deeply moved again. Embry, mayomai. He's outraged again as he heads to the tomb. The life, capital L life, that was the light, capital L light, all caps, turns and is facing the location of death. John describes it bluntly that he came to the tomb

It was a cave and a stone lay against it. A tomb, a cave, a stone, cold, hard reality of this world. And Jesus, it's angry. Jesus said, take that stone away. Jews didn't embalm. Egyptians embalmed traditionally. Jews wrapped their corpses in cloth and they sprinkled on the burial spices. And then they set that body in a shelf down inside of a cave, a tomb cave, but then carved into a wall, shelves where people would be laid. Shirley Lazarus was one of many. You can still go to Israel to this day. I looked it up on the map, and you can see where they think maybe this was his tomb. And it's down, down, down, down, down, deep down, and stairs that wind down, shelves where the bodies would have been laid out there. The spices would have masked the odor for a few hours, but now it's been four days and a natural process of decay is well on its way. So Martha, oh Martha, she explains the situation to Jesus. Lord, by this time, there's going to be an odor. Been dead for four days. The King James really kills it on this one

By this time, he stinketh. I mean, come on. I might just switch to the King James just because of that. That's a great way to say he's going to stink. He stinketh. It's almost comical, really, that Martha, she's so consumed with grief and disappointment, just confessed the most thorough confession of exactly who Jesus is. The thought of her mind is about the stench, like it's going to ruin her party. You know she don't want a wound for her guests this is exactly how Martha has always been she's no different now you know when you come to Jesus you don't get a personality transplant, you get the Holy Spirit you're just you but you get the Holy Spirit it makes it better if you submit to him just do that part also so Jesus has that thought in her mind he's done what he's done the stench is there in her mind that stone is going to be rolled away the smell is going to just come on out. So he reminds her about belief and he uses her own words. She had said, if only you had been there. And Jesus said, if you believe, did I not tell you that if you believe you would see the glory of God, she's worried about the stink of death

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And Jesus reminds her that he will remove the sting of death. Her mind is on the repulsive nature of this dying life. And Jesus Jesus wants her heart and her mind ready to see life and belief. So they took away the stone and Jesus lifted his eyes and said, you believe me, watch and see, this is beliefs. You see the glory of God. Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew you always heard me, but I said this on account of the people standing around that they may believe that you sent me. Jesus had prayed already, privately, speaking to his father, ready for this moment. And he looks up to heaven and he prays aloud for the benefit of the mourning crowd around him. And when he had said these things, he cried out. That word is kratso. Kratso means to cry out loudly with deep emotion, like a wounded person emitting unearthly, non-human types of sounds. That's what that word means and with a loud that word is mega lay we get the word megaphone from a loud voice Lazarus come out and that voice that spoke in the beginning and the earth was created all things are made through him and without him was not anything made that was made that voice like a megaphone cried out and commanded Lazarus Eleazar God helps to come out and good thing he's specified, Lazarus alone or that entire tomb might have emptied it

What now, death? Cause up my friend, grave! The cells in Lazarus' ears came to life. The good shepherd knew his name and Lazarus knew the voice of his good shepherd and his blood pumped fresh in his heart again and his brain functioned again and along with every tissue in his body and any disease that had ever destroyed his cells, all of that was gone. All the decay was instantly reversed and Lazarus came out of that grave and praise God, what What a moment to have been there. And John said in John 5, after he had healed that lame man, an hour is coming and now is here when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. And in this moment, it was just one man who heard. The man who had died came out, his hands, his feet still bound with linen strips and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to him, unbind him, loose him, let him go. You would think the heavens would break open and the angels would cheer and the clouds would roll back and trumpets would sound at the incredible event and that day will come

Jesus has, Revelations 1.18 says, Jesus has the keys to death and Hades and he unlocked death for Lazarus and one day he will do the same for all who know his name. And he heard his name and he came out of that grave. Lazarus, as alive as he was, was still bound hand and feet and had to be loosed and let go. And as joyful as his sisters were and everyone was to have Lazarus back, he would die again. Listen, point is not that Lazarus is back. It's that Jesus is the resurrection and the life. And everyone, everyone who lives and believes in him will have everlasting life. That would be true for Lazarus. And it's true for us as well, that you may believe. And you may be consumed today with the death and the loss of this world. And you're not alone. The world reeks with a stench of death. But thanks be to God. Death, where's your sting? grave. Where's your victory? We can believe. We can believe without reservation because Jesus went all the way to the grave and he rose. Jesus destroyed death. Unlike Lazarus, Jesus left his grave clothes behind

His resurrection power rolled away the stone. Death is defeated. The The battle is won and we can live now in that resurrection power. As we come to the communion table this morning, I want you to remember the power in his blood that was shed for you, the life in his body that was broken for you, the resurrection life of the I am to heal right here, right now. Come to him in prayer and worship and thanksgiving for what he's accomplished for you today. Day and with me say not I believe but and insert anything here that gets in the way of the glory of God and instead say I believe and everything is possible have faith have faith in God's timing in his will in his way Jesus is the resurrection and the life let's pray Heavenly Father what an incredibly glorious day that would have been to be there witnessing Lazarus coming forth. He called his name and he came out of that grave. We praise you and we thank you for the reality of that miracle. And today, Lord God, help us train our hearts, clear our minds to be faithful to the present reality of that exact truth that right now, today, we have that resurrection power because of your death on the cross, because you conquered death and you came out of that grave and we can follow you and come out as well.