

20:20 Vision Ministries – Devotions by Roger Browning Week 4 (January 18-24, 2015)

I ended last week's devotions by teaching about one of the three men who found new **physical** life through Jesus. This man immediately began to **talk** about his experience. This week, we will look at the other two dead people who were brought back to life by our Lord. Together, these three people have a story to tell.

Sunday, January 18 (read Luke 8:40-42)

*Now when Jesus returned, a crowd welcomed Him, **for they were all expecting Him.** (Luke 8:40, emphasis mine)*

Many people tell me that they do not see miracles in the church they are attending. Could it be that most of today's worshippers don't go to church **expecting** to see Jesus? Today's printed verse (v.40) sets the stage for the Lord to work a miracle in their midst. Jairus, a synagogue ruler is in critical need of divine intervention, because his only daughter is nearing death at the tender age of 12 (v. 41). Scripture tells of many synagogue rulers who criticize Jesus and His ministry, but we find that this ruler has a different attitude because he is desperate to get help for his child. What does it take for **you** to fall on your knees before Jesus? I hope that you pray willingly each day so that, whether you have a great need like Jairus or you are simply seeking daily counsel, you will be **expecting** Jesus to respond to your prayers.

Monday, January 19 (read Luke 8:43-50)

Hearing this, Jesus said to Jairus, "Don't be afraid; just believe, and she will be healed." (Luke 8:50)

Have you ever wondered why God often delays in answering **your** urgent plea? In today's text, we get a glimpse into the Lord's demanding schedule. On the way to Jairus' house, a woman with a bleeding disorder touches the cloak of Jesus and experiences instant healing (v. 43-44). Don't miss the fact that, out of the crowd, the Lord can identify that one person who truly touches Him (v. 45). The power from Him enters the woman's body and brings immediate relief (v. 46). When Jesus asks, "Who touched me?" she is compelled to tell the crowd **why** she touched Him and **how** the healing took place (v. 47). I hope you feel the urge to tell what Jesus has done for you as well. How do you think Jairus feels about this delay? When his worst fears are realized (v. 49), Jesus reassures him with those beautiful words: "Don't be afraid; just believe, and she will be healed" (v. 50). We will conclude this story with tomorrow's devotion.

Tuesday, January 20 (read Luke 8:51-56)

*Her spirit returned, and at once she stood up. Then Jesus told them to **give her something to eat.** (Luke 8:55, emphasis mine)*

I have observed that Jesus often does His greatest miracles when the audience is small. In today's text, His witnesses are His three closest disciples in addition to the child's mother and father (v. 51). The professional mourners are left outside the house laughing at Jesus for saying that the girl is not dead (v. 52-53). Taking the hand of the deceased girl (v. 54), Jesus commands, "My child, get up!" She obeys Him and life returns to her young body (v. 55a). The next command is the part that I want you to see. The parents are told to "give her something to eat" (v. 55b). What Jesus teaches us by this miracle is that it is not enough to bring the **spiritually** dead to a born again experience; we must continue to feed them so that they will mature in their new faith. A person who has found new life in Christ should have **an appetite for spiritual things**. Prayer, Bible study and church attendance should be a given! Be sure that your church emphasizes sanctification (maturity in the faith) as well as salvation.

Wednesday, January 21 (read John 11:1-16)

Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. Yet when He heard that Lazarus was sick, He stayed where He was two more days. (John 11:5-6)

Lazarus is the third person Jesus raised from the dead. The Lord is alone with His disciples when word arrives from Mary and Martha concerning the illness of their brother (v. 1-3). In His foreknowledge, Jesus knows about the illness as well as the perils that will beset His friend after the miracle; however, He delays His trip (v. 4-6). When the Lord determines the time is right to return to Judea (v. 7), His disciples object, remembering the persecutions they faced the last time they were there (v. 8). Jesus tells them that they will not stumble if they **walk in the light** instead of in the darkness (v. 9-10). This is a profound theological statement to us as well! We should walk in all the light we have received from Him and we will not stumble either. The Lord is aware that Lazarus has already died (v. 11, 14-15), but His disciples think that their friend is experiencing natural sleep (v. 12-13). “Doubting Thomas” thinks this trip will cost them their lives, but they start off to Bethany with Him anyway (v. 16). We will continue the story in tomorrow’s devotion.

Thursday, January 22 (read John 11:17-32)

Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this? (John 11:25-26)

Read the entire text and note the “guilt trips” Martha (v. 21) and Mary (v. 32) put on Jesus. Have you ever said or thought the same thing after you prayed for someone who died in spite of your prayer? Jesus wants you to know that He has both bases covered! Those who die in Christ experience an immediate **resurrection** of the soul (see Philippians 1:21-22; 2 Corinthians 5:8). Likewise, Jesus should be the **life** of those of us who live (v. 25-26). The Lord can see beyond today to help our loved one avoid the perils of tomorrow (see Isaiah 57:1-2). Heaven is not a punishment! It is God’s reward for anyone who receives His Son as full payment for his/her sins!

Friday, January 23 (read John 11:33-42)

Jesus wept. (John 11:35)

I used to wonder why Jesus would weep prior to calling Lazarus back from the dead. I have heard all the stories about His compassion for the hurting, but I still wondered why He would cry, knowing that He was preparing to bring His friend back. Then I came face to face with the truth taught in John 12:9-11! Jesus knew that His friend, who had died peacefully and entered into the presence of God, would soon be subject to persecution from the same people who were about to crucify Him. Note in v. 38 that Jesus commands the crowd to “take away the stone.” Is it possible that you have a hard, stony heart that is getting in the way of a miracle from God? Don’t worry about the stink that this opening of the heart may bring forth (v. 39). Jesus is interceding for you from His throne in heaven (Romans 8:34) so you, too, can see the glory of God, if only you will open your heart to Him (v. 40).

Saturday, January 24 (read John 11:43-44)

Jesus said to them, “Take off the grave clothes and let him go.” (John 11:44b)

Now we come to the spiritual lesson learned from the third person that **physically** found new life in Christ. We have seen that someone who finds this new life should **tell others** about it (see January 17 devotion) as well as develop an **appetite for spiritual things** (see January 20 devotion). Now we see in today’s printed verse v. 44b that the recipient of the new life should also put on the “**robe of righteousness**” paid for by our Lord’s death (see Isaiah 61:10), replacing the “filthy rags” of his/her own righteous acts (see Isaiah 64:6). If you are a believer, don’t go around looking and smelling like a dead person! Christ has set you free! You are His child! Live like a believer for His glory!