**The Power to Undo Death**

Based on [John 11:1-53](https://biblia.com/books/esv/Jn11.1-53)

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Fifth Sunday in Lent

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Last week, we heard of how Jesus healed a man born blind.And the blind man said of Jesus. **“Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing**” (John 9:30-33).

Two thousand years later, no doctor, no scientist, no holy man, no computer algorithm, no pharmaceutical, no one and no thing to this day, two thousand years later can open the eyes of a man born blind. Now we have built a proverbial tower to the heavens. We have mapped the human genome, sent men to the moon, spacecraft to mars. We have libraries of books stored on a thumb drive; plumbed the depths of the ocean; can communicate from one corner of the globe to another in an instant, and yet there is no indication that we are any closer to being able to open the eyes of a man born blind. How much more incredible, impossible, unattainable is it for mankind to ever bring a dead man back to life.

Today we have the account of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. This lesson teaches us that Jesus is the source of life, and has the power to reverse death.

Despite all of the world’s advancement, it does not have the power to undo death. Not fifty years ago, it took a computer the size of a room to do what now the little phones in our pockets can do today. No one can deny that technology has progressed at an impressive rate. Some of the technology slated for the future is even more impressive. What was once thought impossible seems to be within reach. But despite all that technological advancement has delivered and promises to, even the most optimistic predictions, not even the most fanciful science fiction novels or movies dare to present a future that has the technology to undo death.

To undo death is impossible for man. And yet, Jesus comes to a man named Lazarus, a man who was four days in the tomb and stunk of rot, and with a word called him forth from the tomb. “**Lazarus come out.**” Only God is the source of life; and Jesus says, “**I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?**” Jesus is the source of all life. He has the power to undo death and says, “believe in me and you will live forever.” He said this when he came into the world, and he demonstrated it in the raising of Lazarus, and he promises to do the same for us who believe in Him.

The world makes the same promises or at least implies them. “Someday we will cure cancer”, “Someday we will have the key to life” Someday we will be able to explain how life *really* began from some primordial ooze.” No we can’t show you now, we can’t explain it now, we can’t heal you now, we don’t have the technology now; but believe in us.

The world bids you believe in it, trust in it, put your hope in it…even though it cannot account for life, where it comes from or how to create it. But there is a hidden cost. **The world, in asking for your trust, requires your soul.** The world says, “***Let us experiment with aborted stem cells, let us clone animals, and humans to experiment on.******Put aside all your superstitions about human life being made in the image of God, and let us do all sorts of horrible things in the name of progress.*** *Let us mercifully kill the elderly, the mentally retarded and those with terminal diseases; we can’t help them now anyway. They are sucking up valuable time and resources that could keep the rest of us comfortable. They have no hope anyway, but for us, any day now, human technology will might able to solve* ***our*** *suffering, pain and death, so long as we don’t let our outdated morality get in the way of human progress*.”

The world cannot deliver eternal life. It is not God, only a counterfeit god that can only make empty promises. The world says, “*trust us, we are on the way to discovering the key to life and death. We can bring you promethean fire, maybe not now but someday.* ***In the meantime****, let us teach your kids that they are descended from apes who are descended from fish who are descended from ooze struck by a random bolt of lightning.* ***In the meantime****, let us teach your children that they can be a boy or a girl or anything in between, there’s no proof of this, but trust us we’ll find it someday.* ***In the meantime****, let us provide you shallow entertainment and more and more creature comforts to help you forget that God is calling you to repentance and faith in Him.* ***In the meantime****—until we can figure out how to end all suffering and death—let us raise your kids to be good consumers with successful jobs so they can earn more money to buy more things to earn more money, to keep them busy running like a hamster on a wheel so they don’t bother to trouble us with silly questions about God, life, salvation that we don’t have answers for…yet…but we will, we promise, just trust us*.

***Let us*** *reverse God’s Law,* ***Let us*** *gather you all together under one almighty godless government,* ***Let us*** *build a tower to heaven, distance ourselves from God to make a name for ourselves. We are the priests of mankind, believe in us, obey our commandments and we will storm the heavens steal the keys to death and Hades and live forever*.” This is the false gospel of modern secular progressivism, and it is a doctrine of the devil designed to steal away the trust you have in God so that you would put your faith in the promises of men.

Jesus says, “**I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this**?” Believe it; only God has the power to reverse death and give life; and Jesus Christ is the man who is God. He has the power of God that the world covets and seeks but will never find. But **unlike the world**, God is merciful and just. He not only has the power to give you life; he has the desire to do so. **Unlike the world**, He has never lied to you or broken a promise to you. **Unlike the world**, he does everything in the light so that it can be clearly seen his works are carried out in God. **Unlike the world**, he doesn’t expect you to sell your soul in order to cheat death. Jesus Christ is life and has the key to death and Hades. Believe in him; listen to his Words which are spirit and life (John 6:63).

It is no small irony that the reaction of the authorities to the knowledge that Jesus raised a man to life, is to kill him. It is not within man’s power to create life; but it is within his power to destroy it and take it away. Death is the sting of sin; and it is the source of man’s stolen power and rebellion against God. You see it everywhere. **Evolution** is a doctrine of death; that through the death of unsuccessful species, human life was formed. **Abortion** is a doctrine of death; that through the death of the unborn, a woman can cast off her motherly duty have freedom over her life. **Euthanasia** is a doctrine of death; that through the planned death of the elderly, mentally handicapped and terminally ill; the rest of society can get on with its life. Man who wants to control the world in ways that God won’t let him always turn to death.

Our gospel reads, “Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what [Jesus] did, believed in him, but some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. So the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered the Council and said, “What are we to do? For this man performs many signs. If we *let him* go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away both *our* place and *our* nation. But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, “You know nothing at all. Nor do you understand that it is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish…So from that day on they made plans to put him to death.”

Man who wants to control the world in ways that God won’t let him always turn to death. And so when Jesus Christ, who is life and light came into the world with a power and an authority from God, the reaction of the world was to put him to death. But the glory of God is that he used the death of his son at the hands of the sinful world to save the world from its sin. Those who crucified Jesus meant it for evil, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive forever.

By dying on the cross, Jesus Christ disabled deaths claim on us--took away its sting--so that now when our loved one’s die in Christ, we know that they will rise again on the last day. And when you face death, you do not need to turn to the world for the cure; you only need turn to Jesus who is the resurrection and the life. He says, “**The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life**” so hear them, believe and have eternal life. He says, “**Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day**”, so receive them, believe and have eternal life. Jesus Christ is the eternal son of God who gave you life in the first place; do not doubt, but believe that he has the power to raise you to new life on the last day.