

WINTER QUARTER SUNDAY SCHOOL 2015-2016

THEME: SACRED GIFTS AND HOLY GATHERINGS

UNIT TWO – “Sharing Our Joys and Sorrows”

“CHRIST BRINGS CONTENTMENT IN A CEMETERY”

**John 11:38-44 Jesus raises
Lazarus from the dead**

John 11:40- Then Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?"

John 11:41- So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me.

John 11:44- The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face.

Sunday School Lesson No. IX – January 31, 2016

Rev. Frank A. Davis, III, Pastor-Teacher

Lesson Text: John 11:38-44

Required Reading: John 11:1-44

Memory Text: John 11:43-44, *“And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.*”

Reliable Resources: Union Gospel Press Expositor and Illuminator; Standard Lesson Commentary; Bible Knowledge Commentary; Precepts for Living (UMI Publishing); Word Search 10 Electronic Library; Life Application Study Bible (Tyndale); Libronix Electronic Library; The Jeremiah Study Bible and Resources; Children’s Ministry Resource Bible

INTRODUCTION

Beloved, how does one find peace, relief and contentment when family, friends and associates gather at the gravesite of a very close relative or friend, to lay their body in a cold grave? Then questions are raised, apprehensions come forward, and contemplations lead to confusion of thoughts. No matter how many show up to lend compassion, the greatest need is a sense of contentment that can only come from Jesus Christ’s compassion and true hope. Death leaves its cold fingers tingling down the spine of the bereaved. Death is no respecter of persons and it passes through every family and loving relationship. As the scripture says in Hebrew 9:27, *“As it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment,”* only Jesus Christ can bring contentment in a cemetery.

BACKGROUND

John 11 brings us face to face with a family crisis as two sisters lose their only brother in death, and now, four days after the funeral, Jesus appears outside the city at the cemetery after seemingly having missed the opportunity of healing the man, and is ready to do something more spectacular. He will demonstrate His authority over death and will raise this man from the dead. Such a feat was not to show off, but to bring glory to the Father and ultimately hope to all who will trust and obey Him.

According to verses 17-19, many had gathered at the house of the deceased to bring condolences and expressions of sympathy. But then Martha, one of the sisters, heard that Jesus was near and went to meet Him. She expressed her disappointment that Jesus could not have made it earlier and spared her brother from death (vv. 20-24). Jesus confirmed that He at any time, has the power of life and death, because He is the Resurrection and the Life (vv. 25-26). Martha affirms her faith and goes to get Mary her sister, and she is comforted by Jesus' presence and assures Him that she knew if He had been present, things would have been different (vv. 28-32).

With this in mind, we turn toward the focus of the lesson "**Jesus Christ Brings Contentment in a Cemetery.**"

My Anticipated Power Points:

- **By His Compassion. John 11:33-37**
- **By His Confidence. John 11:38-40**
- **By His Command. John 11:41-44**

LESSON OUTLINE

I. Jesus Christ Brings Contentment in a Cemetery by His Compassion. John 11:33-37

Jesus, having experienced the wailing, cries and depths of human sorrow, groaned while in the graveyard. Undoubtedly understanding that He is the giver of life, but sin had caused death and it was all around Him in the place of the dead. Also knowing that He is the Resurrection, it was in His nature to bring life as He did to Jairus' daughter and to the widow at Nain's son. He is the life and out of this great compassionate agitation for His dear friends, He cries out in verse 34 (MSG) "*Where did you put him?*"

Being led to the place of Lazarus (v. 34) Jesus showed us extreme compassionate emotion as He wept (v. 35). This is the shortest verse in the Bible, yet the most potent in life's situation and care for us all to imitate. "*Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.*" (Romans 12:15). What a friend we have in Jesus, as we find in Hebrews 4:15, "*For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.*" As the onlookers speculated in their hearts, Jesus presses on in compassion. vv. 36-37

II. Jesus Christ Brings Contentment in a Cemetery by His Confidence. John 11:38-40

Jesus in verse 38, was agitated no doubt, at the adversary and his demons who had power over death and no doubt, flaunted their authority over Lazarus, but He was about to exercise His divine authority to wrestle a friend from a foe. Revelation 1:18 tells us, "*I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.*"

In verse 39, He exercises the greatest confidence to say, "*Take away ye the stone.*" Humanly speaking, four days in the grave had led to corruption and it brought fear in the heart of Martha. Jewish tradition believed that a person's spirit might linger around for three days, but by the 4th day, all hope of human resuscitation was lost!

In verse 40, Jesus challenged Martha and all to see the glory of the Lord by their faith. What confidence He expressed in a cemetery. Then He expressed confidence in verses 41-42 to thank the Father for granting Him the miracle before others could see it. True faith in God and the Father's blessed assurance. John. 15:7, "*If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.*"

III. Jesus Christ Brings Contentment in a Cemetery by His Command. John 11:41-44

The thunderous voice of Creation speaks specifically when He calls Lazarus by name and says, "*Lazarus, come forth!*" The voice of the Resurrection spoke and as I Thessalonians 4 declares, "*...the dead in Christ shall rise...*" This is why He had to call Lazarus by name. To be sure all knew that the man in the bandages was Lazarus, Jesus commanded, "*Loose him and let him go.*" (v. 44). Beloved, Jesus brought joy and contentment in a cemetery!

CLOSING

Beloved, Jesus still brings joy and contentment to as many as receive Him. Oh that we would learn to "*Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.*"

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Looking Ahead:

February 7, 2016

Exodus 12:1-14

Please join us each Wednesday at noon at Bibleway where you can ask questions and make comments as Pastor Davis teaches the weekly Sunday School Lesson. All are welcome!

