

## NEW LIFE

How would you live differently if you survived a plane crash? If you came through your cancer treatments against all odds with an unexpected decade added to your life, how would your attitude about life change? What would you do with if your life was restored after years of existing in a frozen state?

In John 11:1-45, we are told the story of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. What would you do with new life, with a second chance, if you were Lazarus. What do you suppose Lazarus did? How did his perspective and attitude change? We are all potential Lazaruses. By Christ's redemptive acts and His redeeming love, we are invited to a new life. How now shall we live? What did Lazarus do? Frankly, we do not know. What can we do with the rest of our new lives? That is THE question. We can learn some things from the account of Lazarus.

Like Lazarus and his family, we have to face death. But, like Lazarus, our death and our "little deaths" (Death of a Marriage, Death of a Job, etc.) throughout life, are not the end. Each is an opportunity in which God can be glorified, just as Jesus says that Lazarus' death was an opportunity for the glory of God to show forth. Even when we consider ourselves as good as dead, with God the best is always coming. Get up! Come out!

Like Lazarus, we have a Savior who can help us. No situation beyond hope or help. Our Lord says so. The world has its deadlines. Christ provides lifelines over and over again. He offers new beginnings, fresh starts, new birth, redemption. Like Lazarus, we get into hopeless predicaments. And, as with Lazarus, Christ comes to help us.

Like Lazarus, we need to choose to "come out" and "take off the grave clothes." We get so accustomed to the way of death, the world's way, that we continue to live that way even when we have been liberated. Just as Lazarus was tightly bound with strips of cloth, we are all bound up by the world. Too often we continue in the ways of death, which the Scriptures tell us are selfishness, anger, lust, envy, sloth, and despair. "Live that life which is life indeed," Paul instructs in 1 Timothy 6. Jesus tells us "If anyone wants to be my disciple, that person must deny self, take up his cross daily, and follow me." St. Francis reminds us that it is in dying that we live. Come out, take off the clothes of death and live. Lazarus became a new person that day. My prayer is that all of us will choose to live new

lives beginning today. "I am the resurrection and the life," says Jesus, "he who believes in me will live!"

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