



Gospel Doctrine Sunday School Lesson

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Slippery Rock Branch

Volume 3, Issue 19

Today's Word: Lazarus

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Are You:

- Nurturing Your Faith with Regular Prayers and Scripture Study?
- Bearing Your Testimony Whenever Possible?

Today's Scriptures

Luke 18:1-18, 35-43

Luke 19:1-10; John 11

Next Week:

Lesson 20:

"Woe Unto You Hypocrites"

Matthew 21-23

John 12:1-8

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Lesson 19: "Thy Faith Hath Saved Thee"

"Lazarus, Come Forth"

"The setting includes Lazarus, his sisters, the disciples, and other Jews. Some are believing. Some are critical. The intense grieving of the sisters, the wailing of the mourners, Christ's own tears, the anticipation of His death, the disciples' fear of the Jewish leaders, the hostility of certain ones in the crowd, and the melancholy of the grave site—all of these constitute for us a crescendo of profound human emotion. Jesus commands that the stone covering the tomb's entrance be removed. Martha objects, saying, "Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days" (v. 39). Christ says, "If thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God" (v. 40).

"The stone is removed. Jesus offers a prayer of gratitude that reveals He had asked permission from His Father to stage this miraculous representation of the Atonement for the purpose of comforting wounded and grieving hearts, of testifying of His love and power, and of convincing the people present to believe the Father had sent Him (see v. 42).

"The climactic moment comes when Christ cries out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth" (v. 43). Can you imagine that combination of hope, terror, and surprise the people feel when Lazarus obeys the command and rises, 'bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin' (v. 44)? The sight and smell of this dead man must have been more than some could bear. But then came Christ's second command to certain others standing by: "Loose him and let him go" (v. 44).

"Think of it. Christ was commanding the people to free Lazarus, to remove the graveclothes and unbind the wrappings from around his eyes, mouth, hands, and feet,—the wrappings of the grave. For he lived again! . . .

"For me the Lazarus story provides one of the most powerful metaphors of the Atonement of Christ for all humankind. We are all like Lazarus, beloved of the Lord, but wrapped about in the graveclothes of the world" (Eric B. Shumway, "Loose Him, and Let Him Go," Speech given at BYU, March 2002).

Questions to Ponder

- What can we do to receive the Savior joyfully into our homes?
- What can we learn from Jesus' example regarding his behavior and attitude toward Zacchaeus, the publican?



Faith in Christ

"There was intense love among the members of this family. Note Mary sent word to Jesus, "He whom thou lovest is sick." And the scripture says, "Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister Mary and Lazarus." When He arrived at Bethany and noted the intense sorrow that had come to the girls, He wept, so great was his sympathy and love.

"Jesus used great powers to restore life, to comfort those who mourn, to bring beauty for ashes, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. How thrilled all were that this young man whom they loved was restored to his sisters. The Savior had desired to give His own people in Nazareth a blessing but as they did not believe in Him they would not permit it. To them He was only Joseph's son.

"Faith in Christ is a great saving principle. Paul it was who said, 'Love never fails.' This healing experience was a beautiful example of faith and love" (Franklin D. West, *The Life and Teachings of Jesus*, p. 266-26.).