

## Fifth Sunday in Lent

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# LIVES

The fifth item that we will consider “giving up” for our observance of this Lenten season will be our LIVES. In our gospel for this Sunday, Jesus encounters the death of Lazarus, in which he gave

up his life as he succumbed to the unnamed infirmity that took his life. In all of this, Jesus moves closer to everyone to make a critical point.

Who wants to give up their lives? Who wants to keep changing directions with our choices of what we want to do with our lives, in favor of following someone else’s direction? It is the question of the moment- can we give up our own agendas in order to follow Jesus?

It is the problem that perplexes all humanity, for most often we answer the above question with a feeble “yes” with all intentions of that being a “no.” We really struggle giving up the controls of our lives to anyone else, much less someone we have never seen. It becomes a matter of trust. Yet that trust is hard to come by, Can we come up with some new solutions to help us address the matter?

One of the most unique approaches Jesus uses with His dear friend is the issue of timing. He seems to tarry in His current location long enough to miss the death of Lazarus. Jesus just doesn't seem to rush things. And as we see from Scripture, it is due to the fact Jesus wants to bring glory to the Father by delaying.

It would appear that Jesus wanted to show what actually happens when you give up control, and even to the point of giving up control over one’s life. It would seem that Jesus is driving home the point that God is working in the middle of all of this, and the point of the whole issue, is that God’s purposes will be accomplished. In this instance, God’s glory will be manifested by Jesus as He raises Lazarus from the dead.

There are so many thoughts swimming around in our minds from a Biblical text like this. We wonder what we might have done in the past moment if we had been a bystander in that cemetery on that day. We wonder and struggle with what we can do in the present moment when we know we should follow Jesus but somehow we have bought into the myth that this would be less than desirable. We are afraid of what the future might be all about without our own steady hands on the tiller of our lives.

Pastor Jonathon Kosec

## OUR WORSHIP TODAY

### GATHERING AND MEDITATION TIME

Pre-Service Music  
Welcome and Announcements

### CONFSSIONAL PRAYER

As we observe this Lenten season, may the message of the Gospel accounts of the work of Jesus Christ guide us and allow the revelation of the Kingdom of God to speak to our hearts and motivate a renewed sense of purpose even today. May the feelings in our hearts be matched with the actions of our hands, our feet, even our words. For the times we have neglected to do this, or avoided doing this, we know we need to offer our confession to Almighty God:

**Most merciful God, we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by the things we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen**

### ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Almighty God, in His mercy, has given His Son to die for us, and for His sake, and by His promise, forgives us all our sin. Therefore on His behalf, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Go and sin no more, that the rest of your life might be pure and holy and modeled after our Lord Jesus in all we say and all we do, we pray in His Holy Name, **Amen**

### HYMN 461 Just A Closer Walk With Thee

**THE PRAYER OF THE DAY (Unison): Almighty God, your Son came into the world to free us all from sin and death. Breathe upon us the power of your Spirit, that we may be raised to new life in Christ and serve you in righteousness all our days, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

**THE FIRST LESSON: Ezekiel 37:1-14**

**New Living Translation (NLT)**

The Lord took hold of me, and I was carried away by the Spirit of the Lord to a valley filled with bones. He led me all around among the bones that covered the valley floor. They were scattered everywhere across the ground and were completely dried out. Then he asked me, "Son of man, can these bones become living people again?"

"O Sovereign Lord," I replied, "you alone know the answer to that." Then he said to me, "Speak a prophetic message to these bones and say, 'Dry bones, listen to the word of the Lord! This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Look! I am going to put breath into you and make you live again! I will put flesh and muscles on you and cover you with skin. I will put breath into you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the Lord.'"

So I spoke this message, just as he told me. Suddenly as I spoke, there was a rattling noise all across the valley. The bones of each body came together and attached themselves as complete skeletons. Then as I watched, muscles and flesh formed over the bones. Then skin formed to cover their bodies, but they still had no breath in them.

Then he said to me, "Speak a prophetic message to the winds, son of man. Speak a prophetic message and say, 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Come, O breath, from the four winds! Breathe into these dead bodies so they may live again.'"

So I spoke the message as he commanded me, and breath came into their bodies. They all came to life and stood up on their feet—a great army.

Then he said to me, "Son of man, these bones represent the people of Israel. They are saying, 'We have become old, dry bones—all hope is gone. Our nation is finished.'

"Therefore, prophesy to them and say, 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: O my people, I will open your graves of exile and cause you to rise again. Then I will bring you back to the land of Israel. When this happens, O my people, you will know that I am the Lord. I will put my Spirit in you, and you will live again and return home to your own land. Then you will know that I, the Lord, have spoken, and I have done what I said. Yes, the Lord has spoken!'"

**THE SECOND LESSON: Romans 8:1-11**

**New Living Translation (NLT)**

So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death. The law of Moses was unable to save us because of the weakness of our sinful nature. So God did what the law could not do. He sent his own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. And in that body God declared an end to sin's

control over us by giving his Son as a sacrifice for our sins. He did this so that the just requirement of the law would be fully satisfied for us, who no longer follow our sinful nature but instead follow the Spirit.

Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace. For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will. That's why those who are still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God.

But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. (And remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them do not belong to him at all.) And Christ lives within you, so even though your body will die because of sin, the Spirit gives you life because you have been made right with God. The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.

**THE HOLY GOSPEL: John 11:1-45**

**New Living Translation (NLT)**

A man named Lazarus was sick. He lived in Bethany with his sisters, Mary and Martha. This is the Mary who later poured the expensive perfume on the Lord's feet and wiped them with her hair. Her brother, Lazarus, was sick. So the two sisters sent a message to Jesus telling him, "Lord, your dear friend is very sick."

But when Jesus heard about it he said, "Lazarus's sickness will not end in death. No, it happened for the glory of God so that the Son of God will receive glory from this." So although Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, he stayed where he was for the next two days. Finally, he said to his disciples, "Let's go back to Judea."

But his disciples objected. "Rabbi," they said, "only a few days ago the people in Judea were trying to stone you. Are you going there again?"

Jesus replied, "There are twelve hours of daylight every day. During the day people can walk safely. They can see because they have the light of this world. But at night there is danger of stumbling because they have no light." Then he said, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but now I will go and wake him up."

The disciples said, "Lord, if he is sleeping, he will soon get better!" They thought Jesus meant Lazarus was simply sleeping, but Jesus meant Lazarus had died.

So he told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. And for your sakes, I'm glad I wasn't there, for now you will really believe. Come, let's go see him." Thomas, nicknamed the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let's go, too—and die with Jesus."

When Jesus arrived at Bethany, he was told that Lazarus had already been in his grave for four days. Bethany was only a few miles down the road from Jerusalem, and many of the people had come to console Martha and Mary in their loss. When Martha got word that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him. But Mary stayed in the house. Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask."

Jesus told her, "Your brother will rise again." "Yes," Martha said, "he will rise when everyone else rises, at the last day."

Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this, Martha?"

Yes, Lord," she told him. "I have always believed you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who has come into the world from God." Then she returned to Mary. She called Mary aside from the mourners and told her, "The Teacher is here and wants to see you." So Mary immediately went to him.

Jesus had stayed outside the village, at the place where Martha met him. When the people who were at the house consoling Mary saw her leave so hastily, they assumed she was going to Lazarus's grave to weep. So they followed her there. When Mary arrived and saw Jesus, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died."

When Jesus saw her weeping and saw the other people wailing with her, a deep anger welled up within him, and he was deeply troubled. "Where have you put him?" he asked them.

They told him, "Lord, come and see." Then Jesus wept. The people who were standing nearby said, "See how much he loved him!" But some said, "This man healed a blind man. Couldn't he have kept Lazarus from dying?"

Jesus was still angry as he arrived at the tomb, a cave with a stone rolled across its entrance. "Roll the stone aside," Jesus told them. But Martha, the dead man's sister, protested, "Lord, he has been dead for four days. The smell will be terrible."

Jesus responded, "Didn't I tell you that you would see God's glory if you believe?" So they rolled the stone aside. Then Jesus looked up to heaven and said, "Father, thank you for hearing me. You always hear me, but I said it out loud for the sake of all these people standing here, so that they will believe you sent me." Then Jesus shouted, "Lazarus, come out!" And the dead man came out, his hands and feet bound in graveclothes, his face wrapped in a headcloth. Jesus told them, "Unwrap him and let him go! Many of the people who were with Mary believed in Jesus when they saw this happen.

The Gospel of our Lord.

**PRAISE TO YOU, O CHRIST.**

SERMON "Lives"

Pastor Jonathon Kosec

**SERMON HYMN: 467 Lord Jesus, Think on Me 1,3,5**

OUR CONFESSION OF FAITH: The Apostles Creed (C)

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day He rose again. He ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

THE OFFERING:

*After the consecration of the Offering, we will sing the Doxology:*

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow, Praise him, all creatures here below, Praise him above, Ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.**

THE PREPARATION OF THE TABLE

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

-PRAYERS OF PRAISE, WORDS OF INSTITUTION, LORD'S PRAYER

THE DISTRIBUTION

THE COMMUNION BLESSING

**HYMN 169 O Sacred Head, Now Wounded 1,2,3**

THE BENEDICTION & THE DISMISSAL

P. Go in peace! Serve the Lord!

C. **Thanks be to God**

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**WELCOME TO OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN!** Thank you for joining us as we worship our Risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! We are happy you are here! Please take a moment to turn your Cell Phone or other devices to mute, so they do not go off during the service and become disruptive. We appreciate your help to this regard. And thanks again for being here with us this morning!

**IN OUR PRAYERS:** We take time during our service to offer petitions for the prayer needs of ourselves, our families, our friends, and the world. Please give those requests to Pastor at the beginning portion of the service so they can be included in our prayers during worship today.

**INVITE YOUR FRIENDS TO BE WITH US THIS LENTEN SEASON!** Traditionally a season of preparation and reflection, we hope to have a new look on the traditions of Lent as we celebrate the work that Jesus accomplished on the cross. **“GIVE IT UP!”** will be the guiding theme as we examine the various things people have given up in observance of the Lenten season, but with more attention as to what Jesus would have us do. It might be the best time to bring someone with you and form a new church relationship together! Next Sunday we will celebrate Palm Sunday and look at our **POPULARITY**.

**OUR NEXT BIBLE STUDY** will be this week Wednesday, April 5 at 10:00 AM, when we will continue our study on Romans. In the near future we will begin a “Heroes of the Bible” series, where each study will take an in-depth look at a number of biblical figures. We know many have conflicts, but if you are free, come and join us!

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Bible Study: Times as announced

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