

Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2015 6:42 PM

Subject: Last Nite's MOB Study

Last nite, we were challenged by John's gospel account, in chapter 11, of Jesus "raising Lazarus from the dead!" Could there be a more climactic "sign" and revelation of who Jesus was and is, and why He came into our world, than by this miraculous event? Jesus did it, and John recorded it, "so you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you might have life in His name" (John 20:30-3). And Jesus did it--as He did everything in His earthly ministry--to accomplish the will of His Father, and to "bring glory to His name" (vs. 4). God's glory is thus seen in His victory over death! He is the "Life-Giver!"

Kostenberger notes that the "significance of Jesus's raising of Lazarus transcends the event itself!" Not only is it a demonstration of Jesus' identity, but it "foreshadows" His own coming death and resurrection, and gives us too the hope of eternal life! Just as Jesus said to Mary: "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live! And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die!" (I like the King James version!)

John writes (in verse 45) that many Jews witnessed the event first-hand, and believed! But not so for the Jewish religious hierarchy! "If we let Him go on like this, all men will believe in Him!" was their horrific response! Their unbelief was so unbelievable! It wasn't due to a lack of evidence but to their hardness of heart and commitment to keeping their religious system as it was--as well, supposedly, as their fear of Rome closing down their operations! And how fitting that Caiaphas, as the high priest, would be the one to prophesy (not knowing the significance of what he was saying!) that Jesus "was going to die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but that He might also gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad! Wow! How ironic that Jesus, in giving life to Lazarus, would set in motion the events leading to His own death on the cross--but then His resurrection!! All of which, of course, was just part of the plan!

Well, there's so much more to this lesson--as Tim brought out so well last nite, in our large group discussion! Mary and Martha and, of course, Lazarus (who probably always livened up things!) drew our attention to some great lessons, e.g., in how they opened up their home to Jesus, "ran to Him" in their moments of turmoil, developed a close and personal relationship with Him--and...well, we'll see more of it and other things in next week's lesson, in chapter 12, on "Mary's Anointing of Jesus."

But I think the bottom line of this lesson for us as believers is the reality that there is, in fact, a resurrection, and life to come, all of which gives us real hope, and a better understanding of I Corinthians 15, and particularly verses 19-20, where it says (again in KJs): "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable! But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept!" More on that as we continue this great study of John!

Have a great week, men!

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