

ARM Prison Outreach International

"Ministers' Minute" Volume VI Number 10

Lazarus the Living John 11 & 12

Editor's Note: This "MM" is an email lesson, the 10th of 2007 and 70th overall in a series. ARM is sending these monthly as an encouragement to preachers, chaplains, and Christians around the world. This message is a lesson I developed recently using the story of the incident in John 12:1-11. It is my prayer that this message will encourage you and honor Christ. Use it as a devotional, edit it, share it, use it or components of it!

-- Rod Farthing, ARM Prison Outreach Development Director rodfar@arm.org

ARM FAST FACT

ARM sent 24 baptistries to prisons in July and August of 2007

Baldwin State Prison - Hardwick, GA - Portable Baptistry
Walton County Dept of Corr - DeFuniak Springs, FL - Portable Baptistry
Lovelock Correctional Center - Lovelock, NV - Communion Table Baptistry
Adelento Community Correctional Fac - Adelento, CA - Portable Baptistry
Columbia Correctional Institute - Portage, WI - Portable Baptistry
SCI- Fayette - LaBelle, PA - Portable Baptistry
Woodland Hills Youth Development - Nashville, TN - Portable Baptistry
Complejo Las Cucharas-Ponce Princpl - Ponce. PR - Portable Baptistry
Hisportic Christian Mission - East Providence, RI - Portable Baptistry
Houston Processing Center/CCA - Houston. TX - Portable Baptistry
Coastal State Prison - Port Wentworth, GA - Communion Table Baptistry
Cornell Companies, Inc. - Big Spring, TX - **FOUR** Communion Table Baptistries
DOC, CSP-Sacramento - Folsom, CA - Communion Table Baptistry
Huttonsville Correctional Center - Huttonsville, WV - Communion Table Baptistry
Louisville Metropolitan DOC - Louisville, KY - Communion Table Baptistry
Scotts Bluff County Adult Corr. - Gering, NE - Communion Table Baptistry
Ware State Prison - Waycross, GA - Communion Table Baptistry
St Marys Correctional Center - St Marys, WV - Communion Table Baptistry
OZANAM - Kansas City, MO - Communion Table Baptistry
Northside Correctional Institution - Spartanburg, SC - Communion Table Baptistry
Daviness County Security Center - Plainville, IN - Communion Table Baptistry

ARM sent 1 baptistry to overseas missions in July and August of 2007

Beijing, China -- sent throught the Nugents in California

ARM sent 1 baptistry to a military base in July and August of 2007

Sheppard Chapel, Sheppard Air Force Base, Wichita Falls, TX

Since 1973, ARM has donated about **1,302** baptistries to prisons! In addition, over one hundred have been shipped to military bases and HUNDREDS have been

donated to mission fields!

Lazarus the Living... John 11 & 12

THE VOICE THAT WILL BE HEARD BY THE DEAD! -- by Dale Williamson

It is not uncommon for loved ones to speak to one in the casket or later in the grave. Such practice no doubt serves as an emotional outlet for the bereaved.

There is one whose voice will penetrate the grave and be HEARD BY THE DEAD. I speak of the voice of Jesus. To Lazarus, who had been dead four days, Jesus said, "Lazarus, come forth," and Lazarus came forth. The voice of Jesus is the voice of a Shepherd, Friend, Physician, Savior and Lord.

First we notice that Jesus speaks to those who are spiritually dead--physically alive but spiritually dead in sins and trespasses. Jesus came "that {we} might have life, and that {we} might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). Jesus states that the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and they that hear shall live. Paul writes "You He made alive who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1 NKJV). When we hear the voice of Jesus speaking through the gospel and we hear and listen to that voice, we shall walk in the newness of life.

In John 5:28 Jesus says: "Marvel not at these" (the reference to the spiritually dead hearing and living.) Now he turns to those who are physically dead. "Those who are in their graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (See John 5:29).

A bit of research about LAZARUS:

- Except for 'beggar Lazarus' -- a different person in Luke 16 -- all references to "Lazarus" are in John 11 and 12.
- His name occurs eleven times in John 11 &

12

- He is not mentioned in any other gospel, nor in the epistles
- His presence is the "driving force" behind the "Triumphal Entry that begins the famous "last week" -- see John 12:14-18

But, interestingly enough.....

- He is not mentioned before John 11.
- He is not mentioned after John 12.
- His faith is never mentioned.
- His actions are never described.
- His fame comes only from WHAT JESUS DID!
- Is there a lesson in that for us?

Excuses.....The next time you feel like God can't use you, remember the following people:

ABRAHAM was too old...

ISAAC was a day dreamer...

JACOB was a liar...

LEAH was ugly...

JOSEPH was abused...

GIDEON was afraid...

SAMPSON had long hair and was a womanizer...

RAHAB was a prostitute...

JEREMIAH and TIMOTHY were too young...

DAVID had an affair and was a murderer...

MOSES couldn't talk, (& didn't want to do what he had to do, and was a murderer)...

ELIJAH was suicidal...

ISAIAH preached naked...
JONAH ran from GOD...
NAOMI was a widow...
JOB went bankrupt...
JOHN the Baptist ate bugs...
PETER denied Christ...
The DISCIPLES fell asleep while praying...
MARTHA worried about everything...
MARY MAGDALENE was demon possessed...
The SAMARITAN WOMAN was divorced...more than once...
ZACCHEUS was too small...
PAUL was too religious...
TIMOTHY had an ulcer...
AND LAZARUS WAS DEAD!!!

- Let's look at the events that swirled around him

John 11:1-42

- In John 11:1-42, "Lazarus" is found four times
- v. 1 and 2: Lazarus was sick
- v. 5: Brother to Mary/Martha and is loved by Jesus
- v. 11: Jesus says he is a friend -- goes to "wake him"
- v. 14: Jesus says Lazarus is dead
- v. 43: Jesus calls his name to bring him from death
- Let's pick up the full story at verse 43

Lazarus the Living..... John 11:43-57

- 43 And when He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth."
- 44 He who had died came forth, bound hand and foot with wrappings; and his face was wrapped around with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."
- 45 Many therefore of the Jews, who had come to Mary and beheld what He had done, believed in Him.
- 46 But some of them went away to the Pharisees, and told them the things which Jesus had done.
- 47 Therefore the chief priests and the Pharisees convened a council, and were saying, "What are we doing? For this man is performing many signs.
- 48 "If we let Him go on like this, all men will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation."
- 49 But a certain one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all,
- 50 nor do you take into account that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation should not perish."
- 51 Now this he did not say on his own initiative; but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation,
- 52 and not for the nation only, but that He might also gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad.
- 53 So from that day on they planned together to kill Him.
- 54 Jesus therefore no longer continued to walk publicly among the Jews, but went away from there to the country near the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim; and there He stayed with the disciples.
- 55 Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and many went up to Jerusalem out of the country before the Passover, to purify themselves.
- 56 Therefore they were seeking for Jesus, and were saying to one another, as they stood in the temple, "What do you think; that He will not come to the feast at all?"

- 57 Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where He was, he should report it, that they might seize Him. (NAS)

The increasing motivation of the chief priests and Pharisees to seize and murder Jesus seems to stem, in this case, from the POWER OF THE WITNESS OF A LIVING LAZARUS! He did NOT carry his graveclothes around with him! Is your life a witness to the power of Christ?

**** A BUNDLE OF RAGS ****

A beggar lived near the king's palace. One day he saw a proclamation posted outside the palace gate. The king was giving a great dinner. Anyone dressed in royal garments was invited to the party. The beggar went on his way. He looked at the rags he was wearing and sighed. Surely only kings and their families wore royal robes, he thought.

Slowly an idea crept into his mind. The audacity of it made him tremble. Would he dare?

He made his way back to the palace. He approached the guard at the gate. "Please, sire, I would like to speak to the king."

"Wait here," the guard replied.

In a few minutes, he was back. "His majesty will see you," he said, and led the beggar in.

"You wish to see me?" asked the king.

"Yes, your majesty. I want so much to attend the banquet, but I have no royal robes to wear. Please, sir, if I may be so bold, may I have one of your old garments so that I, too, may come to the banquet?"

The beggar shook so hard that he could not see the faint smile that was on the king's face.

"You have been wise in coming to me," the king said. He called to his son, the young prince. "Take this man to your room and array him in some of your clothes."

The prince did as he was told and soon the beggar was standing before a mirror, clothed in garments that he had never dared hope for.

"You are now eligible to attend the king's banquet tomorrow night," said the prince. "But even more important, you will never need any other clothes. These garments will last forever."

The beggar dropped to his knees. "Oh, thank you," he cried.

But as he started to leave, he looked back at his pile of dirty rags on the floor. He hesitated. What if the prince was wrong? What if he would need his old clothes again. Quickly he gathered them up.

The banquet was far greater than he had ever imagined, but he could not enjoy himself as he should. He had made a small bundle of his old rags and it kept falling off his lap.

The food was passed quickly and the beggar missed some of the greatest delicacies.

Time proved that the prince was aright. The clothes lasted forever. Still the poor beggar grew fonder and fonder of his old rags. As time passed people seemed to forget the royal robes he was wearing. They saw only the little bundle of filthy rags that he clung to wherever he went. They even spoke of him as the old man with the rags.

One day as he lay dying, the king visited him. The beggar saw the sad look on the king's face when he looked at the small bundle of rags by the bed.

Suddenly the beggar remembered the prince's words and he realized that his bundle of rags had cost him a lifetime of true royalty. He wept bitterly at his folly.

And the king wept with him.

We have been invited into a royal family--the family of God. To feast at God's dinner table, all we have to do is shed our old rags and put on the "new clothes" of faith which is provided by God's Son, Jesus Christ.

But we cannot hold onto our old rags. When we put our faith in Christ, we must let go of the sin in our life, and our old ways of living. Those things must be discarded if we are to experience true royalty and abundant life in Christ.

"Behold, the old is passed away; the new has come!" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Lazarus the Living... John 12:1-2

- 1 Then Jesus six days before the Passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.
- 2 There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. (KJV)

Lazarus the Living... John 12:9-18

- 9 The great multitude therefore of the Jews learned that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He raised from the dead.
- 10 But the chief priests took counsel that they might put Lazarus to death also;
- 11 because on account of him many of the Jews were going away, and were believing in Jesus. (NAS)
- 12 The next day the great crowd that had come for the Feast heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem.
- 13 They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Blessed is the King of Israel!"
- 14 Jesus found a young donkey and sat upon it, as it is written,
- 15 "Do not be afraid, O Daughter of Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey's colt."
- 16 At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that they had done these things to him.
- **17 Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word.**

- 18 Many people, because they had heard that he had given this miraculous sign, went out to meet him.

Lazarus the Living...

... John 11 & 12

- What can we learn from his "fan club" -- John 12:17?

17 Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word.

When you've seen what Christ can do, YOU NEED TO TELL OTHERS! But your life must reflect the joy and victory of the RISEN LORD!

When Dr. Will H. Houghton was at Calvary Church in New York City, a glib-tongued -- but poorly dressed -- salesman came into his study and offered him some oil stocks that he said would make him a fortune. Dr. Houghton looked at the man and said in substance, "If this stock is as good as you say, why aren't you rich? You come in here in a shabby suit, with shoes run down at the heels, and expect me to believe you represent a going concern? I suggest you get into some line of work that produces representatives who inspire more

confidence in their product."

The crowd who was with Jesus as Lazarus was raised **CONTINUED TO SPREAD THE WORD!** And they backed it up with lives **THAT HAD BEEN CHANGED. HAVE YOU DONE SO???? WILL YOU DO SO???**

- **LET'S BE LIKE THEM ... AND CONTINUE TO SPREAD THE WORD!!**

Rod Farthing, ARM National Development Director

rodfar@arm.org RR 5 Box 159, Salem, MO 65560

Check out our web sites: www.arm.org www.abarc.org www.raphahouse.org www.daughtersofruth.org

In 2006, ARM donated over 5 MILLION DaySpring Greeting cards to prisons!