

The Gospel of John 11:28-57

I The Frustration of Human Opinions-continued (vv.28-40)

- A. After Martha said that she believed the Lord to be the Christ, the Son of God, she went away and called her sister Mary. Martha said, "The Teacher is here and is calling you" (22:28). However, I cannot find a word saying that the Lord had called for Mary. That was Martha's suggestion. It was her self-assuming opinion. Again we see in Martha a person who was so full of her own opinions. She was so active in her opinion that she could never be silent. Perhaps you also love the Lord very much, but, like Martha, you cannot be silent.
- B. Mary came to the Lord at Martha's word. She reiterated what Martha first told Lord: "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died" (11:32). This also is an opinion, a complaint against the Lord.
- C. The Lord never argued; neither did He accept their opinion. They simply did not understand that as long as the Lord was present everything would be all right. They could not realize this, for they were very sorrowful and even weeping. For this reason, the Lord groaned in His spirit and was troubled (11:33). He did not groan over the death of Lazarus, but over the fact that not one of the sorrowful ones knew that He was the present resurrection, and He was troubled by this. Then the Lord asked them where they had put Lazarus. They said to Him, "Lord, come and see" (11:34). This answer was very good. When the assembly has a problem, do not talk so much. Simply say, "Lord, come and see." At this juncture, the Lord wept in sympathy with their sorrow over Lazarus' death.

II Life's Resurrecting (vv.41-44)

- A. Why did the Lord, who was able to raise the dead, not remove the stone by Himself? Because His resurrection power requires our cooperation. Once they had removed the stone, the Lord cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, Come out!" (11:41-43), and Lazarus was raised from the dead. He heard the voice of the living Lord, was quickened, and was raised from the dead.
- B. After Lazarus came out of the tomb, there was still the need for human cooperation. Lazarus' hands and feet were bound with the burial clothes and his face was bound about with a handkerchief. Therefore Jesus said to them, "Loose him and let him go" (11:44). They had to remove the bandages from the resurrected Lazarus. They did it and the work of resurrection was completed.
- C. The Lord has the resurrection life, the resurrection power, but it needs our cooperation. It needs our submission. What is our submission? It is simply the giving up of our opinion. You must forsake you opinion and allow the Lord to speak. When He tells us, "Move this stone," we should simply move it. We must submit, cooperate, and coordinate with Him. We need to submit to His word, cooperate with Him, and coordinate with the resurrection power.
- D. Their taking the stone away and loosing Lazarus was their submitting to and cooperating with the resurrection life. The Lord was able to raise up Lazarus from death. However, He could not do anything because He was continually frustrated by human opinions. He was frustrated by those opinions until the time came when they were subdued. Eventually, Martha was subdued with a certain amount of submission.
- E. We too must work by cooperating with the Lord to release others from the bondage of the bandages. When the Lord raises up people from their death in the assembly, we need to cooperate with Him in order to release them from their earthly bondage. By this kind of cooperation the assembly becomes the testimony of the Lord as life.

III The Conspiracy of Religion and Life's Victorious Death (vv.45-57)

- A. We have seen that the death situation provided by God enabled Christ to manifest His resurrection power and that this resurrection power issues in the raising up of the dead one. But this raising of Lazarus caused some trouble. The news of it spread to the Pharisees, and the Pharisees, after hearing of it, considered the situation as very serious. Thus, they conspired to kill Jesus (11:45-57). As the Pharisees were conspiring against the Lord Jesus, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, spoke prophetically saying, "You know nothing at all, nor do you take account of the fact that it is expedient for you that one man die for the people and that the whole nation not perish" (11:49-50).
- B. The following verse says, "But this he did not say from himself, but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was to die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but that He might also gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad"(11:51-52)...What does all this mean? It simply means that the resurrection life will raise up a situation through which God's scattered people may be gathered together in order to be built up for God's dwelling on earth. Religion's conspiracy helps in the fulfillment of God's purpose. Gather into one the children of God implies that both the Lord's death and the Lord's death and the Lord's resurrection life are for the building up of God's children. By His death the Lord released His Life so that it could be imparted into those who believe into Him. This life is experienced by us in His resurrection. It is in the Lord's resurrection that we grow together into one by His life to become His Body.