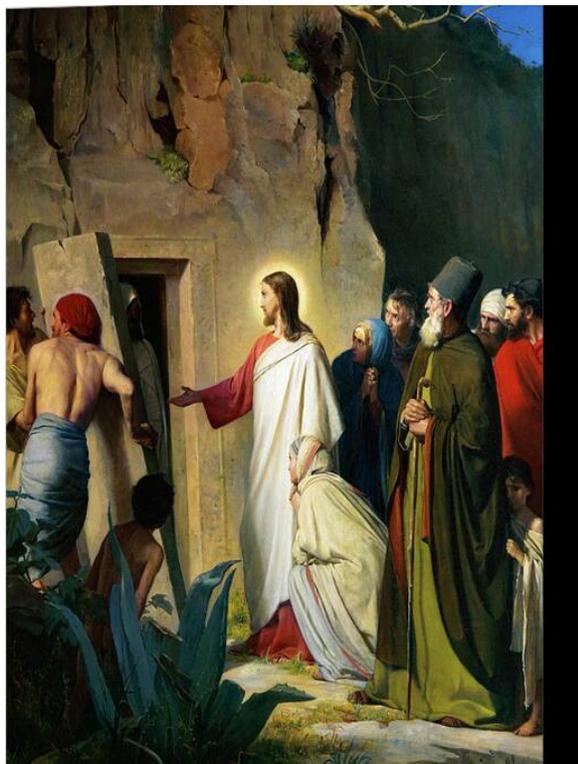


Jesus Christ Is the Resurrection and the Life

Background: Two weeks ago we dealt with physical and spiritual blindness. Last week, it was physical and spiritual blindness. Both serious problems that Christ came to solve. This weekend, the challenge is physical and spiritual death. While Christ was doing wonderful things which should only have glorified Jesus Christ, the hate for Christ only grew worse when He healed a man blind from birth. For saying He



was probably the Messiah, the blind man was excommunicated from the temple. Only a few weeks later, Christ raises Lazarus from the dead after he had been buried 3 days earlier. Martha said his body was already rotting when Christ said he would rise again, referring to his Spiritual life. But Christ raised him from the dead and had him hop out of the grave fully wrapped in his grave clothes. While only God was capable of such an action, it only convinced the temple leaders that Christ must be eliminated. While this anger was totally misled, Christ's death was necessary to fulfill God's Plan of Salvation, which could only be achieved by Christ shedding His blood as the final sacrificial lamb. This sacrifice not only removed our sins, but the sins ever committed by anyone in the world. Only those rejecting the call of the Holy Spirit are not forgiven. Unfortunately, way too many people reject the Holy Spirit's action in their hearts and lives and thus do not know or understand Jesus Christ as their Savior. In all humility, we witness Christ's love to any that don't understand Christ's sacrifice on the cross.

Jesus raises Lazarus from the Dead Carl Bloch 1870

The Lessons: Ezekiel 37:1–14, Romans 8:1–11, & John 11:1–45 (46–53) or John 11:17–27, 38–53

The illness and death of Lazarus happened *“that the Son of God may be glorified through it”* (John 11:4). Jesus' miracle of raising Lazarus prompted His arrest and crucifixion, whereby He would die *“for the nation”* and gather *“into one the children of God who are scattered abroad”* (John 11:51–52). As He called Lazarus from the tomb and commanded others to *“unbind him, and let him go”* (John 11:44), Jesus also calls us and releases us from the bondage of sin and death. We would not *“submit to God's law,”* nor could we *“please God”* (Rom. 8:7–8), but *“he condemned sin”* in His own flesh so *“that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us”* (Rom. 8:3–4). Now through the Gospel, *“the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells”* in us (Rom. 8:11). His Word breathes His Spirit into our mortal flesh, animating us with His own life. As His ministers preach according to His divine command, the Lord Jesus calls us from the grave into the good land that He gives us (Ezek. 37:12, 14).