

TRANSCRIPT
July 26th , 2026 "The Compassion Of Jesus"
Guest Speaker Pastor Larry Swartz

Good morning, brothers and sisters. I'm happy to be here today again to see everybody. It's becoming like home.

It's a good thing. You know, thank you. I love you guys, and I thank you for... Thanks for that special offering you sent out to us a couple weeks ago.

It was very perfect timing. God is always on time. When you're in a need, it just comes from places you wouldn't even expect.

At any rate, we thank you. Thank you for your prayers for our family. God is good, and he's working, and he's always with us.

John 11, I want to read a couple of verses today. We're going to look at the passage. It's lengthy.

I'm not going to read the whole thing now, but we'll try to get through most of the chapter. I don't want to leave anything out because there's an awful lot here that just kind of goes along with this account of the raising of Lazarus. But I wanted to read.

I'm going to pick different verses as we go along, so you can follow as you like, and then we'll get back and try to go through it. Beginning in verse number one, it says, A certain man was sick named Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. That was the Mary which anointed the Lord with the ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.

Therefore his sister sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. When he heard that, Jesus said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby. Verse number seven, the words of Christ here again.

Let us go on to Judea. His disciples said, Master of late, the Jews have sought to stone me. And you go there again.

Jesus would go where he was going without worrying about what the consequences was because he had a mission and he wasn't worried. Then number, I want to jump down to number 11. Our friend Lazarus sleepeth, but I go that I may awake him out of sleep.

Verse number 14, where Jesus said, Lazarus is dead and 15. And I'm glad for your sakes that I was not there to the intent that you may believe. Nevertheless, let's go on to him.

Turn with me to verse 23, talking to Martha concerning her brother who passed on. Jesus says, Our brother shall rise again. Verse number 25, he said unto her, 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. Believest thou this? And then verse number 34, we can just kind of see what's going

on here.

Jesus comes to the place where he was and he said, where have you laid him? Verse number 39, take away the stone. And verse number 40, after Martha confronts Jesus and says, you know, look, he's been dead for quite a while. He says, didn't I tell you that if you would believe, you would see the glory of God? Verse 41, again, just the words of Christ at the end.

Father, I thank thee that thou has heard me. And I know that you hear me always. But because of the people which stand by, I said it, that they may believe that thou has sent me.

Verse number 43, Lazarus come forth. And then 44 at the last part of the verse is where he gets the church involved in helping the sick, loose him and let him go. Let's pray and ask the Lord to help us as we look at this amazing passage, this amazing miracle of the Lord Jesus Christ.

His love for his brethren, his friends, people in general. And we just we see so many things about Christ in this passage. So let's pray.

Father, we're grateful for your goodness. And I ask that you bless our time in your word. We thank you.

We have record of all that Jesus did and said. And even in the last of this book, John said, if the world could hold the books. That of the of the things that Jesus did, it would not be able to.

So Jesus did many more things. But we have so much of the record here in even in the gospel of John. So we thank you for it.

Bless our time in your word. In Jesus name. Amen.

So this is probably the greatest miracle that he had performed. It reveals many truths about the about life, about suffering, about death, about the king of the world, about the king over those things, about Jesus Christ, about his compassion for people, about his love for people and different things. So back to the text again.

Verse number one. A certain man was sick, named Lazarus of Bethany, of the town of Mary and her sister Martha. Bethany was a town and a place where Jesus kind of in going in and out of Judea, in and out of Jerusalem.

They would stop there about two miles to the east, apparently of Jerusalem. And there was times when they would stop there. It was a rest over.

It was a rest. But it was a family that took him in at different times. And and it was a place where where Mary anointed the Lord.

And we can read that in the following chapter. We can see what happened there. But his sister sent now Lazarus is sick.

They send to Jesus and they said this. And I just you know, I love this. It says, Lord, behold, whom thou lovest is sick.

And so they they recognized Jesus, loved Lazarus. They love they saw that. And it's just a wonderful

thing that they recognize that Jesus loves people.

And you can see that if you look at him through the scriptures, he loves you as a matter of fact. He loves you so much that he gave his life for you. And he loves to have communion with you.

He loves to intercede on your behalf. He loves he just he's loved and he loves people. And this is just a great testimony about him.

Lord, behold, he whom you love is sick. When Jesus heard it, he said this sickness is not unto death. This is an interesting thought here again.

But for the glory of God, that the son of God might be glorified. Jesus has power over sickness. He has power over death.

He knows from a distance that this sickness is not something that's going to finish this man by any stretch of the imagination, because Jesus knew he was dead and he knew how long he had been dead. When he gets there, finally, he holds off for two days, but he shows up. But he just he knows he puts a limitation on sickness.

This sickness is not going to be the end of Lazarus. This is so Jesus is in control of all things on this earth. God is in control.

We call it the sovereignty and the providence of God. If you're sick, God has a limitation to that. God has a purpose in that.

Although we find it hard to believe at times, hard to understand. We may not like it, but God often uses pain, sickness, sorrow, even bereavement. He uses it for good purposes for his people.

Romans 8 28. We know that all things work together for good to those who love God. And those are the called according to his purpose.

So sickness, ill health, all of these things. But there's a limit to them. And speaking of limits, there's a limit on what the devil can do, because I like to say he's like a dog on a leash.

He just can only go so far. He can go so far because Jesus allows him to go so far. He wants to pull him back.

He can pull him back. He's in control. There's a book that I that I read, and it's very good by Erwin Lutzer.

It's called God's Devil. It's an interesting thought. And he's one of the pastors that's up at Word of Life often.

And it's just it's a it's a very interesting thought. And it's a great book because it gives you a different perspective on the devil. He's not he's not an opposing force.

He's he's a created being. He fell. He fell.

But he's no match for God. And he's on a leash. So keep in mind that he can only do what he's allowed

to do.

He can't do any more. And you remember the story of Job when the when the sons of men presented themselves before God, Satan was with them. And he said, consider your servant Job.

And God said, OK, you can have you can do this, but you can't do that. You can do this, but you can't do that. You can take this, but you can't take that.

He's on a leash. He has bounds. The same with sickness.

This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God. God is glorified by our sicknesses. He's glorified by the recovery.

But he's glorified through it because people learn and grow closer to God. When you're sick, you're called nearer to him. You spend more time with him.

You call out to him more often. I have a friend that we had in our church. He's been gone now for probably 10, 15 years.

Don Silva. He was his mom was in a elderly community behind our church in Dartmouth, behind Dartmouth Baptist Church. Emily Silva.

She was an elderly woman, about 85, 90 years old. And I went and we were knocking doors and she let me in and spent some time with her after weeks, letter to Jesus. And she says, you need to go tell my son about this.

Well, her son was Don Silva, who was 70 years old, who was in a nursing home after a stroke. So I went to visit Don and God had him eaten out of my hand. I mean, he was, he was this big, proud, tough Navy SEAL who had his legs knocked out from under him.

And now he was nothing. He was laying on his back and he's looking up. And his testimony was, God knocked me down so I could only look up.

He got saved. He was no longer this proud, tough guy anymore. He was on his back.

He said, I had nowhere to call. And God sent me by. God will use you if you are open.

And Don Silva got, he got saved, gloriously saved. And, and we used to call him Don the Baptist. He was a fearless evangelist.

And he, he PO'd a lot of people, but he was, his intentions were good. He was always out trying to tell people, tell people about Jesus in that elderly community. Anyways, the sickness was not unto death, but for the glory of God.

And Don's testimony was, I got sick. I'm glad I had a stroke because I would have never met God. I'm glad I was, my whole economy was ripped out from under me.

My physical, my, my wellbeing, everything was torn away from me. I'm glad I wound up in a hospital bed because now I know God. And so he really, he really got it.

So this sickness is not unto death. Look at verse number five. And we, we, we see that sickness is under God's control.

He allows it. He lets it go so far. And then he can do what he want with it.

But ultimately, God is glorified through it. In this case, in Lazarus' case, God's going to get glorified because Lazarus is going to come up. He's going to come up from the grave.

God's going to get glorified. But Jesus is doing all of this that people would believe. All of the miracles, all of the speaking, all of his parables, all of the Sermon on the Mount, all of the things that Jesus did was that so people who were watching would believe.

So that people who were listening would believe. Yes, he loved Lazarus, but he wanted those people to believe. He wanted to increase Martha and Mary's faith.

He wanted to do many things. And the people that were surrounding them, he wanted them to understand who he was. He had a personal attachment to his friends.

I mentioned that when sickness comes, Jesus is well aware of it. It says we don't have a high priest who has not been touched with the feeling of our infirmities. He's our high priest today.

He's prophet, priest, and king. He's right now in two of those offices. He's our high priest.

He was our high priest because he became the sacrifice, the sacrificer, and he's our intercessor. He's doing priestly intercession for us today. He loves us.

He prays for us. He intercedes for us. And if you want to see how he prays for you, look at John 17 and read all about it.

And he says there at one point, I don't pray for these only, but for those who will believe on me through their speaking. And so that's us. God, Jesus has prayed for us way in advance.

So he comes into this place. And then in verse 5, this is now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. He loved them all.

When he heard, therefore, that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place. Then after that, he said, let's go to Judea again. So it's an interesting thing.

He hears that he's sick. He knows he's dead. They hear he's sick.

He knows he's dead. He wants to make sure that these people understand beyond a shadow of a doubt that this man is dead. He's not three days.

He's four days by the time Jesus gets there. They don't understand. Even she said, Lord, if you would have come quicker, he may have lived.

She didn't get it. People didn't get it. He wanted him totally out so he could bring him totally back.

And it's an interesting passage of the resurrection and the king of the resurrection that we have here. We'll let that finish and then we'll continue. Don't worry.

It happens to all. I remember one time Baron told me he was here preaching and his phone went off and he picked it up and he said, God. I'm like, yeah, that would be him.

But I bet his phone don't ring anymore. Right. I don't even have my pocket.

It's not me when you're speaking. Anyways. After that, it says he said, let's go to Judea again.

So he stayed in the same place that he was. He waited a little bit. They didn't understand.

And we don't understand many of the things that Jesus does. But he let's say this. He's on God's timetable.

There was a day and a time appointed that he would go to Bethany and raise him. It wasn't two days prior. Jesus is on time.

Always on time. Never late. Never early.

Just when he's supposed to be there. And that's when he shows up just at the right specific time so that God gets the glory. They fully understand he's dead.

Something is miraculous if he comes up and we see that's what's going to happen. Jesus tells him, you know, are there not 12 hours in the day? If a man walk in the day, he stumbles not because he sees the light of this world. And then these things said he in verse number 11, after they said unto him, our friend Lazarus, he said, our friend sleeps, but I go that I may wake him out of sleep.

So at this time, sleep was used as a term for death. And there's two different ways that it was used for the pagans, the nonbelievers. Sleep was the end of a terrible, terrible thing.

Death was terrible, is terrible for the nonbeliever. It's brutal because at the dying moment, there's no confidence of where you're going. And I would imagine when you're dying or close to it or very near the end, everything floods your mind now.

What have I done? Who's God? Am I related to God? Do I know him? Is there two places? Where am I going? And death is a horrible thing for the unbeliever. It's a tragic thing. And so they call it sleep because he's just sleeping forever and ever and ever, and it's over with.

But we know it's not that way. Jesus used it in the New Testament. And in Christians, we call it sleeping because death is not the end of a believer.

This sickness is not unto death. This sleeping is not unto death. When we sleep, we will rise again.

Amen? In this term. When we die, so a Christian doesn't necessarily die. He lives forever.

And if you believe that he resurrected, as he told Martha, you will live forever as well. So we don't die. We sleep.

And I've been at the bedside of many believers who died, and it was glorious. It was wonderful. They were comforted.

They weren't struggling. They weren't losing a grip. They weren't hanging on.

They weren't just trying to fight through this thing that was dragging them out. No death for the Christian is asleep, if you will. We don't believe in soul sleep.

We know that when you're absent from the body, you're present with the Lord. And I'm going to mention this before I forget. In verse number 35, it says this.

We'll jump there quick and then come back. But Jesus said, verse 34, where have you laid him? They said, come and see. They bring him to the grave.

And on the way there, it says, Jesus wept. Smallest verse in the scripture. Most powerful, powerful thought about Jesus, his compassion for people.

His hatred of sin and death. It makes him cry that people have to die. Because when we were created, we were created to live with God eternally.

But then sin came in and destroyed it. Sin brought death. The wages of sin is death.

But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Jesus wept there. He wept at the grave for many things we can think of.

Many things. He wept along with his brothers and sisters that were there. He wept along with the family.

He was having compassion. And that's why I called it the compassion of Jesus. Compassion means to suffer with.

He's suffering with Mary and Martha. He's weeping with them. He wept with them.

And you have to understand, Jesus never wept at the cross. He never wept in the court trials. He never wept when they were beating him.

He never wept when he thought about any of these things. He never wept in the garden when he prayed. He sweat great drops of blood.

He wasn't crying. He's crying now. His heart breaks for humanity.

His heart breaks because death has to come. But he's come to do something about it. He's come to turn it around.

He's come to make it something different. For a believer, death is not the end. It's an entrance.

Amen? It's an entrance. It's an entrance into eternal life. And by the way, once you give your life to Jesus, you're in eternal life now.

So you might as well enjoy it. Just might as well start enjoying it. Because this life that we have, that he's given us, lasts forever.

And nothing can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Not even your sleep. And so, he says he's sleeping.

Our friend Lazarus in verse 11 is sleeping. But I go that I may wake him out of sleep. Again, I want to go back to his weeping.

I thought of this. And I was reading Warren Wiersbe on this. And I never thought of this.

And I've read this passage and probably preached it many times in 30 years. I never thought of this fact that perhaps he was weeping for Lazarus because Lazarus had to be called back from glory. Did you ever think of that? I never once ever thought of that when I read theology, read this passage, read what people said.

Never once, never once. Do we believe absent from the body is present with the Lord? Okay. So Lazarus is going to be called back from heaven.

And perhaps Jesus is weeping because Lazarus has to come back to this sin-ridden world again. Get up in a body that was already corrupting. And die again in the physical plane.

He'd have to go through that one more time. Amazing. Maybe that's why.

Who knows? Several reasons. It could be one of them. And then, you know, you always like to try to put yourself into the situation, what was going on.

I'd love to hear what Lazarus said. When they took the grave clothes off, I could just see him saying, Dude, wrap me up, put me back in there. It was better.

What? I'm back here now? You got to be kidding me. Right? What a conversation. What would he have said? Who knows what he said? It's not recorded, but I can imagine.

You imagine. I'm back? It's not like, I'm back. No.

I'm back? Oh, my God. I have to do this again? Maybe that's why Jesus was weeping. He knew Lazarus would one day have to go through that thing again.

He'd have to go through that death again. But thank God for us, it's a sleeping. Thank God this sickness is not unto death.

Thank God he's in control. And thank God when you give your life to him, everything changes. Everything changes.

So Jesus says to them, they didn't understand. Verse number 12, his disciples said, Lord, if he sleeps, he does well. How be it Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought.

See, he spake, they thought. How many times, do you know that this is not too many days before the cross? This is not too many days before he goes into Jerusalem and presents himself as the Messiah. It's

not too many days beforehand.

They've been with him a long time now. They've been with him for three years almost at this point. And they still are so carnally minded that they can't figure him out.

They can't figure his speech out. They can't figure out what he's doing. Lord, if you go there, you know, they tried to stone you.

Don't worry about me. Okay, don't you know who I am? Don't you know who I am? And then here we have, you know, if he's sleeping, he's okay. That means he's going to get better.

No, no, no, guys, you still don't get it. You still don't get it. Even to the last supper, they just, they didn't know.

They didn't figure it out. If you remember, I think James and John were arguing over who's going to sit at the right or the left. And he must have been, oh my God, I am showing them my death in this meal.

I'm showing them I'm going to die and they're worried about who's going to be where. They're not running with me. They still haven't figured it out yet.

They still don't really believe what's going on. They still don't know. And here in this passage, they said, well, he'll do well if he sleeps.

No, no. And then he has to clarify what he said to them. He said, Lazarus is dead in verse number 14.

But notice again, and I mentioned this, but I'm glad for your sakes that I was not there to the intent that you might believe. Nevertheless, let's go on to him. So they must have thought, wow, this is crazy.

He's dead. We thought he was sleeping. We thought he was sick.

We thought he was going to be okay. You lingered for a couple of days. Now you're telling us he's dead and we're going to him.

We're going to go see him. I don't know if I want to be in that company. We're going to go see Lazarus.

Yeah, that's what we're going to do. We're going to go see Lazarus. And so they go.

And Thomas, you got to give him credit. Thomas was the doubting Thomas. Notice Thomas here in verse 16.

Thomas, which was called Didymus unto his fellow disciples. He said, let us also go that we will die with him. Thomas was a man of courage, at least.

Okay, at least. He may have doubted, but he was a man of courage. Let's go then.

If he's going, let's go. Let's go with him. And God needs people of courage to do this work.

Amen. Not to be afraid to just go ahead and do the things that he has for us. And so.