

“Take Away the Stone!”

The story of Lazarus is given in *John 11:1-45*. It tells us about the death of Lazarus, a man whom Jesus loved dearly, and how Jesus raised him from the dead. The word is ‘resurrection...bringing life to that which is dead!’ We pick up the story where Jesus is about to raise Lazarus from the dead in *John 11:38-39*:

³⁸ Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. ³⁹ “Take away the stone,” he said.

Jesus loved Lazarus, and He was saddened and ‘deeply moved’ by his death. I dare to say that just as He loved Lazarus, Jesus loves me and He loves you! And it pains Jesus when we die. The death I am talking about is not a physical death but a spiritual death. I define ‘spiritual death’ to mean ‘living a sinful life and not having a true relationship with Jesus Christ.’ The Bible says in *Romans 3:23* that “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God!”

My friend, sin keeps us in bondage. The Bible also says that the wages of sin is death. So as we continue to sin we stay in that place of ‘spiritual death.’ As we continue to be a slave to sin, we remain in a place of darkness where we do not experience the Light of Christ. Death and darkness go hand in hand. Now picture the inside of the tomb where Lazarus laid....dead. It was not only a dark place, the Bible says that “it was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance.” In my mind I see a place of no escape. The physical cave was sealed by a large boulder. The entrance was blocked. Nowhere to go. Trapped. ‘Sin’ does that to us. Unknowingly or knowingly, sin keeps us in bondage...trapped...unable to break free of its shackles.

But thank God for sending His Son Jesus to our rescue! He came and He died for our sins so that we can be free from a life of bondage. In the story, Jesus gave the order... ‘Take away the stone.’ Jesus is about to do something in your dark situation. He has already given the order, ‘Take away the stone!’

You are reading this and you are about to make the biggest decision in your life. Will you allow the Light of Christ to come into your life. Just as He stood outside the tomb of Lazarus, a dead man....Jesus is standing outside the door of your heart.... the heart of a ‘dead man’ like me or a ‘dead woman’ like you....someone who, although at times, feeling trapped by a life of sin, would like to experience something different ...a new life in Christ. Today, Jesus is knocking at the door. Tomorrow is promised to no one. Will you let Him in? If the answer is “Yes,” let us pray.

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for loving me and for sending Your Son Jesus to die for my sins. I am a sinner. Forgive me of my sins. Today I open the door of my heart and welcome Jesus into my life. Holy Spirit come into my life and lead me along a path that is pleasing to God. Thank You, O Lord, for bringing me out of darkness and into the marvellous light of Christ. In Jesus’ name I pray with thanksgiving. Amen.

John 3:16 – “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”