

All Saints Sunday

FROM TOMB TO LIFE

John 11:32~44

Few of families in the Gospels Jesus visited with frequency. The family of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus was one which Jesus loved and which loved Jesus. From the Gospels we see whenever Jesus came to Jerusalem and was in the Temple region he often found time to visit this family. Since there was no mention of the parent of this family, it is likely that their parents had deceased for sometime. If this were so, the family was then facing the danger and pain of losing their brother, the only surviving male in the family.

Martha sent a messenger to call Jesus for his help. Knowing the emergency Jesus, instead of departing right away for Bethany, stayed at a place beyond Jordan for two more days. When he finally arrived in Bethany Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. The delay brought the anxious two sisters to despair. They felt if only their Lord could have come earlier, their dear young brother's life would be spared. Now Lazarus died, and the two sisters complained about Jesus' delay, which resulted in the loss of their brother. Even so, Martha believed that God would hear whatever Jesus asked.

Jesus assured Martha that her brother would be raised to life. But Martha understood it to come true in the last day. To this, Jesus said to Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live even though he dies." Having encountered the grief of the family and experienced the sorrow of the community Jesus came to the tomb where the body of Lazarus was laid. Jesus prayed to his Father and asked him to hear his petition. Then he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" At his command death has to let loose its captive, and life came back to Lazarus. And Lazarus came out of the tomb tightly bandaged hand and foot, with his face covered with a cloth.

This was the last and greatest miracle Jesus performed. As a fallen creature, life is a journey from cradle to tomb. As a forgiven sinner, we have been transferred from darkness to light, from death to life. Our life is now hidden with Christ in God. Death has lost its sting, and has been forfeited its final authority over us. We are now Christ's, and belong to the company of all who put their sole trust in him. Tomb

is no longer our final destination, but a gateway to new heaven and earth, to the city of God where there will be no more death and weeping.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank you for your love, which draws you near to the ones in pain and sorrow. Thank you for having liberated us from the tyranny of death. Enable us to trust you and sustain us in time of trial and loss that our hope in the resurrection and life in you will shine even brighter. In the name of the risen Lord. Amen.

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