**SERMON OUTLINE**

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| **SERMON TITLE:** | The Abundant Life |
| **SERMON REFERENCE:** | John 11:25-26 |
| **LWF SERMON NUMBER:** | #2474 |
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1. INTRODUCTION
   1. Would you like to live victoriously?
   2. Would you like to live the way the Bible teaches?
   3. Many of us think that these sermons and lessons are something disconnected from us, and we have no intention of being truly changed by them.
      1. The worship service at church is sort of a semi-entertainment and worship service, and we are not expecting to be changed.
   4. Disraeli: “Youth is a blunder, middle age is a struggle, and old age a regret.”
   5. Shakespeare: “Life is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.”
      1. This is the way some people feel about life.
   6. Jesus said, “*I have come that you might have life and have it abundantly*.”
      1. John 10:10
   7. John 11:25-26
   8. If we want to live before we die and live after we die, then there are four steps or principles that we can apply that will help us to have an abundant life.
      1. This is not pop psychology.
      2. This is absolute truth from the Word of God.
2. exercise faith in jesus
   1. When we exercise faith in Jesus, that is when life begins.
   2. John 11:25-26
      1. If we exercise faith, then we will live forever.
   3. Lazarus was a man whom Jesus loved.
      1. Jesus had some friends in Bethany.
         1. They were Mary, Martha, and Lazarus.
         2. They were very special to Jesus, and He would go and abide with them.
      2. John 11:1-45
         1. Lazarus got sick.
         2. Mary and Martha sent for Jesus to come and heal him, but Jesus delayed on purpose until Lazarus was dead.
            1. Mary and Martha scolded Jesus and asked why He hadn’t come.

Jesus knew what He was doing.

* + - 1. Jesus told the people to roll away the stone to the tomb.
      2. Jesus called Lazarus out.
         1. John 11:43
      3. Out of the mouth of the tomb came Lazarus.
  1. Why doesn’t God raise all of the dead?
     1. They are in a far better place than this.
     2. This miracle is an illustration of our greater spiritual life.
  2. In John 20, John tells us why he gave us this miracle story.
     1. There are seven miracle stories in the Gospel of John.
        1. Each one of them illustrates a special point about salvation.
     2. John 20:30-31
        1. This is why we must exercise faith in Jesus.
           1. That believing, we might have life in His name.
  3. There were many things right about Lazarus, but there was one thing that was wrong about him: he was dead.
     1. It didn’t make any difference how well they had him dressed, how much money he had in the bank, or how many friends he had.
     2. There are people today who do not know that they are dead, but they are dead in trespasses and sin.
     3. There are others who have loved ones who have gone to Heaven.
        1. We say that they are dead, but they are not dead.
           1. They are more alive than they have ever been.
           2. They are leaping, dancing, and praising Jesus face-to-face.
  4. We need to understand what death is.
     1. Some people are dead, but their hearts are thumping, their blood is circulating, and their minds are thinking.
     2. 1 Timothy 5:6
        1. This passage is speaking of a person who has given his or her heart over to licentiousness.
        2. They are the walking dead.
     3. Ephesians 4:18
        1. They are alienated from God.
     4. Some are dead in trespasses and sin.
     5. Some today have existence, but they don’t have life.
        1. They may be dead and not know it.
  5. Jesus raised three from the dead:
     1. He raised a little girl who had died.
        1. Luke 8:41-56
        2. She had just died.
        3. He told the people there to stay out of the room; they did not believe.
        4. Her body was still warm.
     2. He raised a young man on the way to his funeral.
        1. Luke 7:11-15
        2. The young man was on the funeral bier; he was being transported.
        3. His body was cold.
        4. Rigor mortis had set in.
     3. He raised Lazarus.
        1. John 11:1-45
        2. Lazarus had been four days in the grave.
           1. Corruption had already begun.
           2. The stench of death was there.
     4. Which one of the three (the little girl, the young man, or Lazarus) was the most dead?
        1. Dead is dead.
           1. It doesn’t matter whether we are like that little girl or that young man or like Lazarus.
  6. Some of us have little children who are old enough to know Jesus.
     1. These children are as lost as the worst criminal on the face of the Earth without Jesus.
  7. There may be degrees of corruption but not degrees of death.
  8. We need to stop comparing ourselves to other people and saying that we are better than they.
     1. That is like a lot of dead people saying that he is more dead than I am.
     2. Dead is dead.
  9. Lazarus was raised from the dead and that takes a miracle of God to do that.
  10. Falsehoods about raising the spiritually dead:
      1. By example.
         1. Many people think that what people need is a better example.
         2. Jesus did not come to be our example; He came to be our Savior.
         3. Salvation does not come by learning lessons from the life of Christ but by receiving life by the death of Christ.
         4. Examples are good, but they won’t raise the dead.
      2. By encouragement.
         1. There are philosophers today who say that a person can do anything if he really applies himself.
            1. A dead man can’t apply himself.

We can encourage him all we want.

* + 1. By environment.
       1. If we take a dead man out of a cemetery and put him in a party, then he is still dead.
       2. Environment is not going to change anything.
       3. Environment will not raise the dead.
       4. Man got into difficulty in the best environment ever known, the Garden of Eden.
       5. Man needs more than environment.
    2. By education.
       1. Education is not going to change him; he needs a miracle.
  1. Jesus performed the miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead with His Word.
     1. John 11:43
        1. With His Word; He spoke.
        2. There is power in the Word of God.
     2. Philippians 2:16
     3. John 6:63
        1. The word “quickeneth” means “makes alive.”
     4. The Word of God, the Bible, is the Word of Life.
     5. The Word of Jesus brought Lazarus forth.
  2. Lazarus was already saved at this time.
     1. This wasn’t when he was saved.
     2. This was only an illustration that he had been saved.
     3. He was saved by believing in Jesus before he went into the tomb.
  3. The secret of abundant life is to experience life and salvation by faith in Jesus Christ.

1. experience freedom through jesus
   1. John 11:44
      1. Lazarus was wrapped round and round with linen very tightly.
         1. Wrapped like this, he couldn’t work, he couldn’t witness, and he couldn’t praise.
      2. Jesus told those around him to loose Lazarus and let him go.
   2. Not only do we need life through faith in Jesus, but we also need liberty and freedom through Jesus.
   3. What our Lord wants to do once we are saved is to loose us.
      1. Many of us, when we were saved, came out of the tomb with graveclothes on.
         1. We have things in our lives that don’t leave immediately.
            1. We have some old loves, old language, or old lusts.
         2. We might even think that we are not saved because we still have the graveclothes on.
            1. We still had some things in our life that did not go away immediately: old loves, old language, old lusts.
            2. This doesn’t mean that we are not saved.
      2. We have to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
   4. James 1:21
      1. In this verse, “to save your soul” means “to deliver your soul.”
      2. “Superfluity of naughtiness” here means “that which is over, superfluid,” or “that which is in excess,” or “that which is left over.”
   5. When someone is saved, that person receives life through the Lord Jesus Christ, but he has the graveclothes of the old life.
      1. For example, someone is saved and hits his thumb with a hammer, and out come those old words he used to say.
         1. He wonders if he had been saved at all.
            1. If we have trusted Jesus and if we have exercised faith in Jesus, then we are saved.
      2. We need to initiate freedom in Jesus.
         1. “*Loose him, and let him go*.”
            1. John 11:44
   6. One of the jobs of the church is to unwrap the saints.
      1. There are a lot of people who do not have freedom.
   7. Jesus gives us life, and He gives us liberty.
      1. He breaks the power of cancelled sin and sets the prisoner free.
   8. John 8:32
   9. John 8:36
2. enjoy fellowship with jesus
   1. John 12:1-2
      1. Lazarus had gone from the tomb to the table.
      2. They were having a banquet, and Jesus was there.
      3. The Bible points out that Lazarus sat at the table with Jesus.
   2. Being saved is not some sort of a penalty that we pay in order to get to Heaven.
   3. When we are invited to come to Jesus, we are not invited to a funeral; we are invited to a feast.
   4. The Bible is full of feasts and stories of suppers.
      1. John 21:12
         1. Jesus says, “Come and dine.”
      2. Revelation 3:20
         1. Jesus will come in as the guest and then He will become the host.
      3. When we come to the Lord Jesus Christ, Jesus bids us to come and have fellowship with Him.
   5. Jesus is a friend with whom we can feast and have fellowship.
      1. The devil wants us to think negatively about God.
      2. God is good all the time, and He says to us, “Come and dine.”
3. express faithfulness to jesus
   1. There were some other people who did not like Lazarus.
      1. John 12:9-11
         1. They had come to see Jesus, but they also had come to see Lazarus because he had been raised from the dead.
         2. The chief priests had threatened Lazarus with death.
            1. Death held no terror for Lazarus.

When a man is no longer afraid to die, then for the first time he is ready to live.

Lazarus knew that he knew that Jesus was the resurrection and the life.

* 1. Lazarus’ testimony, loyalty, and faithfulness to Jesus caused many other people to believe in Jesus.
     1. Lazarus exercised faithfulness in Jesus.
     2. The chief priests came to intimidate Lazarus.
        1. They told him not to speak in Jesus’ name.
           1. That didn’t slow Lazarus down at all.
     3. Are you exercising faithfulness to Jesus?
     4. Are you afraid of what people think?
  2. The best argument for Jesus and the best argument against Jesus is the life of a Christian.
     1. People were saved because they could see in Lazarus supernatural life.
     2. What is there about you that is different than the rest of the people who live on your street?
     3. What is there about you that cannot be explained apart from a miracle?
  3. The only right we have to ask anyone else to believe in our Savior is something they cannot explain in our life.
     1. We are to be witnesses.
     2. Not only are we to be witnesses, but we are also to be examples.
        1. We are the evidence as well as a witness of the changed life.
           1. 2 Corinthians 5:17
  4. There was no way that they could intimidate Lazarus.
     1. Death held no terror for him.
     2. He was disturbing to those who hated the Lord Jesus Christ by His faithfulness to Jesus.

1. CONCLUSION
   1. If you have not exercised faith in Jesus, then you need to do so.
   2. If you are still in graveclothes, then you need to get unwrapped.
   3. If you are not enjoying Jesus, then you need to be enjoying the Lord Jesus Christ and feasting with Him.
   4. You need to be loyal to Jesus.
      1. Never be ashamed of the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ.
         1. It is your changed life that is the best testimony of all.
   5. John 11:25-26
      1. If you live and believe in Jesus, then you cannot die.
         1. You may move out of the body, but to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.
            1. 2 Corinthians 5:8
   6. There is nobody so bad he cannot be saved, and there is nobody so good he doesn’t need to be saved.
      1. Dead is dead, whether you are freshly dead or corrupting.
   7. Lazarus was not only a witness, but he was also part of the evidence of a transformed life.
   8. Jesus will save you, and He will keep you saved.
      1. Jesus is not a probation officer; Jesus is a Savior.
      2. He will see you through all the way.
      3. You might have to be unwrapped.
         1. You might have some hangover sins for a while, but He will save you.
   9. The one who gives you life will also give you liberty.
   10. You can feast with Him and be a witness for Him.
   11. Psalm 107:2
   12. Luke 9:26
   13. Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
   14. Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
       1. Romans 3:23
       2. Romans 10:9-10
       3. Romans 10:13
       4. Acts 16:31
       5. John 3:16