

Open the Tomb 3-8-15 AM

John's Gospel tells us that the miracles recorded "are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name." It is interesting to note then that John records the fewest miracles performed by Jesus (only seven) of any Gospel. The seventh and last one recorded by John is in John 11, the raising of Lazarus.

Jesus said in John 11:4 that what was happening was for the glorification of God. Specifically, it would be a moment for Jesus to manifest that He was the power of the resurrection in the flesh (John 11:25). Perhaps there is a secondary point to be found here too regarding the fear the people had in opening the tomb in verse 39. What would have happened had their fear of the stench of death caused them not to obey? Are we fearful too?

Let us consider that we were once Lazarus. According to Ephesians 2:1-6 and Colossians 2:11-13 we were once dead in our sins, and in a tomb of captivity to sin. It was our obedience to baptism that was the opening of that tomb that caused us to become alive again. But what if we had not opened the tomb / obeyed the Gospel. What if we feared the "stench" of sin (Ecclesiastes 10:1) and refused to open our hearts?

What if even after having been raised with Christ through obedient baptism we still close the tomb to our failings? Consider these opportunities and needs to open the tomb: Confess your sins to each other – James 5:16; Bear one another's burdens – Galatians 6:1-2; Share your troubles with each other – 2 Corinthians 1:8; Reveal your weaknesses to each other – 2 Corinthians 12:9. Here are times where either sin or weakness could either be hid in the tomb of our heart, or by confession or action the tomb can be opened and cleansed.

One of the pointed moments of the account in John 11 is the grief and tears Jesus experienced in that event. Many Bible students realize that this was not a sympathetic grief, but frustration (the word translated "groaned" or "deeply moved in spirit" is "*embrimaomai*", a Greek word which means to snort with anger, or to murmur against or to blame). Why was Jesus upset? Perhaps it was the doubt in Jesus being expressed by those who loved Him. Perhaps too it was the blame being thrown at Him as well. In context to our own issues of "opening the tomb", do we cause Jesus grief when we doubt that our old man can be put away, or we refuse to be accountable for our sins, but instead cover them up?

Obey Jesus and Open the Tomb. Is your life the tomb, as in Ephesians 5:14-16? Then awake sleep and change! Is your heart the tomb, as Jesus accused the Pharisees and hypocrites in Matthew 23:27-28? Then repent. The point is simple: if you want to be healed, you must OPEN THE TOMB