

Resistance
Victory from Shame • Message 6
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Prayer Points for Prayer Time:

- Pray for help to take every thought captive and make it obedient to Christ.
- Pray for strength to break free from old habits and mindsets that no longer fit.
- Ask God to help us live in the fullness of who He says we are in Him.

Scripture Reading:

Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. "Take away the stone," he said. "But, Lord," said Martha, the sister of the dead man, "by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days." Then Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?" So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me." When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go."

John 11:38-44 (NIV)

A. Introduction

You ever been asked the question *What are you wearing?!?*

Country Club café: (wearing the wrong thing) ... I told Steph to dress up... we actually found ourselves at country dinner where the feature was cinnamon roll pancakes ... and the most expensive item was 9.99.... I heard we are going to a country club... the whole time we were there, people were staring...

Have you ever worn the wrong thing to the wrong event?

People don't wear bathing suits to a funeral.

People don't wear sweatpants to an interview.

Godly people don't wear a Philadelphia Eagles jersey to church... I kid ... congrats Eagles fan.

But seriously, there are certain things we physically wear that don't make sense.

Now, spiritually, there are things that, even when we become Christians, we still wear that don't make sense—things God wants to free us from. I want to speak to you about one of those things today. People keep on wearing their past and their shame.

The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go."

John 11:44 (NIV)

I want to draw attention to that truth. Take off the grave clothes. This is such an important truth... some people live and aren't free from the past.

Once Lazarus is alive, it doesn't make sense for him to walk around in grave clothes. It doesn't fit him anymore, and it doesn't make sense. If Lazarus were rolling around for a week with grave clothes, you would be like, *Bro, change your outfit*. Yet there are Christians who keep their past sin or shame their whole life...

And I want you to know... those things don't fit you. It's not who you are anymore...

As a kid, you outgrow things ... sometimes as an adult, you outgrow things ... and as you step into a relationship with Jesus, there are things that don't fit you anymore...

Shame doesn't fit you anymore... yet the enemy wants you to carry that around. You have an enemy that wants to keep you from freedom.

God has moved you into victory ... those grave clothes don't fit you. You have moved from death to life.

You don't have to do the things you used to do because you aren't the person you used to be.

Let me give you some truth this morning about your past... so that you can live from victory!

B. Living from victory means:

1. Jesus has made you NEW ... Believe it. (Colossians 2:10)

In this story, Lazarus passes away. Then Jesus shows up four days later when all hope is gone. The family is grieving, and Jesus tells Lazarus' sisters that he will rise again. They think in the future, but Jesus has different plans. He says, *I am the resurrection and the life*, and then He tells Lazarus to come back to life... and he does...

So here you have Lazarus alive, but he's bound up... and I think this is a picture of far too many Christians...

You can be alive in Christ but not live free. It's possible to be alive in Christ but look and smell bad!

Men, I'm going to show you something you may have never seen before. Have you seen this...? (Show pic) ... but for most people, you don't take a shower and then put on dirty clothes.

Yet, for some people, this is exactly what we do: We keep putting dirty habits, attitudes, and bitterness back into our lives. Sometimes, Jesus transforms us, but we keep putting on those dirty socks.

There are a few reasons people keep on grave clothes:

- 1.) Double mindedness. (anger... afraid to go there... we want Jesus, but we want our rights)
- 2.) Shame. (UPS store/I don't want to go there... things get worse before they get better)
- 3.) Don't believe change is possible.

I have said this before, but why will you believe things for other people that you won't believe for yourself? Sometimes, we live like a Christian atheist.

What does that mean?

It means... God, I believe you can change anyone, but you can't change this one thing in my life.

Listen to what He says. Love this verse.

So you also are complete through your union with Christ, who is the head over every ruler and authority.
Colossians 2:10 (NLT)

Do you know what complete means in Greek? ... Complete. It means lacking nothing...

When Jesus shows up, dead things come to life!

Sometimes people say... *I just can't forgive myself... I can't let that go...* it sounds humble, but it's really not. Christ said nothing can separate you from Him. You are complete. You lack nothing. It's a slap in the face to God because what we are saying is... *I know you are powerful, but your grace just isn't powerful enough to remove that from these grave clothes.*

This is a demonic lie. He brings shame to keep you trapped in your old grave clothes.

Only Jesus gets to tell you who you are.

The enemy wants to define you by your past scars... Jesus defines you by His!

Only Jesus tells you who you are... So, put the drunkenness away. Put the porn away. Put the past away. Put the anger away. Put the anxiety away. Why? Because that stuff doesn't fit you anymore, brother or sister.

Once you become a Christian, the greatest victory the enemy can have is to keep you bound up in shame and your past...

See, we aren't just forgiven; we are made clean. You are pure and righteous in Jesus. And some of you say... *Well, I'm not living it...* it's time to start believing that you are pure and clean, and then you will start living it!

Spiritual warfare is in the mind... and you go... *What I did was really bad...* yeah, but what Jesus did was really good.

I heard this from another pastor... but to help you believe... trigger spaces, people, and memories... these are things that keep us in grave clothes ... when you shower... hopefully you shower daily or regularly... or when you brush your teeth... or when you clean the dishes... or when you clean the house... or when you watch your spouse clean the house... I joke... or you wash your car... remind yourself over and over again that Jesus makes you clean. He sets you free!

2. Jesus sends others to HELP. Let them.

(John 11:44. C/R: Genesis 3:7; Colossians 3:12-14; James 4:7)

The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go."

John 11:44 (NIV)

This surprised me. I've preached this verse and talked about Lazarus running out of the grave but notice he doesn't. He's bound up.

You ever done the potato sack race? ... Is that a thing here? ... Or does that just explain some things about my childhood? So, you know you are in a potato sack or giant pillowcase... and you are hopping around.

This is most likely what Lazarus is doing. He's bound up. He can't get free... So, what does Jesus do? ... Notice he said to them... he said to the community... Lazarus was dead, so who would have been there? Family and friends- his community...

He says to them... *Take off the grave clothes.* Meaning help him.

Now, think about it. It's not like Jesus could raise Lazarus from the grave but then get bested by some grave clothes... Like he did the absolute hardest part... He raised a man from the grave... yet he doesn't unbind him... Why?

One reason, I believe, is that God has called us to live and walk together in a community. We walk with others. We get into their mess...

Think about it... those are dirty grave clothes... so guess what's going to get on the people around them... a little dirt, the bandage... they had to be a part of it...

So let me say this... that means part of the way God designs us to be freed from shame and our past is through others.

You can't get out of grave clothes on your own. You need Jesus and others.

Let me say it this way: Jesus alone saves us... but Jesus didn't save us to be alone.

You will never find the full depth of healing and life God has for you unless you are walking with others.

When we've got grave clothes... some addiction... a lie we keep telling... something spoke over us from our past that we believe. What happens is that we fear how it will look and smell to others... so we try to hide it...

At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves.

Genesis 3:7 (NLT)

So, they tried to fix it themselves, and then they hid. They hid from God... and that's what we do; we hide from God and others...

Let me say this... the most powerful sin is the one that you are hiding because it's keeping you bound up...

Think about Lazarus when he's bound up....

If his eyes are bound up, he can't see what God needs him to see. (cover eyes, can't see)

If his ears are bound, he can't hear what God needs him to hear. (cover ears, can't hear)

If his hands are bound, he can't do what God needs him to do.

If his legs are bound, he can't go where God needs him to go.

See, there are times when we can't hear or see God ... so we can't do what He wants or go where He wants. This is the power of community... Lazarus' community is the one God uses to set him free. (Connect Track, program)

When you show your healing... when you tell your story... you cause others to take off the grave clothes... to step out of darkness towards the light.

Who do you need to bring into something? Who can you help today?

Have you ever slowed down to think that as a follower of Jesus, you have a two-sided responsibility in your identity?

Take off the grave clothes- that's personal.

But the other is to take on a new identity- that's community.

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Colossians 3:12-14 (NIV)

Notice that God has chosen you... you are His... and every one of the things we are to put on... has to do without relationship with the other... which means God has freed us now to help others...

How are you dressing? Are you clothed in love? Gentleness? Kindness? Goodness? Patience?

And notice what it says... above all else... love... it's hard to love because people can be hard to love sometimes...

I was talking to someone the other day, and she said... *Hey, I want to apologize. I feel like every time we talk, I'm complaining to you.* I said *No big deal...* and then she said, *But I do have to ask... Why did we do this thing? ...* Then she went on to complain and had no idea...

Closing Communion Song

Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

James 4:7 (NIV)

Where is the enemy trying to cut/ divide you?

From God- bread

From others- blood

Blood of Jesus sets us free and gives us the ability to love others well.

But you can't love others until you've been set free... it's like trying to run with a broken leg... you won't get very far.

God says you are new... believe it... take off the grave clothes this morning.

And if you're feeling guilt or shame... this morning, I just want to remind you again that it's the blood of Jesus that allows us to be free. That's it... you don't have to fight for victory; just live from it...and that victory comes from Jesus' blood.

Nothing but the blood... the only way we can take off the grave clothes is because Jesus has healed us.