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LET'S TALK ABOUT RAISING THE DEAD

*Why should it be thought incredible by you that
God raises the dead? (Acts 26:8)*

Responding to an occasion of death has been fairly predictable throughout history. Generally speaking, the loved ones left behind plan a funeral or memorial service and follow through with some type of burial or disposal of a body. This has long been the conventional response. But this response will gradually begin to change when Christians begin to realize the spiritual potential resident within us to start exercising our faith to raise the dead.

Christian believers should begin to realize that we have to begin crossing the thresholds of culture and convention if we are going to raise the dead. For example, we may still end up planning for a funeral. But somewhere in the midst of that process, an unconventional and active faith to intervene will spring into action, regardless of who is around and what might be taking place. This statement will make more sense as you continue reading.

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I have heard stories about individuals who received ministry to be raised but were not. My insight and perception into the majority of these situations is that most of the ministry took place shortly after the person died. This is, of course, the most opportune time for us to exercise our faith, before our emotions overwhelm us and doubt has time to creep into our minds. However, it is not the only time acceptable for us to minister.

Some of the stories shared with me involved praying inconspicuously or secretly in the funeral home parlor well ahead of the actual funeral service. In other words, ministry for the deceased usually took place early in the funeral process. When that attempt was unsuccessful, no further attempted act of faith was made to press in and see the restoration of that life.

We will have to examine responses like this if we, as believers in Jesus Christ, are going to successfully demonstrate the Kingdom of God in this manner. These constraints will definitely need to be addressed. All the more reason we must prepare and educate ourselves right now.

There are a myriad of reasons why preparation and education is in our best interest to obtain. One prime reason is that we need to be prepared to deal with unbelief. *To be forewarned is to be forearmed.* At best, our actions are likely to be perceived as out of the ordinary and possibly as incomprehensible to the unbelieving.

When there is a pervasive spirit of unbelief, there is the likelihood that even the strongest believers can be prevented from moving in the miraculous. Scripture tells us that Jesus Himself did not do many mighty works in His hometown of Nazareth because of the unbelief that prevailed (Matthew 13:58). Having said that, is it any wonder we have not seen this miracle manifested like we

have, say, healings? We need to be prepared to stand in the face of such unbelief, and this fact leads to the need for education.



WE CAN LEARN
HOW TO EXERCISE OUR FAITH
TO RAISE THE DEAD.



Teaching on this subject is extremely vital in order for believers to realize that we, too, can learn how to exercise our actions of faith to raise the dead. As stated previously, the place to begin learning is, of course, from God's written Word, the Bible. Scales will begin to fall from our eyes when we go to the Scriptures and begin observing, with open minds, the behavioral insight and wisdom of the resurrection stories provided for us there.

I don't have to tell you that actions required to raise the dead can be considered out of the ordinary to the unbelieving. In fact, faith actions can be very offensive to some of those gathered around. Nevertheless, we need to know when and how to persist in our pursuit to raise the dead in the face of adversity. If we do not first allow what the Word of God has to say about raising the dead to saturate our minds and spirits, then we run the risk of allowing the unbelief of others to prevent us from moving in this manner.

When truths from the Word of God on this subject truly begin to drop down into our spirits, the battle for another's life will not be as fruitless as in the past. We can learn how to valiantly battle this enemy called death when it knocks on our door. Should we find ourselves faced with a situation of premature

death, the information and revelation contained within this text should provide sufficient wisdom and insight for the battle.

Is it any wonder that the Church has, for the most part, been ineffective up until this point where raising the dead is concerned? Basically, the Body of Christ has yet to be educated on how to approach, much less endure, within these seemingly implacable situations. Hopefully, this will no longer be the case after reading this text. It will then be a matter of putting words into action when we are put to the test to intervene.

The overwhelming consensus at present is that intervening in these particular situations is much easier said than done when all factors are realistically taken into consideration. While this may be true for a limited time, the biblical fact remains that believers *shall* raise the dead as a testament to the resurrection power of the Lord, Jesus Christ, for the glory of God (John 14:12). With this in mind, we have to start somewhere.

WHERE DO WE BEGIN?

Biblical grounds for raising the dead should be immovably solidified within the minds and spirits of every believer desiring to see the demonstration of the dead raised. In other words, what biblical right entitles believers within the Body of Christ to participate in this kind of activity? Who is initially responsible for initiating action with regard to raising the dead? A loved one? A minister? Or simply a believer who happens to be available at the time? How do we move into these situations? When do we consider a death as premature? Some conceivable answers to questions like these are explored in this book, as well as other related issues.

Educational materials addressing how believers in the Body of Christ operate in this dimension are not yet in abundance.

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However, a lack of published works should not be construed to mean that we are out of order in approaching this subject. When God starts to reveal what He wants to corporately take place on the earth, dialogue and discussion may abound long before the visible demonstration begins to unfold.

TALK IT 'TIL YOU WALK IT

I like the saying, "Talk it 'til you walk it." Stated another way, we may actually hear and read more about the topic of the dead being raised before we see it happen. Hopefully, we will have had time for this type of spiritual information to drop down and absorb into our spirits through dialogue and discussion before needing to exercise it.

Comparatively speaking, there is relatively little discussion of how believers go about raising the dead when compared to healing the sick or casting out demons. The subject of death carries within it a sense of finality that has unconsciously hindered believers from discussing this matter in depth. This fact will gradually begin to change as believers feel the liberty to discuss this subject at face value rather than needing to feel qualified to approach it. Thus, the first major barrier of entry needing to be addressed here is that of getting believers to talk about the subject.

LET'S TALK

Skepticism, also known as a form of unbelief, initially emerges rather quickly in most of the new settings where I find myself discussing this subject. The most common question, inevitably asked almost immediately, is, "Have you ever raised the dead?" The skepticism is revealed by the tone and motive behind the question, rather than the question itself.

The underlying message in the tone of the posed question is that this subject cannot be credibly discussed unless we have raised someone from the dead. This is a fallacy that must be addressed. To address this fallacy head-on, allow me to first pose my own question in response.

When is an appropriate time to discuss and talk about raising the dead? When someone dies? Nonsense! Do we wait until someone needs a miracle of healing in their body or deliverance from demonic spirits before we search the Scriptures to see what God's Word says about that subject? The answer to both of these issues is, "Absolutely not!"

As believers, we should have already equipped ourselves to deal with either of these situations. Otherwise, we are likely to come up short when we encounter either situation. Why should we handle the issue of raising the dead any differently? It is equally important to know what the Scriptures say on this topic beforehand. We should know how to pray for resurrection, just as we know how to pray for healing or how to cast out a demon.

Unfortunately, this subject primarily gets explored the majority of the time when someone dies. This is the most inopportune time to start preparing and equipping ourselves to raise the dead. Our lack of preparedness has caused us to be highly ineffective in this area. Why wait to prepare ourselves to raise the dead when we can prepare now? Now is the time to make preparation, not when someone dies.

We do not wait until we witness someone in cardiac distress with no pulse and no respiration to take a course in CPR. As conscientious citizens, we take the course, gain the knowledge, and prepare ourselves—just in case we ever encounter such a situation and can be the instrument used to save a life. Likewise, we should

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not wait until we are faced with a death to begin preparing ourselves to be the instrument used by God to restore a life.

The time has come for the Body of Christ to go to the Word of God and start discussing the various aspects of this subject so that when someone dies a premature death we know we have another option.



WE SHOULD BE PREPARED.



As with the CPR analogy, we need to be prepared ahead of the crisis. We should be prepared and know what to do if we encounter a situation where there is a need for healing or deliverance. Raising the dead, in all reality, is not different from healing or deliverance. It takes the same faith. It may seem to take a greater measure of it, but it is still the same faith! If we have learned how to minister healing or deliverance to individuals, then it stands to reason that we should be able to learn how to minister resurrection life to them too.

With this in mind, will believers ever learn how to go about raising the dead if we continue to, consciously or subconsciously, dismiss listening or talking about this subject on the basis of lack of experience? The answer to that question is, "Probably not." The need exists to talk now.

Whether or not we have raised the dead is a totally irrelevant and spiritually shortsighted requirement. What *is* relevant is a working knowledge of what the Word of God has to say on this subject long before anyone dies. Other than this, our base qualification is being a believer in Christ Jesus and nothing else.

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For future reference, individuals questioning our desire to discuss this subject should be met with answers such as the following: “Even though I have not raised the dead, I want to know what the Word of God has to say on the issue so that I can be prepared to do so when that is needed.” Or say, “No, I have not yet raised the dead, but I anticipate that the opportunity to do so will eventually present itself.”

These are just a couple of responses to keep in mind and consider if we find ourselves being challenged while talking about this subject. Tearing down this subtle barrier that says we cannot talk about raising the dead if we have not raised someone needs to be recognized for what it is—a lack of spiritual insight toward the subject.

The bottom line is that just because we personally have not raised the dead should in no way be construed to mean we are not qualified to discuss the subject. Romans 10:17 says, “*So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*” Faith levels will rise as we constructively discuss this subject from the Word of God. We should all the more begin discussing this subject so we can learn how to go about raising the dead when opportunities arise.

Classrooms are full of people who have yet to experience what they may be doing in the future. Sure, these classrooms are ideally taught by experienced individuals. Obviously, there has been a serious shortage of teachers within the Body of Christ who have raised the dead. For this reason alone, we should fully embrace, discuss, and instigate dialogue regarding this dimension.

It will only be a matter of time until ministers and teachers with experience begin to emerge on the scene. The Body of Christ will then be in a better position to talk about raising the dead

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from a platform of experience, and not just from a standpoint of biblical truth, as willing vessels begin coming forth to exercise their faith. Until that time comes, truth is still truth and should be taught as part of the preparation process.

THE TIME IS NOW

Remember, the most inopportune time to begin preparing to raise the dead is when someone dies. Why not prepare ourselves for the spiritual future as we would prepare for our natural future? Do it now! Know that we will have to ignore the many taboos that the majority of individuals, including other believers, associate with this subject in order to discuss it.

We need to identify other believers who share our sentiment toward this subject. Discuss this subject with them. Let's get our thoughts out into the open and begin creating an atmosphere for resurrecting faith. The scenario we want to avoid is that of being thrust into a pressure cooker situation before we are ready to enter into this dimension. We should prepare ourselves so that we are spiritually ready when the time comes. With these thoughts in mind, let's start talking and explore our biblical right of discourse.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Diane was born and raised in Gadsden, Alabama, USA. She attended Bethel College in McKenzie, Tennessee, and graduated from the University of Georgia in 1981. She studied at the National Center for Paralegal Training in Atlanta, Georgia, and worked there in the legal field for ten years before transitioning into full-time itinerant ministry.

After completion of her Accounting Management Technology studies at Northwest Florida State College, she began finishing what God had prophetically directed her to do—write *the message* on preparing Christians to raise the dead. God is using her to pioneer and plow this message nationally and internationally. Key leaders consider her to be a forerunner in laying down this groundwork for the final reformation of the earthly Church.

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Diane's experience during 18 years in itinerant ministry revealed her gifting as a teacher and musician. Now, as an author and pioneer of present truth, her desire is that Christians from all walks of life become equipped to enter into the spiritual dimension of raising the dead in the event of premature death.

Diane's interest also lies in watching college football and professional tennis, playing the piano, jet skiing, and observing beautiful sunsets. She has one son, Drew, and they have resided in the Destin, Florida, USA, area since 1998.

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