

# Resurrection Failure

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“After praying over a freezer for more than two hours, a preacher admitted Sunday that he had failed to raise his mother from the dead” (Fort Worth Star Telegram, 3/13/78, p. 3). So reads the report of Daniel Aaron Rogers, who froze the corpse of his mother when she died February 2, in Harrison Arkansas. The evangelist had recruited three other preachers to help him and “tried everything Jesus told us to do” but his mother’s body remained lifeless. “We don’t know what went wrong,” Rogers lamented. With no intention of impugning Mr. Rogers’ sincerity or zeal, we will suggest some reasons for his failure.

1. We commend Rogers for his consistency. Most of those who claim to have miraculous powers comparable to those of Jesus and His apostles claim those which are relatively “easy” for anyone to simulate (e.g., speaking in “tongues,” “interpreting tongues,” “healing” internal ailments, etc). Rogers attempted the hardest miracle, in that it allowed for no ambiguity of success: either the corpse would remain dead, or it would revive. Let it be noted that if modern “miracle-workers” **really** had God’s power, they could raise the dead as easily as they could heal the sick or speak in tongues. The fact that none have been able to raise the dead since the apostles did it (Acts 9:36–42; 20:9–12) is evidence that miraculous powers did not extend beyond the beginning years of Christianity.
2. Mr. Rogers is mistaken when he says that Jesus commanded him to heal the sick and raise the dead, as the news story quotes him. The only persons Jesus ever commanded to raise the dead were His apostles (Mat. 10:8). If Mr. Rogers is serious about applying this passage to himself and to others now, then he must preach only to Jews, preach that the kingdom (the church) has not yet come, but is “at hand,” cleanse lepers and cast out demons, all of which are specifically commanded in the context (Mat. 10:5–8). Such a gross mishandling of the Word of God as to apply the limited commission of the apostles indiscriminately would be ludicrous were it not so tragic.
3. Mr. Rogers failed, simply because no one can now work the miracles that were performed by the Lord, His apostles, and those upon whom they laid their hands. It was their function to establish and confirm the Word of God (Heb. 2:3–4) and when this was completed, miracles passed from the scene by Divine plan (1 Cor. 13:9–10).

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