



Resurrection & Life (John 11:1-46)

Of all the signs confirming the claims of Jesus, the raising of Lazarus is the pinnacle proof that Jesus is "the Resurrection & the Life."

7 Signs demonstrating that Jesus is the Messiah.

1. Water to wine (2:1-12)
2. Healing of the official's son (4:43-54)
3. Healing a paralyzed man (5:1-15)
4. Feeding 5000 (6:1-15)
5. Walking on water (6:16-24)
6. Healing a man born blind (9:1-12)
7. Raising Lazarus from the dead (11:1-44)

John 11:1-2 (CSB) ¹ Now a man was sick, Lazarus from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ² Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair, and it was her brother Lazarus who was sick. ³ So the sisters sent a message to him: "Lord, the one you love is sick." ⁴ When Jesus heard it, he said, "This sickness will not end in death but is for the glory of God, so **that the Son of God may be glorified through it.**" ⁵ Now Jesus loved Martha, her sister, and Lazarus. ⁶ So when he heard that he was sick, he stayed two more days in the place where he was.

Bethany means 'the house of the poor'. There is some evidence it was a place where poor, needy and sick people could be cared for, a kind of hospice about 1.5 miles outside the city of Jerusalem.¹ Jesus often stayed with this family when He was near Jerusalem. But rather than leaving to help the friends He loves so much, Jesus takes a 2-day pause, for **the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.**

John 11:7-10 ⁷ Then after that, he said to the disciples, "Let's go to Judea again."⁸ "Rabbi," the disciples told him, "just now the Jews tried to stone you, and you're going there again?" ⁹ "Aren't there twelve hours in a day?" Jesus answered. "If anyone walks during the day, he doesn't stumble, because he sees the light of this world. ¹⁰ But if anyone walks during the night, he does stumble, because the light is not in him."

Remember that **Judea** (the state of Jerusalem) is where Jesus had almost been stoned (Jn 10:31-33). The **light of this world**, a phrase Jesus has used for Himself, has yet to be snuffed out. "**Night**" is coming, but not until His mission is complete. This looks like a treacherous trip, but they still have *the light of the world* with them.

John 11:11-16 ¹¹ He said this, and then he told them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I'm on my way to wake him up." ¹² Then the disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will get well." ¹³ Jesus, however, was speaking about his death, but they thought he was speaking about natural sleep. ¹⁴ So Jesus then told them plainly, "Lazarus has died. ¹⁵ I'm glad for you that I wasn't there so that you may believe. But let's go to him." ¹⁶ Then Thomas (called "Twin") said to his fellow disciples, "Let's go too so that we may die with him."

Asleep is used other places in the NT as a metaphor for physical death (Acts 13:16; 1 Cor. 15:6, 18, 20, 51; 1 Thes. 4:13-15, 5:10; 2 Pet. 3:4). Jesus uses it in another instance in Matt. 9:24. In the Old Testament writings use phrases like, "*He slept with his fathers*" in Kings and Chronicles. While these Jewish disciples might have been familiar with this "sleep" terminology used to refer to death, *it is clear they interpreted the words of Jesus at face value - they thought he was SLEEPING.*

Now Jesus makes it clear that **Lazarus has died**. The delayed response of Jesus is intentional, so that his disciples **may believe**. This sign was powerful proof that would solidify the disciples' commitment to Jesus, a reminder of what awaited them after persecution - resurrection from the dead. **Thomas** is the unlikely disciple who encourages the others to follow Jesus into this dangerous area. While we know Thomas as 'doubting', the reading audience would not have come to that yet.

YOUR NOTES

¹ Tom Wright, *John for Everyone, Part 2: Chapters 11-21* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2004), 4.

John 11:17-19 ¹⁷ When Jesus arrived, he found that **Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days.**

¹⁸ Bethany was near Jerusalem (less than two miles away). ¹⁹ Many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother.

The dead would be buried the same day as their death and the mourning over the departed loved one lasted for 7 days.² As others came to care for the family, the word got out that Jesus was approaching.

Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days.

Later rabbinic writings demonstrate that “the soul hovers over the body of the deceased person for the first three days, ‘intending to re-enter it, but as soon as it sees its appearance change’, i.e. that decomposition has set in, it departs...At that point death is irreversible.”³

Jerusalem was less than two miles away, the place where Jesus would be tried, convicted, beaten, crucified, & buried. Many from Jerusalem and other villages were there to witness the *sign* that would not easily be dismissed.

John 11:20-23 ²⁰ As soon as Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him, but Mary remained seated in the house. ²¹ Then Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother wouldn’t have died. ²² Yet even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you.” ²³ **“Your brother will rise again,”** Jesus told her. ²⁴ Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”

The next words of Jesus seem to be taken as consoling words, as we might say when someone dies, “He’s better off now...and ONE DAY you will see him again.” It was common Hebrew belief that the dead would **rise again in the resurrection at the last day**, but Jesus had something else in mind.

John 11:25-27 ²⁵ Jesus said to her, **“I am the resurrection and the life.** The one who believes in me, even if he dies, will live. ²⁶ Everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” ²⁷ “Yes, Lord,” she told him, **“I believe you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who comes into the world.”**

Jesus doesn’t just claim to be a prophet who God uses to raise the dead. He claims to be the LORD OF LIFE! No legitimate prophet dared to make a claim like **“I am the resurrection and the life!”** Martha believed Jesus was the **the Messiah, the Son of God.** THIS is the reason why John wrote this letter.

John 20:30-31 (CSB) ³⁰ Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. ³¹ But these are written so **that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.**

John 11:32-33 ³² As soon as Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and told him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died!” ³³ When Jesus saw her crying, and the Jews who had come with her crying, he was **deeply moved** in his spirit and **troubled**.

The Greek verb for **crying** (*klaio*) as a *loud wailing and crying*, a loud public display of grief, common in that culture.⁴ That’s what Jesus heard from Mary and her mourners. This causes Jesus to be **deeply moved in his spirit and troubled**. Commentators note that the typical English translation doesn’t do justice to what was actually going on inside of Jesus.

- The classical Greek word translated to English as **deeply moved** describes the snort of a horse (in war or in a race). For humans it describes outrage or **ANGER**.⁵
- The term **troubled** means to cause great emotional distress,⁶ or **ANGUISH**. The same word is used later in **John 13:21**, describing how Jesus reacted to the thought of being betrayed by Judas.⁷

Jesus is not angry with Martha or Mary, *but He is angry at the outcome of sin - separating people from their loved ones. And Jesus is in anguish that they HURT so deeply, grieving without HOPE.* Those who say they believe in a future resurrection, don’t BEHAVE like they believe it.

YOUR NOTES

² Gary M. Burge, *John, The NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000), 315.

³ D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John, The Pillar New Testament Commentary* (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans, 1991), 411.

⁴ Burge, 317.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 318.

⁶ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 314.

⁷ Biblical Studies Press, *The NET Bible First Edition*; Bible. English. NET Bible.; The NET Bible (Biblical Studies Press, 2005).

John 11:34-37 ³⁴ “Where have you put him?” he asked. “Lord,” they told him, “come and see.” ³⁵ **Jesus wept.** ³⁶ So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!” ³⁷ But some of them said, “Couldn’t he who opened the blind man’s eyes also have kept this man from dying?”

Jesus wept, but it was different from the wailing of others. The word refers to a quiet cry,⁸ a word only used here. They thought Jesus was weeping over Lazarus because **he loved him** so much, but Jesus wasn’t weeping over Lazarus - He was weeping over them! Jesus knew that this would not end in the death of Lazarus. **Jesus wept** over the impact that death had on these people. Our compassionate King would weep over us too! In fact, Christians are commanded to “*Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep.*” (Romans 12:15 CSB)

🌟 **Gary Burge:** “*Jesus’ tears should be connected to the anger he is feeling so deeply. The public chaos surrounding him, the loud wailing and crying, and the scene of a cemetery and its reminders of death—all the result of sin and death—together produce outrage in the Son of God as he works to reverse such damage.*”⁹

John 11:38-44 (CSB) ³⁸ Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. ³⁹ “Remove the stone,” Jesus said. Martha, the dead man’s sister, told him, “Lord, there is already a stench because he has been dead four days.” ⁴⁰ Jesus said to her, “Didn’t I tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?” ⁴¹ So they removed the stone. Then Jesus raised his eyes and said, “Father, I thank you that you heard me. ⁴² I know that you always hear me, but because of the crowd standing here I said this, so that they may believe you sent me.” ⁴³ After he said this, he shouted with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” ⁴⁴ **The dead man came out** bound hand and foot with linen strips and with his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unwrap him and let him go.”

This might be the the most dramatic moment in the ministry of Jesus. Jesus ordered ordered almost everyone out of the room and told the parents not to tell anyone what He did after he raised their daughter from the dead (Mk 5).¹⁰ And now Jesus, less than 2 miles from Jerusalem, the place where many want to stone Him, is preparing to do something no one had ever seen, raising a man who had **been dead four days**.

John 11:45-46 (CSB) ⁴⁵ Therefore, **many of the Jews** who came to Mary and saw what he did **believed in him.** ⁴⁶ But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done.

This story reminds us that Jesus is the Lord of life! He hated the effects of sin and death and we should too. Christians, however, shouldn’t grieve for other believers like there is no hope.

1 Thessalonians 4:13 (CSB) ¹³ We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, concerning those who are asleep, **so that you will not grieve like the rest, who have no hope.**

Enter this on a STICKY NOTE and put it on your bathroom mirror.

I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE...DO YOU BELIEVE THIS?

* **Want to talk further?** Please contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Justin** (704-618-6144), **Christy** (673-9764), or another follower of Jesus soon! Or call our **deacons & wives:** Tom & Martha Waddail, Steve & Debbie Bass, Freddy & Joyce Howard, Jere & Darlene Burnette, Alan & Christy Androski, Willy & Melissa Gamalero.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **Read John 11:1-5.** Why does John make sure to tell the reader that Jesus loved Lazarus and his family? Why did Jesus wait instead of leaving immediately to see Lazarus? Can you give an example of how God’s delayed answer to your prayer was for God’s glory and another person’s good?
2. **Read John 11:7-14.** What surprises you about Thomas’ response and why is it that we often focus on his moment of doubt from later in the story? (Jn 20:24-25)
3. **Read John 11:21-27.** People who believe in Jesus DO DIE, so what does Jesus mean by verses 25-26?
4. **Read John 11:32-37.** What does Jesus’ response to Mary, Martha, & the mourners tell about His compassion and frustration?
5. **Read John 11:38-46 and 1 Thes. 4:13-14.** What does Jesus’ power to raise Lazarus after 4 days say about the future for Christians who die? How should this future hope impact how we live today?
6. How did today’s teaching challenge, encourage, or stir questions for you to seek answers to?

⁸ Tenney, 120. * ἔδάκρυσεν (*edakrusen*, “wept”), means to shed tears quietly.

⁹ Burge, 318.

¹⁰ Wright, 13.