

A person wearing a blue robe is walking on water, with their feet visible and creating splashes. The background is a bright sunset or sunrise over a body of water, with the sun low on the horizon, creating a golden glow and reflecting on the water's surface. The overall scene is serene and spiritual.

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

PART THIRTY-ONE

The Word Made Flesh



JOHN 11:23-57

1. Resurrection and the Life (vv.23-32)

a. What is the contrast between what Martha said and what Jesus says?

i. Martha refers to a future endtime resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous (Dan 12:1-2)

this is not news to me



ii. Martha thus claims, Jesus, you know I study my word, AND I have been listening to what you have taught (John 5:25-29; 6:39-40). This is not news to me

iii. Jesus clarifies his earlier statement to Martha, connecting the end-time resurrection to himself



iv. Jesus redirects Martha to the fact that he is not just the one who can raise the dead in the last day, but that he is the very definition of life and resurrection, which is not only limited to the end times.

v. But that Jesus as the resurrection and life is something both PRESENT and future, and he's about to show them just that



vi. If we return to Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus in chapter 3, we now have a fuller understanding of what he meant by eternal life. He is putting flesh on this concept--filling in the blanks concerning the kind of life that belief in Jesus garners. Namely, this: There is no death for those who believe in the Son of God.



Application: To the question(s) considered last week, I didn't mean to leave us under an excessive weight, as we considered God using us for his glory, but only to direct us to the fact that Jesus presents himself as the answer.



b. Martha's Confession and Mary's

i. Martha's belief is emphatic and the perfect example of what Jesus desires from those who witness his miracles and hear his teaching (v.27)

ii. Mary's statement in verse 32 (Martha said the same earlier) summarizes the tension of the entire narrative--Death Prevention!



(1) If you would have just kept Lazarus from dying, we'd all be good--there is **faith** and **criticism** coiled up in the same statement

(2) Jesus, you should have done your work on this side of death, because now, it's all over



(3) This presents an attitude consumed with death or even suffering prevention--if God would just keep these periods of suffering or death from happening, then all would be okay



(4) Such thinking says that the only real solution to life's thorniest issues (suffering and death) is prevention, and that Jesus can do nothing, or bring anything good out of life once those situations occur

(5) This is exactly the false thinking Jesus wanted to refute with this miracle.



Principle: Belief in Jesus is not merely functional in the light of life, but also during the darkest moments of our journey.



2. Jesus' Humanity (vv.33-37)

a. Jesus shows emotion even though he knows what his plan is

b. I struggled with this as a young Bible student because I figured, since he knew what he would do, why would he be so emotional



c. I think this text teaches us a few things:

i. Jesus was truly human, as this was not fake--as Hebrews 4:15 tells us, we have a High Priest who is able to sympathize with us

ii. Knowledge of the end (eternal life) should not harden us to the grim realities of life



iii. The current presence of sin in the world should trouble us too

iv. Glib and nonchalant comments about life in the face of death and suffering show an elementary understanding of what Jesus teaches



d. Note verse 37 with what we mentioned earlier concerning suffering prevention.

i. Is not the power to open blind eyes the same as healing the sick?

ii. Yet, Jesus decides to show a different level of his power



3. Jesus' Divinity (vv.38-44)

a. The note that Lazarus has been dead for four days is a reminder that Jesus delayed his arrival on purpose so that there would not be any second-guessing his power (v.39)

b. Verse 40 teaches us an important principle – belief precedes the experience of God's glory (cf. Matt 13:58)



4. Mixed Results (vv.45-57)

a. Some believed, while others went and tattled (vv.45-46)

b. Lessons from darkness (vv.47-53)

i. There is a deep interest in the natural that you can control over the supernatural that you cannot (vv.46-47)



ii. You would rather be a subjugated pawn of the enemy (Rome or Satan if you prefer), than a liberated bishop (Chess analogy) serving the Master (v.48)

iii. The religious leaders show us the ultimate conclusion of darkness, is that it can witness the glory of God and only hone in on death and destruction (vv.49-53).



Question:

What lessons are most memorable to you in John 11?

