



Summary

In John 11, we delve into the story of Lazarus' death and Jesus' deliberate delay in responding. This passage challenges us to examine our faith in the face of seemingly unanswered prayers. We're reminded that God's timing is perfect, even when it doesn't align with our expectations. The central theme revolves around Jesus' statement: 'This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it.' This profound declaration invites us to consider how our own trials might be opportunities for God's glory to shine. As we wrestle with the disciples' confusion and Thomas' bold proclamation, 'Let us also go, that we may die with him,' we're encouraged to reflect on our own commitment to following Christ, even in the face of danger. This passage challenges us to trust in God's bigger picture and to find hope in Jesus' power over death itself.





Points

Title: Waiting on God's Timing: The Faith-Building Power of Lazarus' Resurrection

Sermon Summary: This sermon explores the narrative of Lazarus' death and resurrection in John 11, emphasizing Jesus' deliberate delay in responding to Lazarus' illness. The pastor highlights how this delay served to strengthen the disciples' faith and demonstrate God's glory. The sermon underscores the importance of trusting in God's timing, walking in the light of Christ, and having the courage to follow Jesus even in the face of persecution.

Key Points:

- Jesus' delay in going to Lazarus was purposeful, designed to glorify God and build faith
- Walking in the spirit (light) makes believers indestructible until God calls them home
- Fear of death or persecution should not prevent believers from following God's will
- Jesus uses Lazarus' death as an opportunity to solidify the disciples' faith
- The importance of bold faith in the face of danger, as exemplified by Thomas

Scripture Reference:

- John 11:1-16 (primary)
- Luke 7:1-10 (Centurion's servant healed)
- Luke 10:38-42 (Mary and Martha)
- John 8:59, John 10:31-39 (attempts to stone Jesus)
- Galatians 5:16, 2:20 (walking in the Spirit)
- 1 Thessalonians 4:13-15 (those who sleep in Jesus)

Stories:

- The healing of the Centurion's servant from a distance (Luke 7:1-10)
- Mary sitting at Jesus' feet while Martha serves (Luke 10:38-42)
- Thomas declaring willingness to die with Jesus (John 11:16)
- Brief mention of Rachel Brading's recent seizure and prayer for healing
- The Old Testament practice of animal sacrifice for sin, used as an analogy for Christ's sacrifice



Scripture

Here are the scripture references mentioned or alluded to in the sermon, listed in standard notation:

1. John 11:1-16 (Main passage being studied)
2. John 1:1-5
3. Luke 8:54
4. Luke 7:14
5. Matthew 17:1-9
6. John 10:40
7. John 9:3
8. John 20:30-31
9. John 11:39
10. Luke 4:16-30 (specifically verse 28-30)
11. John 8:59
12. John 10:31, 39
13. Luke 9:23-26
14. Galatians 5:16
15. Galatians 2:20
16. Acts 7:59-60
17. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-15
18. Romans 8:35-39
19. Isaiah 61 (alluded to, not directly quoted)

Additional themes discussed without specific references:

1. Jesus as the Light of the World (could reference John 8:12)
2. Believers as the light of the world (could reference Matthew 5:14)
3. Walking in the Spirit vs. walking in the flesh (could reference Romans 8:1-17)
4. The gospel message of salvation (could reference Romans 10:9-10)
5. Persecution of believers (could reference 2 Timothy 3:12)
6. Jesus' statement "I am the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25, mentioned as upcoming in next week's sermon)



Quotes

Jesus answered and said to her, Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things, but one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part which will not be taken away from her.

This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.

When you walk in the spirit, in the light of God, as he says in verse nine, you are indestructible until God calls you home.

I say then, walk in the spirit and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

Jesus said to them plainly, Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there that you may believe.

Then Thomas, who is called the twin, said to his fellow disciples, let us also go, that we may die with him.

It's not a Republican, Democrat war. It's a fight between good and evil.

I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever comes to me shall never die. Do you believe this?



Discussion Questions

How does Jesus' deliberate delay in going to Lazarus challenge our understanding of God's timing and purposes in difficult situations?

In what ways might the concept of being 'indestructible until God calls you home' impact how we approach risks and challenges in our faith journey?

How does the metaphor of 'walking in the light' versus 'walking in darkness' apply to our daily decision-making and spiritual growth?

What can we learn from the disciples' confusion about Jesus' euphemisms, and how might this relate to our own struggles in understanding spiritual truths?

How does Jesus' statement 'I am glad... that you may believe' challenge our perspective on difficult or painful circumstances in life?

In what ways does Thomas' bold declaration 'Let us also go, that we may die with him' inspire or challenge your own commitment to following Christ?

How might the concept of 'character assassination' in our current culture relate to the persecution faced by early Christians, and what can we learn from their response?

What does Jesus' love for Martha, Mary, and Lazarus reveal about the nature of His relationships with individuals, and how might this impact our own relationship with Him?

How does the story of Lazarus' death and Jesus' response demonstrate the interplay between divine knowledge, human limitations, and faith?

In what ways does the pastor's explanation of Old Testament sacrifices and Jesus' sacrifice on the cross deepen our understanding of the cost and significance of our salvation?



Small Group Guide: Jesus' Love and Purpose in Lazarus' Sickness

Opening Prayer

Key Takeaways:

1. Jesus' timing and purposes are often different from our expectations.
2. Walking in the Spirit provides boldness and protection in God's will.
3. Jesus uses challenging situations to build our faith.
4. Death for believers is described as "sleep" - a temporary state.
5. Jesus demonstrates both human compassion and divine purpose.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think Jesus waited two days before going to Bethany after hearing about Lazarus' illness? How does this challenge our understanding of God's timing?
2. The sermon mentions two Greek words for love used in this passage - phileo and agapeo. How do these different types of love help us understand Jesus' relationship with Lazarus and his sisters?
3. Jesus says, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God." How can difficult circumstances in our lives bring glory to God?
4. Discuss the concept of being "indestructible until God calls you home." How might this perspective impact how we live out our faith?
5. How does Jesus' description of death as "sleep" change our perspective on death? How can this bring comfort to believers?
6. Thomas says, "Let us also go, that we may die with him." What does this reveal about his faith and commitment to Jesus? How can we cultivate this level of devotion?
7. The sermon emphasizes the importance of walking in the Spirit versus walking in darkness. What are some practical ways we can ensure we're walking in the Spirit daily?

Practical Applications:

1. This week, identify a situation where God's timing seems different from your expectations. Pray for trust and patience in His plan.
2. Practice using both phileo and agapeo love in your relationships this week. Reflect on how this impacts your interactions.



3. Share a testimony with the group next week about how a challenging situation ultimately brought glory to God in your life.
4. Memorize Romans 8:38-39 as a reminder of God's unshakeable love and our security in Christ.
5. Reach out to someone who has lost a loved one recently. Share the hope we have in Christ regarding death as "sleep."
6. Identify an area where fear might be holding you back from fully following Christ. Take one step of faith in that area this week.
7. Start each day this week by consciously choosing to "walk in the Spirit." Journal about the differences you notice in your attitudes and actions.

Closing Prayer





Daily Devotional

Here's a 5-day Bible reading plan and devotional guide based on the themes from the transcription:

Day 1: God's Unfailing Love

Reading: John 11:1-6, Romans 8:35-39

Devotional: In John 11, we see Jesus' deep love for Lazarus and his sisters, even as He delays going to them. This mirrors God's love for us - constant and unfailing, even when we don't understand His timing. Romans 8 reinforces this, declaring that nothing can separate us from God's love. Today, reflect on times when you've questioned God's love due to difficult circumstances. Remember that His love remains steadfast, regardless of what we face. How might this truth change your perspective on current challenges?

Day 2: Walking in Faith

Reading: John 11:7-16, Galatians 5:16-25

Devotional: Jesus' decision to return to Judea, despite the danger, demonstrates walking by faith rather than fear. Thomas's bold declaration, "Let us also go, that we may die with him," shows a willingness to follow Christ regardless of the cost. Galatians 5 contrasts walking by the Spirit with living by the flesh. Today, consider areas where fear might be holding you back from fully following God. What would it look like to step out in faith, trusting God's protection and guidance?

Day 3: The Promise of Resurrection

Reading: John 11:17-27, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Devotional: Jesus declares, "I am the resurrection and the life." This profound statement offers hope beyond death. Paul echoes this in 1 Thessalonians, comforting believers about those who have "fallen asleep" in Christ. Death is not the end for those who believe. How does the promise of resurrection impact your daily life? Does it change how you view hardships or loss? Spend time thanking God for the hope of eternal life.

Day 4: Divine Presence in Suffering

Reading: John 11:28-37, Psalm 34:18

Devotional: Jesus' weeping at Lazarus's tomb shows His deep empathy with human suffering. Even knowing He would raise Lazarus, Jesus shared in the grief of Mary and Martha. Psalm 34 reminds us that God is close to the brokenhearted. Reflect on times when you've felt God's presence in your pain. How can you extend Christ-like compassion to others who are hurting? Consider reaching out to someone who is grieving today.

Day 5: The Power of Belief



Reading: John 11:38-44, Ephesians 1:18-20

Devotional: Jesus' miracle of raising Lazarus was meant to cultivate belief in His disciples and others present. He wanted them to see God's glory and believe. In Ephesians, Paul prays for believers to understand the immeasurable greatness of God's power. Today, examine your own faith. Are there areas where you struggle to believe in God's power? Ask God to strengthen your faith and open your eyes to His work in your life. How might a deeper belief in God's power change how you approach challenges?

