

Love and Friendship

John 11:1-16

vs. 1, Lazarus / Bethany / Mary & Martha

vs. 2, Mary anointed Jesus with perfume (12:1-8)

vs. 3, "Lord, the one you love is sick."

Lord -> acknowledging His Deity, understanding His authority, and expressing their humility.

Psalm 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, a helper who is always found in times of trouble.

vs. 4-7, The thoughts and actions of Jesus
Jesus loved Martha, Mary and Lazarus

Our wholeness or our brokenness is not what determines the quantity and quality of God's love.

What would you do if you heard a close friend was sick and close to death?

What does Jesus do?

- Speaks about the purpose of the situation. What is the purpose?
vs. 4, The sickness will not end in death but is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.
- Waited two days before going to Judea.

Jesus waiting does not demonstrate any lack of love from him or his Father (God).

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord does not delay his promise, as some understand delay, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish but all to come to repentance.

What is the timeline?

There is a purpose to the waiting.

- *Cultural understanding*: It was believed that the spirit of the departed hovered around the body for three days in the hope of a resuscitation.
- To be raised on the fourth day would be clearly seen as a manifestation of the glory of God.

There are reasons...

To increase the faith and resolve of Martha and Mary.

To provide an opportunity to grow in patience.

To increase their joy when the resolution arrives.

All true...and yet Jesus waited to do the will of the Father.

John 6:38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me.

Delay, if embraced, can lead to the strengthening of faith.

Notice the posture of Martha and Mary.

1 Peter 5:6-7 Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you at the proper time,
7 casting all your cares on him, because he cares about you.

Waiting, discerning, listening, diligent obedience

Question: Are you waiting? Have you asked Jesus to intercede? What has been your approach? Humble or commanding? Are you able to be content with not fully understanding God's timing?

What have you learned through waiting?

It is much easier to wait when you are in close relationship!
Waiting for a professor -versus- Waiting for a friend

Friendship with Jesus

John 15:12-15 This is my command: Love one another as I have loved you. **13** No one has greater love than this: to lay down his life for his friends. **14** You are my friends if you do what I command you. **15** I do not call you servants anymore, because a servant doesn't know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything I have heard from my Father.

Luke 7:34 The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!'

Jesus takes friendship seriously.

Jesus demonstrates on-going care and love.

He deeply desires reconciliation and is readily available to those of which society has rejected.

He continuously challenges social and religious norms.

Bonds of friendship are challenged to go beyond "natural inclination".

Question: Why does intimacy in friendship make a difference concerning patience / waiting?
Is your tolerance for waiting indicative of your friendship with Jesus?
Why or why not?

vs. 7-8, Let's go to Judea. Rabbi...

vs. 9-10, There are still things that need to be accomplished. I will do what my Father wants me to do without stumbling.

9:4 We must do the works of him who sent me while it is day. Night is coming when no one can work.

Proverbs 3:5-6 Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding; **6** in all your ways know him, and he will make your paths straight.

vs. 14, Lazarus had died.

vs. 16, Thomas' response is complicated.

He is resolved to not succeed.

Lazarus is dead.

If Jesus continues, he is going to die.

So I guess we too are off to die.

At the same time Thomas is in fact willing to follow Jesus to death.

He couldn't imagine abandoning Jesus at this time.

We will later learn that Thomas did flee.

Thomas deeply struggled to believe the testimony concerning Jesus' resurrection.

Truth: Struggle is part of the faith journey.

Christ Rejected

- Occasion: Healing of the man who was unable to walk.

5:16, The Jews began persecuting Jesus because he was doing these things on the Sabbath.

- Occasion: Before Abraham was, I am.

8:59, So they picked up stones to throw at him.

- *Occasion*: You don't believe because you are not of my sheep.
- 10:31**, Again the Jews picked up rocks to stone him.

Christ Glorified

- The divinity of Jesus is demonstrated and his glory revealed through the raising of Lazarus.
- The fullness of his Messianic character is on display demonstrating his glory entering Jerusalem as "King of Israel" (12:12-15)
- The incarnation of Jesus is revealed. He is the Son of Man he is the human who fulfills the promise given to David. His humanity will be glorified (12:23).

We have reached what will be the seventh sign.

John has taken us on a journey.

1. Turning water into wine (2:1-12).
2. Healing of the official's son (4:46-54)
3. Healing of the man who was unable to walk because of a disability (5:1-15).
4. Feeding the five thousand (6:1-15)
5. Jesus walking on the sea (6:16-21)
6. Healing of the man born blind (9:1-34)

There is good spiritual imagery to be observed and pondered from the journey (John as our guide).

1. Humanity can not fully experience joy apart from Jesus.
2. Humanity is unwell (sick) and health can only be restored by Jesus.
3. Humanity is in great need and without the strength or ability to find healing on their own. Our wholeness can only be accomplished through Jesus.
4. Humanity is always searching for what will satisfy. Jesus is the bread of life who abundantly satisfies.
5. Humanity exists in a world of difficulty and chaos. We work and work to try and gain ground only to be worn out. Peace, rest, and secure arrival can only happen through Jesus.
6. Humanity is lost in darkness. They shut their eyes and refuse to understand. Light is revealed and the kingdom is understood through the care, love, and guidance of Jesus.

Jesus dies to give life.

The sheep are in danger.

Jesus is glorified because Lazarus's raising leads directly to Jesus' arrest, death, and resurrection, by which Jesus is glorified.

God's power and love would be manifested for all to see

Reflection: Take time this week to reflect on the spiritual imagery given to us so far in the gospel of John. How do these truths move you toward a deeper friendship with Jesus? How do they increase our longing for his return?