

# the unexpected.

what's with miracles?

"THE UNEXPECTED" WEEK 3 NOTES **APRIL 23**

## KEY THOUGHTS

- We've looked at "Why the push on miracles?" and "How much should we emphasize the miraculous?" This week: "How do I deal with God not showing up?"
- If I follow Jesus, I'm likely to recognize in those situations where I'm praying for a miracle: "I know He can. I know He has. I know He loves me. So... why hasn't He worked the miracle I'm asking for?" We'll explore this from multiple angles in the coming weeks.
- A reminder: Miracles are signs which speak messages, and not simply the changing of circumstances.
- John 11 is a lengthy story that has many "mini-messages." What follows are some thoughts regarding the verses:
- v.1-2: while Jesus' ministry was predominantly in the northern areas, He carried on ministry in the south around Jerusalem, and the family of Lazarus and his two sisters (Martha and Mary) were very close to Him
- v.3: "he whom You love is sick" – certainly this would entice Jesus to come and care!
- v.4: sickness is for the glory of God? What if I began viewing my dire circumstances as canvases on which God could demonstrate His artistry?
- v.1-5: all this emphasis on how much Jesus loved this family! Why? Because of what He would do next...
- v.6: counter to what we would think, Jesus stayed away!
- v.7-13: so much misunderstanding from the disciples on what Jesus said and was intending to do! And yet He would still use them to change the world!
- v.14-15: "so that you may believe" – didn't they believe already? Believing is progressive – faith develops and grows.
- v.16: again, they just don't get Jesus
- v.17-19: note that Jesus delayed 4 days. It took Him 4 days to travel all of 2 miles! Even the friends of Mary had come to her by this time! Often the question isn't just "where is God", but also "where is God?"
- v.20-21: "Lord, if You had been here..." Often our same question, "Lord if You would just take this awful trait in me away..." or "Lord if You just would have given me parents who loved me and stayed together..." or "Lord if You would correct my spouse..." or "Lord if You would just step in and do what I would do if I were You."
- v.22-26: this is a powerfully strong statement. Didn't everyone in that setting actually end up dying?! What Jesus is doing here is MORE THAN what is about to happen here! The ramifications are so much deeper than what He was doing!
- v.27: Martha dances around the question. "I'm not sure where this is going?!"
- v.33-38: don't think for a moment that Jesus is emotionally detached from your situations! "Deeply moved in spirit" means He groaned in anger in His spirit. It's as if His emotions here "got away from Him." WHY? While death is powerfully personal, this was all Jesus' responsibility (He delayed in coming), AND was about to change everything! God knows what is sometimes required to grow your faith, but don't think He's emotionally disengaged from the pain that is sometimes part of the process.
- God is not immune to the pain His process puts us through.
- v.40-42: "If you believe you will see the glory of God..." Doesn't mean her faith brought this about. Just means she could SEE IT. "Martha, what I'm about to do is a sign. Read the message!"

- v.43-44: This is incredibly powerful! Imagine the response as people watched!
- v.45-46: This is perhaps equally stunning – there were people there who saw it, and even reported it, but didn't believe in Jesus as a result! How unbelievable is unbelief!

## SCRIPTURES

- John 11:1-46

## PRACTICAL & REFLECTION

3 things we can take away from this:

- 1. Jesus is eerily powerful and loving. As we talked last week: Trust Him. He knows. It's His story.
- 2. Concerning God, my impatience is not my friend. God's timing is perfect: even when He's "late" and even in my life.
- 3. Pain is commonly used by God to bring honor to Himself and character to me. And He feels the pain, too!