

John 11.1

This week in the book of John, we will go to a story that many people know: the story of Lazarus. This is the story of a funeral, a story that starts badly, goes to worse, and the worst-case scenario happens. But before we get into it, let's not forget the most important factor, "**Jesus**," because when Jesus shows up, not even the dead stand a chance

The story begins with a good friend of Jesus, who has 2 sisters, Mary and Martha (they were close) seem like none of them were married; they all lived together in Bethany on the slopes of the Mount of Olives, one of Jesus's favorite places. Jesus would stay with them many times.

Jesus had raised other people from the dead: Jairus's daughter, the widow of Nain's son. This one would be different. Those resurrections happened the same day they died. Lazarus would happen 4 days after, decomposition would have already set in. But also, there was a belief from rabbinic writings that the spirit of a person would linger for 3 days. So this miracle of resurrection would leave no doubt on who Jesus really is, the Messiah

This takes place sometime between December and April, the feast of dedication, after He went to the Jordan where He had been baptised by John the Baptist, and we'll get to the passover in the next chapter, to the last week of Jesus' ministry

John 11:1 Now a certain *man* was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. **2** It was *that* Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. **3** Therefore the sisters sent to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick."

- Mary and Martha from **Luke 10:41** "*Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. 42 But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.*"
 - We all need a bit of Martha, and we all need a bit of Mary
- Mary would anoint the feet of Jesus, John 12
- The sisters send a message to Jesus, "he whom you love is sick."
- The basis of their request is not that Jesus knows them or stays at their house, but that Jesus loves Lazarus (how cool!)
 - I have an unfortunate reality to point out: people whom Jesus loves, who love Jesus, go through sickness and trials and tribulations
 - I have another reality to tell you. We are not alone. The lord is with us. "Weeping may endure in the night, but Joy comes in the morning."

4 When Jesus heard *that*, He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it."

- Just like the blind man in Chapter 9, this was for the glory of God (very difficult)
- Can God bring glory out of suffering, out of sickness? The very difficult answer to that is **yes, He can**

5 Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. **6** So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was.

"He whom you love" (phileo), "Jesus loved Martha and..." (Agapeo)

So he stayed 2 more days, like on purpose.

Not a problem because we know Jesus. Well, Jesus loves you, and because He loves you, he will delay. (Lazarus, you are going to take one for the team.)

What many would call a delay is God's perfect timing

7 Then after this He said to *the* disciples, "Let us go to Judea again."

8 The disciples said to Him, "Rabbi, lately the Jews sought to stone You, and are You going there again?"

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- The disciples have a legitimate concern, first, Jesus didn't go right away when He was called,
- Now he is going back to where the Jews wanted to stone and kill Jesus
- They remembered the incidents when Jesus said the I AM statements he made to the Jews when he healed the blind man

9 Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. 10 But if one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him."

- Jesus refers to the Jewish day that begins at 6 AM and ends at 6 PM. The 1st hour is at 6 AM
- Jesus is talking about the appointed time for Him to go to the cross; the day is the time He has to do the works that He has to do
- A principle for us, we have **works** to do, all of us have a calling from God, a unique calling for works that He has established for us, that must be done while it is day. **Ephesians 2:10** For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.
- Some of us have not discovered that calling, I pray you do because it is wonderful to know that you are doing the works that God prepared for us
- Jesus had work to do; the Jews tried to kill Him many times, the same with Peter, Paul, and the church, but their works were not finished
- When the works are done, then we go. Some have gone before us; we may call it too soon, but their works were done, and God called them home. (When I'm done, please don't pray me back)....

11 These things He said, and after that He said to them, "Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up." 12 Then His disciples said, "Lord, if he sleeps he will get well."

13 However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep. 14 Then Jesus said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. 15 And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him."

- When He said this, He meant the term that is used over and over in the Bible when someone died, "they slept," then he tells them clearly

16 Then Thomas, who is called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with Him."

- In Aramaic, Thomas means twin
- We don't know if Thomas had a twin brother, or is called a twin in reference to all of us in doubt
- Thomas, called doubting Thomas, saw things with common sense. Some may say that he saw the dark side of things, but he was honest (here, at the last supper, after the resurrection)
- There is a **Thomas in every congregation**, but don't worry, it's ok
- Because Thomas asked Jesus, I don't know where you are going, Jesus made one of the greatest declarations recorded in the Gospel of **John 14:6** Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

17 So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days. 18 Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away. 19 And many of the Jews had joined the women around Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.

20 Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house. 21 Now Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. 22 But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You."

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- Jesus, we called you; you could have done something. She is grieving, heartbroken dealing with the loss of her brother
- Jesus doesn't rebuke her, doesn't turn her away.

23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

24 Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

- This was Jewish theology, Daniel 12
 - I want to point out that she said if you had been here, and she says he will rise again in the resurrection in the future
 - That is something we do if God had done something in the past, if I had
 - In the future, a miracle can happen, God can deliver, God can heal in the future
 - Jesus was there in front of her in the "Now moment"
 - Jesus is here, you are here, God can move today, the time is now
 - Jesus answered Martha with the 5th statement in the Gospel of John that references the "I AM WHO I AM" from Exodus 3:14
1. "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35).
 2. "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12).
 3. "I am the door" or "the gate" (John 10:7, 9).
 4. "I am the good shepherd" (John 10:11).
 5. "I am the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25).
 6. "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (John 14:6).
 7. "I am the true vine" (John 15:1).

25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. **26** And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Resurrection is no longer an event like Martha knew

- Jesus says resurrection is no longer an event that will happen to people
- Resurrection is a person that happens to people
- Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life," so whether we are dead in our sins, Lazarus' death, or our death, Jesus is the Resurrection and the life
Billy Graham once said, "One day you will read in the newspaper Billy Graham is dead, don't you believe it for one second, **I will be more alive than ever.**"
- **This is the Gospel of Jesus Christ**
- Whoever believes in Him

Jesus gives us a true statement, now He asks a question to Martha and the readers here today
Do you believe this?"

- I have shared in funerals many times on this text, and ask this question, "Do you believe?"
 - I can tell who believes, there is sorrow, pain, and in the midst of tears, there is hope
 - Unfortunately, so many times, I can tell when there's no hope, just pain, grief, and sorrow
- 27** She said to Him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."

Do you believe?.....

28 And when she had said these things, she went her way and **secretly** called Mary her sister, saying, "The Teacher has come and is calling for you."

I want to say this to you

The teacher, the Lord, is here and is calling for you