

John 25
“Faith, Fear & Fury”
John 11:
145-57

Hey Newsong!

I want to take a second and welcome our first time guests and those who are watching online...

If you're just joining us, welcome to the party!
We're spending most of the year in the Gospel of John...

John was one of Jesus' closest friends, He lived with Jesus, He heard the sermons, He saw the miracles...

So let me catch you up to speed...

In chapter 10 we saw this growing tension between Jesus and the religious leaders come to an all-time high...

They come to Jesus and they publicly demand that He tell them if He is the Messiah or not...Are You God or not?

Jesus declared openly and clearly...Yes I Am!

The religious leaders responded by wanting to kill Jesus...They picked up stones, and Jesus asks them, “hey what good work have I done that you want to kill Me?”

33 “We are not stoning you for any good work,” they replied, “but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God.”-Jn 10:33 (NIV)

So in chapter 10...Jesus says He’s God...
Last week, Alyse did an amazing job walking us through most of chapter 11...where we see Jesus say things that only God can say!

He says...

25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; 26 and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?”-Jn 11:25–26 (NIV)

Then to prove His words, Jesus goes to the graveside of His friend Lazarus who had been dead for four days and He shouts “Lazarus come out!...And Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead!

So in chapter 10... Jesus says He’s God
In chapter 11...Jesus shows that He’s God

Now we’re going to see the different reactions to what Jesus says and does...and my prayer is that as we finish chapter 11...you will think about what your response is to Jesus today...

The first reaction to Jesus' miracle we see is...

FAITH

Notice that verse 45 starts with the word Therefore...so as good Bible students, whenever we see this word we should see what it's "there for"...so lets go back a few verses

John 11:38-44 (NIV)

45 Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, so these are Mary's friends and family...people who came to support her and mourn with her and her....in this culture the official mourning period would last days after the burial...

It would include loud crying...in fact, the louder you cried and wailed...the more you loved and

showed honor to that person...so sometimes people would hire professional mourners... So notice that this group...

and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.-Jn 11:45 (NIV)

Sometimes seeing is believing...

These people saw Jesus raise to life a dead, decomposing corpse...how many of you would admit that's pretty convincing?

Think about your own spiritual journey...

For some of you, you were convinced that Jesus is Who He says He is because you saw His power in a miraculous way...

Maybe someone you know, was miraculously healed, delivered, transformed, made new...by the power of Jesus...

They looked the same, they sounded the same, but they were not the same! And seeing God

move in their life helped you believe that God could do the same things for you!

If He saved them...He can save me...

If He delivered them...He can deliver me...

If He healed them...then He can heal me...

Father whose daughter was healed at breakout

Sometimes we believe in Jesus because we see His power on display in our life, or in the life of someone else...and it begins to produce faith in us!

Now this isn't the only way to believe in Jesus...sometimes we believe in Jesus because the Word of God convicts us...

We're in Bible Study or we're in Sunday Service, the Word of God is being preached and we realize that we need Jesus...

Sometimes someone shares their personal testimony of Jesus, and we believe...
Sometimes you're convinced of Who Jesus is because you studied the different religions...and you realized that there's no One like Jesus...

The reality is...that there is only one way to Heaven...that is through Jesus Christ...but there are many ways to Jesus!

All we have to do is believe in Jesus...put our faith and trust in Jesus...

Many people reacted to Jesus' miracle with faith...but some reacted with...

FEAR

46 But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. -Jn 11:46 (NIV)

I want you to notice with me that the same miracle Jesus performed that produced faith in some...also produced fear in others...

We see that some of them suffered from what I'll call "**FOPO**" (*Fear of people's opinion*)

These people saw Jesus' miracle and went directly to the religious leaders...

We saw them do the same thing in John 9...Remember when Jesus healed the man born blind? Jesus heals him and his neighbors are like who did this?

The blind man was like...His name is Jesus... They were like where is He now? He's like I don't know I was blind remember? And what do they do? They bring the man who was born blind to the religious leaders...

Now it's already been established that these religious leaders...do not like Jesus, in fact they tried to kill Him in chapters 8 & 10...

These religious leaders had the power to excommunicate a person from the church...To ban others from worshiping God...

Remember they did that to the man born blind...They kicked him out of the church because of his testimony about Jesus...

So now we have these people...They see Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead...and they go running to the religious leaders like "guess what Jesus did this time?"

They're afraid...they have FOPO...They're afraid to believe in Jesus because of what other people are going to say...

Now, for the record, it's a good thing to come to your religious leaders if you have questions or concerns...It's okay to get insight from your Pastor or other mature Christians...

It's good to have spiritual accountability

But those insights...

Those opinions...

They have to be rooted in Scripture...

If not, you can actually go against God...

We see this in different religions and cults...They will hold to a particular teaching or practice that's either not found in the Bible...

Or is misinterpreted from the Bible...

That's a problem! Why? Because the Word of God has to have the final authority...not the pastor or the church...

25 Fearing people is a dangerous trap, but trusting the Lord means safety.-Pr 29:25 (NLT)

We see that people refused to believe in Jesus because they feared the opinions of others...

The Chief Priests and Pharisees didn't have FOPO...They had FOMO...fear of missing out...

47 Then the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin. "What are we accomplishing?" they asked. "Here is this man performing many signs.

48 If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our temple and our nation."-Jn 11:47-48 (NIV)

This group was made up of two groups of religious leaders...Sadducees and Pharisees

The Sadducees were more political than spiritual...they were theologically liberal...They didn't believe in the whole O.T.

They only trusted the first five books...Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers & Deuteronomy...

They didn't believe in the supernatural...They didn't believe in angels or the resurrection of the dead...This made them sad you see?

The Pharisees were not political...They were theologically conservative...They believed in all of the O.T. writings...they believed in angels, and they believed that one day God would resurrect His people from the dead...

Now what's interesting is that these two groups didn't get along with each other, however here we see them meeting together because Jesus is giving them FOMO...There's an old saying...

“The enemy of my enemy is my friend?”

What are they afraid of missing out on? Their political and religious power! Jesus had become a threat to their agendas...He had become a threat to their power and prestige...

48 If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our temple and our nation.

If everyone worships Jesus they will stop putting us on a pedestal...These guys are so full of themselves that they're ignoring the fact that Jesus just raised Lazarus from the dead!k

They've finally admitted that Jesus is doing things only God can do...

They're willing to overlook that fact and overlook Who Jesus is...so that they can continue to live their life their way...

Their pride was keeping them from believing in Jesus...

Can I suggest to you that people still refuse to believe in Jesus today because of fear?

Because of FOPO & FOMO

Fear of other people's opinions...

If I accept Jesus as Lord and Savior what will my friends say? What will my family say? What will others think of me? FOPO...

If I accept Jesus as Lord and Savior that means I won't be able to have anymore "fun"...FOMO fear of missing out...

By the way, when people say things like that they're not talking about going to an amusement park, or watching a movie, or hanging out with friends...

That's not the "fun" they're talking about...

They're talking about getting high, getting drunk, having sex outside of marriage with whoever, or whatever I want to, being dishonest for my own benefit, stealing, gossiping, lying...

Most of the things that the world calls "fun" God calls sin!

Pride, People, and Power these things still keep people from Jesus!

Now in the midst of this discussion by the religious rulers we see that the high priest named Caiaphas, actually makes a prophetic statement about Jesus

49 Then one of them, named Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, spoke up, "You know nothing at all! 50 You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish."

Basically Caiaphas is accessing the situation here...Okay we've got Jesus on this side...and we've got the whole nation of Israel on this side...

If Jesus continues then the whole nation is going to suffer...so let's have Jesus suffer in place of the whole nation...

Caiaphas doesn't understand that he just prophetically spoke God's plan...

51 He did not say this on his own, but as high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation, 52 and not only for that nation but also for the scattered children of God, to bring them together and make them one.-Jn 11:48–52.

Think about this...

We're here today meeting together, worshiping Jesus, because we're saved by Jesus...

Our sins forgiven by the blood of Jesus,
Adopted into God's family because of Jesus...

Now we can know God, find freedom, discover
our purpose and make a difference...

All because Jesus went to the cross and died
for our sins...

Caiaphis thinks he's talking about killing Jesus
so that he and his friends can keep their power
and prestige...

But spiritually speaking he's prophesying that
Jesus will die for the sins of people...and that
good news of Jesus' death, burial and
resurrection will go out to all of the nations of
the world...

And now anyone and everyone can put their
trust in Jesus...they can repent, believe and
receive salvation!

What's the principle found here?

God is always in control...

33 We may throw the dice, but the Lord determines how they fall-Pr 16:33 (NLT)

What people mean for evil, God can use for good...Even though the religious leaders had evil intentions, God uses it to bring redemption...

You may be in a situation where it seems like evil is winning...maybe you're being treated unfairly...perhaps you've been wronged in some way...

Maybe everything around you is chaotic...remember that God is in control...and nothing or no one can stop His purposes and His plan!

28 And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. Ro 8:28 (NLT)

You can trust God, even when things feel out of control...

Caiaphas thought that the religious leaders were running out of time to get rid of Jesus...but in reality they were right on time...

All through John's Gospel we kept seeing the phrase "His hour had not yet come"...

In Jn 2 Jesus' mother comes to Jesus and says look, they're out of wine...Jesus says "my hour hasn't come"

They wanted to arrest Jesus in Jn 7 and Jn 8 but they couldn't...why? Because "His hour had not yet come"

Now here at the end of Jn 11...we see that the clock is ticking faster and faster...

So what have we learned? We learned that some people reacted to Jesus' miracle with faith...they believed...and they drew closer to Jesus...

We learned that others reacted with fear...their unbelief moved them further away from Jesus...

By the way...Persistent unbelief hardens the heart...At this point, the religious leaders have repeatedly rejected Jesus...and now we see them reacting with...

FURY

53 So from that day on they plotted to take his life.

Those who believe that they know God want to kill God...This just shows us that you can be religious, you can be moral, and you can still be far away from God...

This was an official decision made by the Sanhedrin...We want Jesus dead...

Although His trial isn't going to be for many chapters...the decision to give Him the death penalty has already been made...The clock to the cross is ticking...

They were filled with fury...There's a principle for us here...The more we reject God the harder our hearts become...

It reminds me of learning to play the guitar...

When you first start learning the chords it hurts...You're pressing down on those strings to form those chords and those strings feel like they're cutting into your skin...

But it's all of that friction that begins to form a callus...

Your fingertips hurt...they peel...but the more you practice, the thicker the skin on your finger tips get...They become less responsive to the pain...

The same is true spiritually. When we feel the conviction of the Holy Spirit, it hurts...The Bible says that the Word of God is sharper than a double edged sword...The Word of God will cut you deep...

Have you ever felt that conviction?...Our hearts feel that pain...Because we're aware of our sin...

If we continue to reject God...
If we continue to reject His Word...

Play through the friction...
Our hearts build up calluses...
Soon, we become less sensitive to His voice...

Our conscience which was once bothered by our sin...is no longer affected by it...

Every time we say “no” to God, it becomes easier to say “no” the next time...

That’s the heart of the religious leaders...They were now filled with fury...so much so that they were willing to kill Jesus...

54 Therefore Jesus no longer moved about publicly among the people of Judea. Instead he withdrew to a region near the wilderness, to a village called Ephraim, where he stayed with his disciples.

Now Jesus isn’t afraid...It’s just that His hour hasn’t arrived yet...so He’s got to be careful...People are looking for Him...He retreats with His disciples...He’s preparing Himself because the clock is ticking...

The first 11 chapters of John cover about three years of Jesus' ministry...Now from this point on John's Gospel covers Jesus' last few days...

55 When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, many went up from the country to Jerusalem for their ceremonial cleansing before the Passover. 56 They kept looking for Jesus, and as they stood in the temple courts they asked one another, "What do you think? Isn't he coming to the festival at all?" 57 But the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that anyone who found out where Jesus was should report it so that they might arrest him-Jn 11:52-57 (NIV)

As we close today, I want to point out the fact that people were looking for Jesus...

Some were looking for Him out of curiosity...

Some were looking for Him because they needed a miracle...

Some were looking for Him so that they could kill Him...

But all were looking for Him...

The amazing thing is that over 2,000 years later and people are still talking about Jesus...

They're still looking for Jesus...

Some are looking for a miracle...

Some are looking for hope...

Some are looking for freedom...

Some are looking for forgiveness...

Some are looking for purpose...

The good news is, that Jesus isn't hiding from you! He wants to meet with you...

The crowd in Jerusalem was asking each other
“Where is Jesus?” Today, the more important
question is, “Where are you in relation to
Jesus?”

Are you seeking Him, avoiding Him, or following
Him? Are you drawing closer to Him, or moving
further away from Him?

I want to take a moment and pray for you if
you're here or watching online and you're
searching for peace, direction, healing,
forgiveness, or a fresh encounter with God...

Don't leave this place still looking...

Come and meet with Him!

Don't respond with fear...

FOPO or FOMO

Don't let your fear and unbelief harden your
heart...

Respond with faith...draw closer to Him!
Don't just look for Him...RESPOND to Him!

What's the Holy Spirit Saying To You?
Altar Time