

Subject: *Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life, Part 1*

Scripture: *John 11:1-16*

The Gospel of John constantly reminds us that life is filled with troubles. This is what Job said, ***Job 14:1*** *Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble.* John 11 records what is considered to be the greatest miracle of Jesus. It was the greatest miracle because it solved man's greatest problem, death. Jesus healed blind eyes, made the lame to walk, and fed the hungry multitudes, and yet all of those people would eventually die.

Hebrews 9:27 *And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.* There was a funeral director who signed his letters, "Eventually Yours."

Jesus raised three people from the dead: a little girl (Lk. 8:54); a young man (Lk. 7:14); and a man named Lazarus (Jn. 11:44). Jesus raised the little girl and the young man soon after they died, but Lazarus had been dead four days. This was an amazing miracle. This is the seventh miracle recorded in the Gospel of John. In this chapter we also have another of Jesus' "I AM" statements in verse 25. It is a tremendous chapter in the Word of God.

SICKNESS FOR THE GLORY OF GOD (vs. 1-16)

- The report of Lazarus' sickness (vs. 3)

Mary and Martha sent word to Jesus that Lazarus was sick, but they didn't ask Jesus to come heal him. They knew that Jesus loved Lazarus (see vs. 5). When there is unexpected sickness in your life or family, we are tempted to question Christ's love. Never doubt in the dark what God has shown you in the light. Our circumstances change, but God's love never changes.

- The reason for Lazarus' sickness (vs. 4)

This is the most important statement in the whole chapter. The main reason for Lazarus' sickness was for the glory of God, specifically the glory of Jesus Christ. The glory of God is the underlying reason for everything God does. God's work of creation is for His glory. ***Psalm 19:1*** *The heavens declare the glory of God.* ***Isaiah 6:3*** *And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.* God's glory is also seen in the salvation of sinners. ***Romans 9:23*** *And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory.* God's glory was revealed in the person and ministry of Jesus Christ. ***John 1:14*** *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.* John explained the significance of Jesus' first miracle turning the water into wine: ***John 2:11*** *This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.* On one occasion Jesus took three disciples (Peter, James, and John) up on a mountain and revealed His glory to them. The ultimate reason for Lazarus' sickness was not death, even though he died, but it was to provide an opportunity for Jesus to raise him from the dead and reveal His glory.

- The result of Lazarus' sickness (vs. 11-15)

Lazarus eventually died. Jesus told the disciples that Lazarus was sleeping. They misunderstood and thought he was resting and getting better, but Jesus spoke of his death. Death is often described in the Bible as sleeping. Death is peaceful, restful, and temporary. Jesus said: "Lazarus is asleep, but I'm going to wake him up."

Daniel 12:2 *And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.*

1 Thessalonians 4:13 *But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.*

1 Corinthians 15:51-52 ⁵¹ *Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,* ⁵² *In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

SORROW FOR A GRIEVING FAMILY (vs. 17-37)

By the time Jesus came Lazarus had been dead four days. Many of the Jews came to the family to comfort them. Their presence was a great comfort, but nothing compared to the comfort Jesus could give.

- The sorrow of Martha and Mary (vs. 20-22)

When Jesus finally showed up, Martha went out to meet Him. There was a note of frustration in her words, and yet there was a note of faith. Think about those two words: “Lord, if.” “Lord” is the word of faith. “If” is the word of frustration. Martha didn’t understand why Jesus delayed, but she knew that He was able to help even though Lazarus was now dead. Martha told Mary that Jesus had arrived and she went out to meet Him (vs. 28-31). She said the exact same words that Martha said (vs. 32). Martha and Mary were different in many ways, but they both struggled with the death of their brother. Martha was more of a doer and Mary was more of a learner.

- The sorrow of Jesus (vs. 33-36)

As you already know, verse 35 is the shortest verse in the Bible. This is one of three times in Scripture we read of Jesus’ weeping. He wept at the graveside of Lazarus. He wept over the city of Jerusalem because the people rejected Him. He wept with strong crying and tears in the Garden of Gethsemane on the night of His arrest. When Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus, these were tears of sorrow for the family, not for Lazarus. He was going to raise him from the dead. These were tears of sympathy and compassion.

- The statements of Jesus (vs. 23-27)

Jesus makes a promise that Lazarus will rise again from the dead (vs. 23). Martha had faith in God’s Word. She believed in the Old Testament promises about the future resurrection. Jesus then says, “I am the resurrection and life,” and calls for Martha to believe in Him. It is one thing to believe a Bible doctrine. It is another to believe in Jesus. Verse 27 is one of the great confessions of faith in the Bible. It stands in a category with the confession of Peter, ***Matthew 16:16*** *And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,* and the confession of Thomas, ***John 20:28*** *And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.*

In John 11:25, we have Jesus’ declaration, “I am the resurrection and the life,” and then in verses 43-44 we have Jesus’ demonstration as He raised Lazarus from the grave.

In John 11:25, Jesus states that if we believe in Him we have the hope of resurrection life. As Paul says in *1 Corinthians 15:21-22* ²¹ *For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.* ²² *For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.* We are in Adam by a physical connection. We are in Christ by a spiritual connection, a faith connection.

But there's something more in John 11:26. Whoever lives and believes in Christ never dies. We have the assurance of eternal life, spiritual life. The moment we believe in Him we have life that will never die. It is eternal or everlasting life. Do you believe this? Do you live and believe in Christ?

APPLYING THIS MESSAGE TO YOUR LIFE:

- Remember that God does all things for His glory and your good

Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

- Trust Jesus to work on His timetable not yours

Don't interpret God's delays as His denials. God is more interested in timing than time.

- Believe in what Jesus says and believe in who He is

It's one thing to believe in the doctrine of the future resurrection. It's another to believe in the One who is the resurrection and the life.

- In times of suffering and sorrow Jesus knows and cares about you

Isaiah 53:3 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.