

Raising Lazarus (Sermon #2) John 11:17-32

I. Jesus the seemingly last arrival –

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. John 11:17–19 (NKJV)

1. *Lazarus dead, and in the tomb four days, he was probably buried the same day he died.*
2. *Friendly Jews (meaning dwellers of Jerusalem) two miles away, came to comfort the sisters.*

II. Martha, the motivated mourner –

¹²⁰ Now Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, John 11:20 A (NKJV)

- Holds things together, when others are falling apart.
- Cries less, leads and comforts more.
- Meets and greets at the funeral.

III. Mary, the meditative mourner -

but Mary was sitting in the house. John 11:20 B (NKJV)

² Better to go to the house of mourning Than to go to the house of feasting, For that *is* the end of all men; And the living will take *it* to heart. ³ Sorrow *is* better than laughter, For by a sad countenance the heart is made better. ⁴ The heart of the wise *is* in the house of mourning, But the heart of fools *is* in the house of mirth. Ecclesiastes 7:2–4 (NKJV)

The meditative mourner does not or cannot do what the motivated mourner does, gets alone, CRIES, thinks, remembers ...

IV. As they were with funerals, so also were they with parties –

³⁸ Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. ³⁹ And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. ⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me." ⁴¹ And Jesus answered and said to her, "**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.**" Luke 10:38–42 (NKJV)

1. *Martha entertained, welcomed, she had the gift of hospitality ...*
2. *Mary spent time with Jesus alone, Jesus credits MARY with the better part!*

V. The issue two different people agree on –

²¹ Now Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. John 11:21 (NLJV)

³² Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died." John 11:32 (NKJV)

VI. Martha's faith –

1. *An accusation, doubt expressed, but also quickly corrected ...*

²¹ Now Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. John 11:21 (NKJV)

²² But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You." John 11:22 (NKJV)

2. *Truth from Jesus -*

²³ Jesus said to her, "**Your brother will rise again.**" John 11:23 (NKJV)

3. Martha's true knowledge of this truth, as it applies to most all of us -

²⁴ Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." John 11:24 (NKJV)

"It is applicable to all the saints, and their resurrection at the last day. Note, it is a matter of comfort to us, when we have buried our godly friends and relations, to think that they shall *rise again.*" Matthew Henry

Secondly, yet she seems to think this saying not so well worthy of all acceptations as really it was: "*I know he shall rise again at the last day; but what are we the better for that now?*" As if the comforts of the resurrection to eternal life were not worth speaking of; or they yielded not satisfaction sufficient to balance her affliction. See our weakness and folly, that we suffer present sensible things to make a deeper impression upon us, both of grief and joy, than those things which are the objects of faith. *I know that he shall rise again at the last day; and is not this enough?* She seems to think it is not. Thus, by our discontent under present crosses, we greatly undervalue our future hopes, and put a slight upon them, as if not worth regarding.

Matthew Henry

4. Jesus' further claims about Himself, claims that apply to every true believer -

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. Do you believe this?**"

5. Martha's response to Jesus' question: "**Do you believe this?**"

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." John 11:17–27 (NKJV)

A. *Martha is theologically correct in everything she says about Jesus.*

B. *Note, the conversation changed from "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died" to a theological discussion of the resurrection ...*

C. *Was this discussion helpful? Comforting? It should be ... But DEATH facing even true faith does it make us WAVER?*

D. *Was Martha like Peter trying to walk on water in a stormy sea?*

²⁹ So He said, "**Come.**" And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. ³⁰ But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!" Matthew 14:29–31 (NKJV)

³¹ And immediately Jesus stretched out *His* hand and caught him, and said to him, “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?”

VII. Mourning and learning –

1. Note Martha, when calling Mary, calls Jesus, “The Teacher” -

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.” John 11:28 (NKJV)

2. Mary was an “A” student -

²⁹ As soon as she heard *that*, she arose quickly and came to Him. John 11:29 (NKJV)

“Blessed Jesus, Blessed Jesus, let us early turn to Thee; Blessed Jesus, Blessed Jesus, let us early turn to Thee. Early let us seek Thy favor; Early let us do Thy will;”
William Bradbury

3. She meets Jesus where He was not quite in town ... Note what Mary’s first and maybe only words to Jesus are at this time -

³⁰ Now Jesus had not yet come into the town, but was in the place where Martha met Him.

³¹ Then the Jews who were with her in the house, and comforting her, when they saw that Mary rose up quickly and went out, followed her, saying, “She is going to the tomb to weep there.”

³² Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.” John 11:30-33

4. Jesus joins in the weeping, the same QUESTION / accusation is asked again -

³³ Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. ³⁴ And He said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to Him, “Lord, come and see.” ³⁵ Jesus wept. ³⁶ Then the Jews said, “See how He loved him!” ³⁷ And some of them said, “Could not this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?” John 11:33–37 (NKJV)

A. Note Jesus observes Mary’s weeping, and her companions’ weeping, and He groans, and weeps with them - ³⁵ Jesus wept.

B. Some see LOVE in Jesus’ tears - ³⁶ Then the Jews said, “See how He loved him!”

C. Yet, many seemed to think Jesus FAILED, as He did not get there in time to HEAL -

²¹ Now Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. John 11:21 (NLJV)

³² Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.” John 11:32 (NKJV)

³⁷ And some of them said, “Could not this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?” John 11:37 (NKJV)

The Great QUESTION – WHY?

Even Jesus asks this question?

⁴⁶ And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, **“Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?”** that is, **“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”** Matthew 27:46 (NKJV)

Why is there death in the world? Answer – SIN!

Why did Jesus have to die? Answer -SIN!

Why did God the Father forsake His Son? Answer – SIN!

But did not Jesus overcome sin? Why is there still death?

John 11:21 *Martha is correct if Jesus would have been there her brother would not have died!*

John 11:32 *Mary is correct if Jesus would have been there her brother would not have died!*

John 11:37 *those in the crowd are correct, Jesus could have kept Lazarus from dying.*