

**Theme:** With the threat of death over us and the suffering which surrounds it we know that we have life in the power of Christ. The resurrection isn't *just* something that awaits us; we have resurrection life *now* in Christ Jesus our Lord who *is* “the resurrection and the life.”

**Background:** Jesus has tied his work and person to the various festivals and institutions of the Jews. A new chapter begins as he returns to Jerusalem, and turns toward the cross.

**Introduction:** Important events call us back to places we might not visit otherwise.

## **I. Why Jesus Returns**

- A. The messengers from Bethany
  - 1. Jesus and the disciples are far from Jerusalem
    - They were in danger there
  - 2. News of Lazarus' illness reaches Jesus
  - 3. Two day delay, four day journey (4,6,17)
- B. For God's glory (4)
  - 1. *Revealing* God's glory
    - The “death/sickness” of Lazarus has a purpose
    - Won't end in death – but in resurrection!
  - 2. Glorifying his Son
    - That he should be honored (5:23)

QUESTION: If God could have such wondrous purposes in seeing someone die – can we trust that he has glorious and faithful purposes in the trials we endure by the grace of God in Christ?

- C. His *hour* nears

## **II. What Jesus Finds**

- A. Wonderful faith
    - 1. Thomas (among the disciples)
      - a. The disciples knew the danger (8)
      - b. Ready to die with him
        - Understood that the association with Jesus was “life-threatening”
- TRUTH: Being a disciple will pose some real challenges and threats. The danger is real.
- c. Spoke more than he knew!
      - We must die in him to live (2 Timothy 2:11; Romans 6:8)
  - 2. Martha (21-27)
    - a. Looking to Jesus, “If you had been here...”
    - b. Confessing her faith (27)
      - She believes in the resurrection – at the last day! (24)
      - She believes in Jesus, in spite of his absence
  - 3. Mary (28-32)
    - a. Looking to Jesus (like Martha)
    - b. Takes Jesus to the tomb
- B. Weak understanding
    - 1. Disciples

- a. Time is of the essence
    - Work while it is day. Light of the world is in the world. (9:4,5)
  - b. Jesus is doing the will of the Father
    - He will be safe in the “daylight”
  - c. The disciples will be safe; they still have the “light of the world” (8:12)
  - d. Literalists! Subtlety is not their strong suit. (12-14)
2. Martha
- Assumes they are talking of the last day

### III. What Jesus Reveals

#### A. His divine authority and prerogative!

- 1. Lord of the last day
  - His voice raises the dead (5:21,25-29; 6:39,40)
- 2. He rules the resurrection – for he *is* the resurrection! (25)
 

NOTE: Therefore, there is no resurrection, and no eternal life outside of him!
- 3. The *Resurrection* – and he is *Life* (25a)
  - a. The resurrection – addressed in 25b
    - Eph. 2:1 – We are made alive in him, brought back from the dead
  - b. He is the *Life* – 26
    - You will never die!
    - We pass from life to life! (3:15,16; 5:24; 8:51)

#### B. Perfect humanity (33-35)

- 1. His anger/outrage
  - This is not simply an emotional response

NOTE: Text doesn’t really support translations like “he was deeply moved”

  - a. The wreckage of sin
    - Which he feels and *knows* (Hebrews 2:10; 4:15)
  - b. The hopelessness of unbelief
    - For many, death wins
- 2. His *tears*
  - a. Tears are *human*!
  - b. Tears of love
    - For those the Father has given him
    - For those he would die to save
  - c. Tears of grief? Anticipating his own death?

### IV. What Will He Find Here, Today?

- 1. I identify with 11-12. The path of least resistance
- 2. Finding fault with God? (21)
- 3. Like in verse 37 – See the love of Christ
- 4. Faith expressed like Martha (25,26)
  - With humility, for I have much to learn
- 5. To follow like Thomas
  - Going wherever he leads, regardless of the consequences
  - For there is life eternal