

Christ in Control of all Your Suffering John 11:1-27

11 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.”

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.”

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. 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?”

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.” 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.”

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

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 Now 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.”

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.”

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?”

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.”

Introduction

It is no surprise to any of us that the World we live in is full of Suffering and Evil. The Fall in the Garden of Eden brought us a whole lot more than thorns and thistles and work by the sweat of the brow and pain in Child birth.

The problem of Evil and Suffering is the major problem, if not the single problem that, atheist, agnostics and unbelievers have with Universe and the God of the Bible.

Yet if you divorce yourself from the God of Scripture.

You have no answers to these questions.

You are left with catastrophic chaos resulting in meaningless existence.

A Worldview divorced from the God of the Bible leaves one completely without hope and purpose in this world.

You are simply protoplasm waiting to be manured

The fact that evil and suffering exist is not up for debate.

It is very clear, because it is all around us and our history is saturated with it.

The Evil and subsequent Suffering in the world that I'm talking about could be categorized into 3 areas

There are 3 areas of Evil and Suffering that we deal with

Natural Evil and Suffering
 Moral Evil and Suffering
 Demonic Evil and Suffering

1. Natural Evil and Suffering

Sickness, Disease, death, and disaster

This is result of a fallen planet, a curse earth.

2 Examples

Tsunami of 2004

a magnitude of 9.1–9.3 (M_w) and a maximum Mercalli intensity of IX (*Violent*). It was an undersea megathrust earthquake caused by rupture along the fault between the Burma Plate and the Indian Plate.

The 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake triggered a series of devastating tsunamis up to 30 metres (100 ft) high, inundating coastal communities along the coasts of the Indian Ocean and killing an estimated 227,898 people in 14 countries, with the majority of victims being killed in the Indonesian city of Banda Aceh. The earthquake was one of the deadliest natural disasters in recorded history,

2004 Indian Ocean earthquake is the third-largest earthquake ever recorded on a seismograph and had the longest duration of faulting ever observed, between 8.3 and 10 minutes.^[10] It caused the entire planet to vibrate as much as 1 centimetre (0.4 inches),^[11] and it triggered other earthquakes as far away as Alaska

Influenza of 1918

Haskell County, Kansas, lies in the southwest corner of the state, near Oklahoma and Colorado. In 1918 sod houses were still common, barely distinguishable from the treeless, dry prairie they were dug out of. It had been cattle country—a now bankrupt ranch once handled 30,000 head—but Haskell farmers also raised hogs, which is one possible clue to the origin of the crisis that would terrorize the world that year.

Another clue is that the county sits on a major migratory flyway for 17 bird species, including sand hill cranes and mallards. Scientists today understand that bird influenza viruses, like human influenza viruses, can also infect hogs, and when a bird virus and a human virus infect the same pig cell, their different genes can be shuffled and exchanged like playing cards, resulting in a new, perhaps especially lethal, virus.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the 1918 influenza (flu) pandemic that swept the globe in what is still one of the deadliest disease outbreaks in recorded history.

It is estimated that about 500 million people or one-third of the world's population became infected with this virus, and the number of deaths was estimated to be at least 50 million worldwide with about 675,000 occurring in the United States. The pandemic was so severe that from

1917 to 1918, life expectancy in the United States fell by about 12 years,

There were high death rates in previously healthy people, including those between the ages of 20 and 40 years old, which was unusual because flu typically hits the very young and the very old more than young adults.

It actually caused the immune system to attack the healthy people and their own immune system killed them. The 1918 flu pandemic occurred during World War I; close quarters and massive troop movements helped fuel the spread of disease.

At the outbreak's peak, 1,543 soldiers reported ill with influenza in a single day. Now, with hospital facilities overwhelmed, with doctors and nurses sick, with too few cafeteria workers to feed patients and staff, the hospital ceased accepting patients, no matter how ill, leaving thousands more sick and dying in barracks.

Roy Grist, a physician at the hospital, wrote a colleague,

“These men start with what appears to be an ordinary attack of LaGrippe or Influenza, and when brought to the Hospital they very rapidly develop the most vicious type of Pneumonia that has ever been seen.

Two hours after admission they have the Mahogany spots over the cheek bones, and a few hours later you can begin to see the Cyanosis”—the

term refers to a person turning blue from lack of oxygen —“extending from their ears and spreading all over the face....

It is only a matter of a few hours then until death comes...It is horrible....We have been averaging about 100 deaths per day...For several days there were no coffins and the bodies piled up something fierce...”

1. Natural Evil and Suffering

2. Moral Evil and Suffering

This is all the bad, evil sinful choices and acts of men that lead to massive Suffering.

Sinfulness of Men.

Hitlers reign and Holocaust

Mass shootings

Abuse of children

Abortion

the current promotion and public education of Homosexuality and transgenderism

Romans 1:28–31 (NKJV)

²⁸ And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; ²⁹ being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness,

covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; *they are* whisperers,
³⁰ backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,
³¹ undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful;

1. Natural Evil and Suffering
2. Moral Evil and Suffering.

3. Demonic Evil and Suffering

Mark 5:2–5 (NKJV)

² And when He had come out of the boat, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, ³ who had *his* dwelling among the tombs; and no one could bind him, not even with chains, ⁴ because he had often been bound with shackles and chains. And the chains had been pulled apart by him, and the shackles broken in pieces; neither could anyone tame him. ⁵ And always, night and day, he was in the mountains and in the tombs, crying out and cutting himself with stones.

Revelation 9

What does this have to do with John 11

In our last study we began to introduce John 11 and the Great miracle of the Resurrection of Lazarus

As noted last time, there is much more here than just the powerful display of the Deity of Christ through this miracle.

But here, there are insights into the purposes of God for Suffering and Death.

The broader doctrine of this would be, Gods purposes with evil, sin and death.

In others words, Why is there so much evil, pain, sickness and death in the world.

1. Evil does does not exist because of a mistake
2. Evil has a purpose in the big picture of Gods plan
3. Evil will eventual suffer the hammer of Gods justice

1. You can get sick and die because you are a sinner and live in a fallen world
2. You can get sick and die because you may be chastised as a believer
3. You can get sick and die because you are under the wrath of God

4. You can get sick and die for the Glory of God.
for the resurrection

We see the Reason for all of this is

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.”

This speaks to the absolute Sovereignty of God over Suffering and evil. God is absolutely sovereign over every molecule, good or Bad

The Sovereignty of God is for some a difficult concept. But it is not nearly as difficult as believing that He is not .

Think for a while what it would be if He were not in charge.

If God is not in control
then

who is? What is.

Is the devil in control. Is Evil in control. Is the sickness you have in control..

Is your free will in control, as if God is some how at the mercy of your will !!!!!

Authur Pink

The God of the twentieth century is a helpless, effeminate being who commands the respect of no really thoughtful man. The God of the popular mind is the creation of maudlin sentimentality. The God of many a present-day pulpit is an object of pity rather than of awe-inspiring reverence

A god whose will is resisted, whose designs are frustrated, whose purpose is checkmated, possesses no title to Deity, and so far from being a fit object of worship, merits nothing but contempt!

The trend of modern theology-if theology it can be called-is ever toward the deification of the creature rather than the glorification of the Creator, and the leaven of present-day Rationalism is rapidly permeating the whole of Christendom

How could Christ say

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.”

If He is not sovereign over sickness and death. If he is not sovereign over the fall that caused it.

Deuteronomy 32:39 (NKJV)

³⁹ ‘Now see that I, *even I, am* He,
And *there is* no God besides Me;
I kill and I make alive;
I wound and I heal;
Nor *is there any* who can deliver from My hand.

Exodus 4:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ So the Lord said to him, “Who has made man’s mouth? Or who makes the mute, the deaf, the seeing, or the blind? *Have* not I, the Lord?”

Psalms 105:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ Moreover He called for a famine in the land;
He destroyed all the provision of bread.

2 Kings 17:25 (NKJV)

²⁵ And it was so, at the beginning of their dwelling there, *that* they did not fear the Lord; therefore the Lord sent lions among them, which killed *some* of them.

Psalms 75:7 (NKJV)

⁷ But God *is* the Judge:
He puts down one,
And exalts another.

Isaiah 45:7 (NKJV)

⁷ I form the light and create darkness,
I make peace and create calamity;
I, the Lord, do all these *things*.’

Amos 3:6 (NKJV)

⁶ If a trumpet is blown in a city, will not the people be afraid?
If there is calamity in a city, will not the Lord have done *it*?

Lamentations 3:38 (NKJV)

³⁸ *Is it* not from the mouth of the Most High
That woe and well-being proceed?

Job 2:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ But he said to her, “You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?” In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

Review

I. The Critical Man

1 Now a certain *man* was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.

II. The Concerned Sisters

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.”

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.”

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.

Lesson

I. The Critical Man

II. The Concerned Sisters

III. The Confused Disciples

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?”

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.” 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.”

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

7 Then after this

6 So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was.

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

John 10:31 (NKJV)

³¹ Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him.

John 10:39 (NKJV)

³⁹ Therefore they sought again to seize Him, but He escaped out of their hand.

and are You going there again?” Why, they reasoned, leave a fruitful ministry (10:41–42) for a life-threatening journey to the vicinity of Jerusalem? The situation did not seem to require the Lord’s immediate attention or presence; He Himself had said that Lazarus was not going to die (v. 4). And if Jesus did need to heal Lazarus, why not do it from a distance like He had done before (cf. 4:46–53)

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2006). *John 1–11* (p. 455). Chicago: Moody Press.

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.**”

1. Nothing can Stop the Pre-Ordained plan of God.

As an answer to the question of the disciples as to why *Jesus* is determined to go up to Judea (v. 8), these verses metaphorically insist that Jesus is safe as long as he performs his Father’s will. The daylight period of his ministry may be far advanced, but it is wrong to quit before the twelve hours have been filled up. The time will come soon enough when he will not be able to work.

Carson, D. A. (1991). *The Gospel according to John* (p. 409). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.

The Jews divided the daylight period into **twelve hours**, which unlike modern hours varied in length at different seasons of the year. The **twelve hours in the day** symbolize the duration of the Lord's earthly ministry as allotted by the Father. Just as no one can lengthen or shorten a day, so the disciples' concern could not extend the time allotted to Jesus, nor could the Jews' hostility shorten it. The one who **walks in the day** need not fear that he might **stumble**; thus Jesus was perfectly safe for the prescribed time of His life (7:30; 8:20). The **night**, signifying the end of His earthly ministry (cf. 12:35), would come at the precise time set by God's eternal plan, and only then would the Lord **stumble** in death

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2006). *John 1-11* (pp. 455-456). Chicago: Moody Press.

Robertson, A. T.

This is not blind fatalism that Jesus proclaims, but the opposite of cowardice. He has full confidence in the Father's purpose about his "hour" which has not yet come. Jesus has courage to face his enemies again to do the Father's will about Lazarus.

Robertson, A. T. (1933). *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Jn 11:9). Nashville, TN: Broadman Press.

The Lord calmed their fears by reminding them that He was **on the Father's schedule**, and that nothing could harm them. As we have seen, this is an important

theme in the Gospel of John “My hour has not yet come” (John 2:4; 7:6, 8, 30; 8:20; 12:23; 13:1; 17:1).

Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Vol. 1, p. 335). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

Acts 2:23 (NKJV)

²³ Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;

Acts 4:27–28 (NKJV)

²⁷ “For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together ²⁸ to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done.

Acts 17:26 (NKJV)

²⁶ And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings,

2. We have a limited amount of Time

9 Jesus answered, “**Are there not twelve hours in the day?**”

1. There is a limited amount of time to Serve

John 9:4 (NKJV)

4 I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; *the* night is coming when no one can work

Ephesians 5:16 (NKJV)

16 **redeeming** the time, because the days are evil.

redeeming

Pres

Middle (reflexive)

Participle

1805 *eksagorázō* (from **1537** /*ek*, "completely out from" which intensifies **59** /*agorázō*, "buy-up at the marketplace") – properly, take *full advantage* of, seizing a buying-opportunity, i.e. making the most of the *present opportunity* (recognizing its *future gain*).

Ecclesiastes 9:10 (NKJV)

10 Whatever your hand finds to do, do *it* with your might; for *there is* no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.

Romans 13:11–14 (NKJV)

¹¹ And *do* this, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation *is* nearer than when we *first* believed.

¹² The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.

¹³ Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. ¹⁴ But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to *fulfill its* lusts.

don't waste your life.

“America is the first culture in jeopardy of amusing itself to death.”

— John Piper, [Don't Waste Your Life](#)

“I am wired by nature to love the same toys that the world loves. I start to fit in. I start to love what others love. I start to call earth "home." Before you know it, I am calling luxuries "needs" and using my money just the way unbelievers do. I begin to forget the war. I don't think much about people perishing. Missions and unreached people drop out of my mind. I stop dreaming about the triumphs of grace. I sink into a secular mind-

set that looks first to what man can do, not what God can do. It is a terrible sickness. And I thank God for those who have forced me again and again toward a wartime mind-set.”

— John Piper, Don't Waste Your Life

“Desire that your life count for something great! Long for your life to have eternal significance. Want this! Don't coast through life without a passion.”

— John Piper, Don't Waste Your Life

Remember, you have one life. That's all. You were made for God. Don't waste it.”

— John Piper, Don't Waste Your Life

2. There is a limited amount of time to be saved

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.”**

1 John 1:5–7 (NKJV)

⁵ This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. ⁶ If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. ⁷ But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

John 12:35–36 (NKJV)

³⁵ Then Jesus said to them, “A little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going. ³⁶ While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.” These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them.

3. Those who know Christ are assured of God’s Divine Providential Care and Protection.

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.

Romans 8:28–30 (NKJV)

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose. ²⁹ For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. ³⁰ Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

Matthew 6:25–34 (NKJV)

²⁵ “Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ²⁷ Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?

²⁸ “So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor

spin; ²⁹ and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ³⁰ Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, *will He* not much more *clothe* you, O you of little faith?

³¹ “Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’

³² For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. ³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day *is* its own trouble.

²⁷ Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his **stature?**

stature

hélíkiá: maturity, i.e. age

Original Word: ἡλικία, ας, ἡ

Transliteration: hélíkiá

Phonetic Spelling: (hay-lik-ee'-ah)

Definition: age, term of life; full age, maturity; stature.

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.

Then He explained to the disciples why He needed to return to Judea: “**Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I go, so that I may awaken him out of sleep.**” Sleep is used throughout the Bible as a euphemism for death, particularly that of believers (cf. the repeated use of the phrase “slept with his fathers” in 1 and 2 Kings and 2 Chron.; 1 Kings 2:10; 11:43; Ps. 13:3; Dan. 12:2; Matt. 9:24; 27:52; Acts 7:60; 13:36; 1 Cor. 11:30; 15:6, 18, 20, 51; 1 Thess. 4:13–15; 5:10; 2 Peter 3:4);

Daniel 12:2 (NKJV)

² And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake,
Some to everlasting life,
Some to shame *and* everlasting contempt.

Matthew 9:23–26 (NKJV)

²³ When Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the flute players and the noisy crowd wailing, ²⁴ He said to them, "Make room, for the girl is not dead, but sleeping." And they ridiculed Him. ²⁵ But when the crowd was put outside, He went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose. ²⁶ And the report of this went out into all that land.

Acts 7:59–8:1 (NKJV)

⁵⁹ And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on *God* and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." ⁶⁰ Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not charge them with this sin." And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

8 Now Saul was consenting to his death.

1 Corinthians 15:6 (NKJV)

⁶ After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep.

1 Corinthians 15:17–18 (NKJV)

¹⁷ And if Christ is not risen, your faith *is* futile; you are still in your sins! ¹⁸ Then also those

who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

1 Corinthians 15:51–52 (NKJV)

⁵¹ Behold, I tell 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 trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

1 Thessalonians 4:13–16 (NKJV)

¹³ But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. ¹⁵ For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive *and* remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

for Jesus, therefore, to say that He would **awaken him out of sleep** was to speak metaphorically of raising Lazarus from the dead.

Relieved to hear that Lazarus was on the road to recovery (or so they thought), **the disciples then said to Him, “Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover.”** “Why not just let him rest?” they reasoned. They saw no need for their Master to risk His life by returning to Judea. But their reasoning was based on a misunderstanding of Jesus’ words; He **had spoken of Lazarus’s death, but they thought that He was speaking of literal sleep.** The disciples’ mistake flowed from their misunderstanding of Jesus’ words in verse 4; they still believed that Lazarus’ condition was improving, and would continue to do so with adequate rest.

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2006). *John 1-11* (p. 456). Chicago: Moody Press.

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.”**

plainly,

3954 *parrhēsía* (from **3956** /*pás*, "all" and *rhēsis*, "a proverb or statement quoted with resolve," L-S) – properly, *confidence (bold resolve)*, leaving a witness that something *deserves to be remembered (taken seriously)*.

“Lazarus is dead

At that point Jesus ended their confusion, and **said to them plainly, “Lazarus is dead.”** Here is an unmistakable indication of the Lord’s omniscience, since the messenger had merely said that Lazarus was sick (v. 3), and there was no way for Jesus to have heard that Lazarus had already died.

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2006). [John 1-11](#) (p. 456). Chicago: Moody Press.

15 And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him.”

Jesus’ next statement, **“I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, so that you may believe,”** does not mean that He rejoiced in the death of His dear friend (cf. vv. 33, 35, 38). The Lord’s point was that Lazarus’ resurrection from the dead would do far more to strengthen the disciples’ faith than a healing alone would have done. Jesus’ time on earth was rapidly nearing its end, and with the cross looming ever nearer, the disciples needed a powerful support for their faith.

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2006). [John 1-11](#) (p. 456). Chicago: Moody Press.

We often do not realize that it is in the times of deepest suffering that we know God better. It is in these times that we run to Christ often. Scripture is full of this

Job

Job 42:1–6 (NKJV)

42 Then Job answered the Lord and said:

² “I know that You can do everything,
And that no purpose *of Yours* can be withheld from
You.

³ *You asked*, ‘Who *is* this who hides counsel without
knowledge?’

Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand,
Things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.

⁴ Listen, please, and let me speak;
You said, ‘I will question you, and you shall answer
Me.’

⁵ “I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear,
But now my eye sees You.

⁶ Therefore I abhor *myself*,
And repent in dust and ashes.”

2 Corinthians 12:7–10 (NKJV)

⁷ And lest I should be exalted above measure by the
abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was
given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be
exalted above measure. ⁸ Concerning this thing I pleaded
with the Lord three times that it might depart from me.

⁹ And He said to me, “**My grace is sufficient for you, for My
strength is made perfect in weakness.**” Therefore most
gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of
Christ may rest upon me. ¹⁰ Therefore I take pleasure in

infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

1 Peter 4:12–16 (NKJV)

¹² Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you;

¹³ but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.

¹⁴ If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed *are you*, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified.

¹⁵ But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters.

¹⁶ Yet if *anyone suffers* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter.

Philippians 3:8–11 (NKJV)

⁸ Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord,

for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ⁹ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;
¹⁰ that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, ¹¹ if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

IV. The Courageous Statement

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

Such a pessimist?

Seeing that Jesus was determined to return to Judea, **Thomas, who is called Didymus (Thomas [Hebrew] and Didymus [Greek] both mean “twin”), said resignedly to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, so that we may die with Him.”**

Thomas is known to history as “Doubting Thomas” (cf. John 20:24–28),

John 20:24–25 (NKJV)

²⁴ Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.

²⁵ The other disciples therefore said to him, “We have seen the Lord.”

So he said to them, “Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.”

John 20:26–28 (NKJV)

²⁶ And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, “**Peace to you!**” ²⁷ Then He said to Thomas, “**Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand *here*, and put *it* into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.**”

²⁸ And Thomas answered and said to Him, “My Lord and my God!”

but there was much more to him, as his words here reflect love, devotion, and courage, in spite of his pessimism. His negativity led him to believe he would die if they went to Jerusalem. On the other hand, his love for Jesus was so strong that he was willing to **die with** Him.

Thomas was sincere in his intentions.

Yet at the crucial moment in Gethsemane (just a short time away) his faith, like that of the rest of the disciples, would be found wanting. When Jesus was arrested in the garden, “all the disciples left Him and fled” (Matt. 26:56).

Here, however, Thomas was an example of courage and strength to the wavering disciples. Following his bold lead, despite their doubts (vv. 8, 12), they all went to Bethany with Jesus.

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2006). *John 1-11* (pp. 456–457). Chicago: Moody Press.

V. The Coming of Christ

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 Now 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.”

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.”

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?**”

The Four

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.

The Faith

²⁰ Now 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.”

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.”

The Fact

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?”

VI. The Confession of Martha

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.”

