

# John 11 Commentary

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Charts from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission  
Another Chart from Charles Swindoll

Click to enlarge

**John 11:1 Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.**

BGT John 11:1 ὁ τις σθεν ν, Ἀζαρος π Βηθαν ας, κ τ ς κ μη ς Μαρ ας κα Μ ρθα ς τ ς δελφ ς α τ ς.

KJV John 11:1 Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.

NET John 11:1 Now a certain man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village where Mary and her sister Martha lived.

CSB John 11:1 Now a man was sick, Lazarus, from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.

ESV John 11:1 Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.

NIV John 11:1 Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.

NLT John 11:1 A man named Lazarus was sick. He lived in Bethany with his sisters, Mary and Martha.

NRS John 11:1 Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.

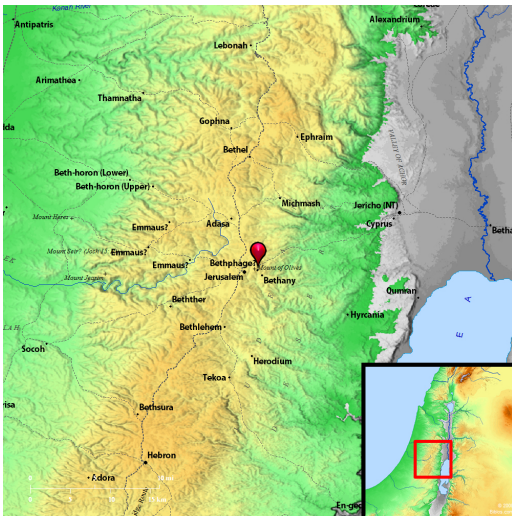
NJB John 11:1 There was a man named Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister, Martha, and he was ill.

NAB John 11:1 Now a man was ill, Lazarus from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.

YLT John 11:1 And there was a certain one ailing, Lazarus, from Bethany, of the village of Mary and Martha her sister --

MIT John 11:1 A man by the name of Lazarus became sick. He was from Bethany, the town of Mary and Martha her sister.

- **was sick:** Joh 11:3,6 Ge 48:1 2Ki 20:1-12 Ac 9:37
- **Lazarus:** Jn 11:5,11 12:2,9,17 Lu 16:20-25
- **Bethany:** Jn 12:1 Mt 21:17 Mk 11:1
- **Mary:** Lu 10:38-42
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



Bethany, Bethphage, Mount of Olives

## LAZARUS WAS SICK

**Now** - Assuming there is no gap in time, Jesus had just departed from Jerusalem to "beyond the Jordan to the place where John was first baptizing, and He was staying there." (Jn 10:40). In that case, **Vincent** says "**now**" is "Marking the interruption to Jesus' retirement."

**John Phillips** - The seven miracles connected with the public ministry of Jesus, and selected by John as seven of his eight "signs," begin and end with a family, one in Cana of Galilee and one in Bethany of Judea. The one was at a wedding, the other at a funeral—life's gladdest and life's saddest hours. At the one he changed water into wine. At the other he triumphed over the tomb. Both miracles were humanly impossible. The one revealed him as Lord of creation. The other revealed him as creator of life. (BORROW [Exploring the Gospels. John](#))

**Warren Wiersbe** - The emphasis in John 11 is on faith; you find some form of the word believe at least eight times in this account (ED: Actually 9x in 8v - Jn 11:15, 25, 26 = twice, Jn 11:27, 40, 42, 45, 48). Another theme is "the glory of God" (John 11:4, 40). ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Arnold Fruchtenbaum** sees John 11:1-44 as a presentation of the first sign of Jonah writing "The resurrection of Lazarus, recorded in John 11:1–44, is the presentation of the first sign of Jonah (Mt 12:39-40+, Mt 16:4+, Lk 11:29-30+). The Messiah had raised others from the dead, yet all of the other resurrections are covered in just a few verses. But here John the Apostle uses 44 verses to give great detail about the resurrection of Lazarus. Why? This is the sign of Jonah that Yeshua had promised."

**J C Ryle** - The chapter we have now begun is one of the most remarkable in the New Testament. For grandeur and simplicity, for pathos and solemnity, nothing was ever written like it. It describes a miracle which is not recorded in the other Gospels—the raising of Lazarus from the dead. Nowhere shall we find such convincing proofs of our Lord's Divine power. As God, He makes the grave itself yield up its tenants. Nowhere shall we find such striking illustrations of our Lord's ability to sympathize with His people. As man, He can be touched with the feelings of our infirmities. Such a miracle well became the end of such a ministry. It was fit and right that the victory of Bethany should closely precede the crucifixion at Calvary.

A certain man was sick ([astheneo](#)) , [Lazarus](#) ("God helps" "God is helper" [dictionary note](#)) of [Bethany](#), the village of [Mary](#) (Hebrew - Miriam) and her sister [Martha](#) (Aramaic for "mistress") - [Lazarus](#) is derived from [Eleazar](#) which means "God a help" or "whom God helps" a fitting name for one whom God would soon help but restoring his life! This is not the Lazarus of Lk 16:20+ although it is interesting he too was "sick" and he too was helped by the Lord! It is surprising that more men are not name Lazarus! There is no suggestion his sickness was related to sin. [Bethany](#) not that of Jn 1:28, but is the village about 2 miles (Jn 11:18) east of Jerusalem on the southeast side of the Mount of Olives.

**Bob Utley** on [Bethany](#) - This is a different location from the Bethany mentioned in John 1:28 and Jn 10:40, which was close to Jericho by the Jordan River. This [Bethany](#) is about two miles southeast of Jerusalem on the same ridge as the Mt. of Olives. This was Jesus' favorite lodging place while in Jerusalem.

*Lazarus was a son of God, and grace makes greater distinctions than earthly rank and worldly honours ever can make.*

-- C H Spurgeon

**Spurgeon** - In God's book, towns are most remarkable for saints that dwell in them. "The town of Mary and her sister Martha." A day will come when a city shall be more illustrious for a saint than for a Caesar — be more renowned for deeds of faith than for deeds of battle. It was "the town of Mary and her sister Martha."....To many people, it may have seemed an event of no particular importance that "a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany," but great consequences often depend upon what appear to us to be very minor matters, and we must not despise the least of the Lord's people, nor think slightingly of anything that concerns them. **When a king or an emperor is ill, the news is published in all the papers; but when a friend of the Lord Jesus, a man "named Lazarus of Bethany," was sick, that event was recorded in the Bible because of something very remarkable which was to follow that sickness.** Lazarus was a son of God, and grace makes greater distinctions than earthly rank and worldly honours ever can make. ([Spurgeon's Exposition - Gospel of John](#))

*The love of Jesus does not separate us  
from the common necessities and infirmities of human life.  
Men of God are still men.*  
-- Spurgeon

**J C Ryle** astutely observes - Let it be noticed that the presence of God's elect children is the one thing which makes towns and countries famous in God's sight. The village of Martha and Mary is noticed, while Memphis and Thebes are not named in the New Testament.

["Are you weary, are you heavy hearted, Tell it to Jesus"](#)  
(SING IT TO HIM BELOVED)

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**Sick** (770) **astheneo** from **asthenes** = without strength, powerless from **a** = without + **sthenos** = strength, bodily vigor) means to be feeble (in any sense), to be diseased, impotent, sick, to lack strength, to be infirm, to be weak. To suffer a debilitating illness. To be weak or experience some personal incapacity or limitation. To experience lack of material necessities as in Acts 20:35.

**Astheneo** - 33x/32v - **am weak(1), becoming weak(1), fell sick(1), sick(18), weak(12)**. Matt. 10:8; Matt. 25:36; Matt. 25:39; Mk. 6:56; Lk. 4:40; Jn. 4:46; Jn. 5:3; Jn. 5:7; Jn. 6:2; Jn. 11:1; Jn. 11:2; Jn. 11:3; Jn. 11:6; Acts 9:37; Acts 19:12; Acts 20:35; Rom. 4:19; Rom. 8:3; Rom. 14:1; Rom. 14:2; 1 Co. 8:11; 1 Co. 8:12; 2 Co. 11:21; 2 Co. 11:29; 2 Co. 12:10; 2 Co. 13:3; 2 Co. 13:4; 2 Co. 13:9; Phil. 2:26; Phil. 2:27; 2 Tim. 4:20; Jas. 5:14

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#### QUESTION - [Who was Lazarus in the Bible?](#)

**ANSWER** - There are two men called Lazarus in the Bible. The first Lazarus is the subject of a story told by Jesus (Luke 16:19–31). Lazarus was very poor, probably homeless, and definitely a beggar (Luke 16:20). He often stayed at the gate of a rich man in hopes of getting scraps from his table. Both men died, and Jesus tells of how Lazarus was taken to "Abraham's side," a place of comfort and rest, while the rich man went to "Hades," a place of conscious torment (Luke 16:22–23). Some Bible scholars believe that Jesus was telling a parable, that is, a fictional story not meant to be a literal account. However, Jesus uses actual names in the story, He does not interpret the story, and neither does He add a moral to the end. He lets the story stand for itself. Because of these details, the story of Lazarus and the rich man could be a true account, relating the actual fates of Lazarus and the unbelieving rich man. Either way, Jesus' teaching on the reality of heaven and hell is clear. The Lazarus in Jesus' story does not appear anywhere else in the Bible, and we do not know when in the timeline of history he may have lived, if he was a real person.

The second Lazarus, also called Lazarus of [Bethany](#), was the brother of Mary and Martha. These three siblings were friends and disciples of Jesus, and they were people Jesus loved (John 11:5). Once, an urgent message came from Bethany to Jesus: His friend Lazarus had become ill, and Mary and Martha wanted Jesus to come and heal him, for he was near death. Jesus then puzzled His disciples and friends. He started by saying that the illness would not lead to death; rather, it would be for God's glory (John 11:4). Then Jesus stayed two days where He was before suggesting going back to Judea, where Lazarus was but also where Jesus' enemies had also recently tried to stone Him (John 11:5–8). During Jesus' delay, Lazarus died, but Jesus referred to Lazarus as "asleep" and told the disciples He was going to wake him up (John 11:11). The disciples responded, "Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better," clearly thinking of physical sleep (John 11:12). Then Jesus told them plainly that Lazarus had died, but they were still going to see him (John 11:14). Thomas perfectly expresses the disciples' confused frustration by saying, "Let us also go, that we may die with him" (John 11:16)—he saw that Jesus was resolute, but knew the dangers of such a trip (John 11:8).

When they arrived at Lazarus' home in Bethany, they found Mary and Martha grief-stricken. They had buried their brother four days earlier. Jesus had not come to help. They were confused and frustrated, but their faith in Jesus was intact (John 11:17–36). Everything became clear when Jesus did the unexpected: He went to Lazarus' tomb and raised him from the dead (John 11:43–44).

The entire episode of Lazarus' sickness, death, and restoration to life worked toward giving glory to God and increasing the faith of Jesus' followers, just as Jesus had said when He heard of Lazarus' illness. Just before He raised Lazarus, Jesus prayed, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me" (John 11:41–42). Jesus' prayer was answered: Lazarus came back to life, and "many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him" (John 11:45).

When Jesus called to Lazarus, Lazarus emerged from the tomb—not a zombie or half-dead or undead, but fully alive and well. Such is the power of Christ. Scripture never records what Lazarus experienced during his four days in the tomb. We assume that his soul/spirit was in paradise, where the other Lazarus was.

After Lazarus was raised from the dead, the chief priests and Pharisees plotted to kill him, because so many witnesses to the miracle believed in Jesus (John 12:9–11). The enemies of Christ couldn't deny the miracle; the next best thing, in their view, was to destroy the evidence—in this case, the evidence was a living, breathing person. But they couldn't stop the truth from spreading. [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

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**Spurgeon** - Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus (John 11:5). They were three of His special favorites, and thus He sent them an extraordinary trial (John 11:1). When a dealer in precious gems finds a stone of minimum value, little time is spent cutting it. But when a rare diamond is found, that stone will be cut, and cut, and cut again. When the Lord finds a saint whom He loves much, He may spare others trial and trouble but not this one, His well-beloved. The more Jesus loves you, the more of the rod you will feel (Heb. 12:5–6). It is painful to be a favorite of heaven, but seek it and rejoice in it.

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#### **Donald Cantrell**

1. The Death of Lazarus "Tears"
  2. The Delay of the Lord "Tarry"
  3. The Delight of the Lesson "Trust"
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#### **James Smith in Handfuls of Purpose - LAZARUS JOHN 11**

The Hebrew form of the name Lazarus is Eliezer—God my Helper. Surely a fitting name for one who was so mightily helped by God. The history of Lazarus is, in a spiritual sense, the history of all who have passed from death unto life. Note the various stages in his remarkable experience. There was—

**I. Sickness.** "A certain man was sick" (Jn 11:1). "He whom Thou lovest is sick" (Jn 11:3). Loved by the Lord, yet smitten with sickness. Through some cause or other, soul-sickness is almost invariably the prelude to enlarged and deeper spiritual blessing. When Jesus heard of it, He said, "This sickness ... is for the glory of God" (v. 4). Yes, blessed be His Name, for that sickness which brings us down to the place of death, that the Son of Man might be glorified in doing a marvellous work in us and for us. The Holy Spirit must convince of sin before He quickens into newness of life.

**II. Death.** "Jesus said unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead" (Jn 11:14). This sickness was not unto eternal death, but unto that death which in a very singular way made Lazarus a fit subject for the resurrecting power of the Son of God. Real sin-sickness is only unto the death of self-love and self-will, that the power of Christ might be manifested. Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. When the Spirit convinces of sin, of righteousness and of judgment, it is the passing of the sentence of death upon the sinner. All hope of salvation from any other source had to be abandoned. "Sin revived, and I died" (Rom. 7:9).

**III. Life.** "He that was dead came forth" (Jn 11:44). The life-giving power of Jesus Christ could only be manifested in the case of a dead man. If Lazarus had only been in a swoon, or in a sleep, there would have been no glory to God in his awakening. Christ Jesus came into this world to save sinners. It would bring no glory to Him to give life or salvation to those who did not need it. Before the Apostle Paul could say, "Now I live," he had to say, "I am crucified." Resurrection life can only come where there has been death. We must die to self if we would live unto God. To share with Christ His resurrection power, we must needs go to the Cross and the grave with Him. If we refuse to die, we refuse to enter into the new and fruitful life. "Except a corn of wheat die, it abideth alone" (John 12:24).

**IV. Liberty.** "Jesus said, Loose him and let him go" (Jn 11:44). It ill becomes one who has been raised from the dead by the power of God, to be in bondage to any man, or the customs and habits of men, especially those manners and customs that belong to the dead. As in nature, so in grace, where there is a fullness of life there will be the bursting open and a breaking forth from the old dead forms and habits. All that we can do for our dead is to bind them and bury them, but how different when, with a loud voice, the Son of God speaks to them. The man that has been liberated from death and the grave, must not be hindered by any fashion of grave clothes. Whom the Son of God makes free are free indeed. The relatives of those saved by Christ may do much to bind or loose their lives for His service. The Lord's command to the friends of Lazarus was, "Loose him and let him go" (John 11:44). What a crime

in His sight if they had refused to obey. See that ye refuse not.

**V. Communion.** “Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with Him” (Jn 12:2) What a blessed privilege to company with Him who has given us to know in our own experience that He is the “Resurrection and the Life.” To those who have passed from death unto life there is no fellowship to be compared with His. As like draws to like, so must the resurrected spirit draw to Him who is the Resurrection. Every time we sit down prayerfully to study His Word, we are sitting at the table with Him, listening to His voice, and receiving food for our souls. Are you one of those who sit at this table with Him?

**VI. Testimony.** “By reason of him, many of the Jews went away and believed on Jesus” (Jn 12:11) The power of his testimony lay, not so much in what he was able to say, as in what he was. The fact that he had been raised from death and corruption by the word of Jesus Christ, was in itself a most convincing witness to His Divinity and Messiahship. The greater the work of grace wrought in us by God’s mighty power, the greater will be the force of our testimony for Him. The influence of Christ’s risen life in us should be the leading of others to “believe on Jesus.”

**VII. Suffering.** Because of the converting power of this new life in Lazarus “the chief priests consulted that they might put him to death” (Jn 12:10). His old life brought no persecution, but now he has the happiness of those who are reproached for the Name of Christ (1 Peter 4:14). It is beyond the power of the enemy to kill or destroy the resurrection life. Your life is hid with Christ in God. “If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf” (1 Peter 4:16).

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## **JESUS - JOHN 11 - James Smith - Handfuls of Purpose**

The Gospel of John is like the rending of the veil, it opens up the way for us into the Holiest of all. Much of the personal glory of the Son of God will be unseen by us, if we fail to discern what His sayings and doings reveal concerning Himself. In this chapter we have several bright glimpses of this inner glory, glimpses such as we have everywhere throughout the Gospels.

**I. His Divinity.** When Jesus heard of the sickness of Lazarus, He said, “This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby” (Jn 11:4). This prophetic language is full of meaningless mystery if Jesus Christ was nothing more than the “best of men.” Although He emptied Himself as the Divine One, that He might live and die for us, He was still Himself, the eternal Son, in the bosom of the Father. He knew that this sickness had come that He, as the Son of God, might be glorified thereby.

**II. His Love.** “Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus” (Jn 11:5). While Jesus Christ was Divine, He was also perfectly and purely human. He loved all with that love of God which is the love of pity and compassion, for even those who are His bitterest enemies, but the Marthas, the Marys, and the Lazaruses are the special objects of His affection and delight. He can only delight with His whole heart in those whose hearts are opened with delight toward Him. It is not possible for such love as His to rejoice in iniquity.

**III. His Faith.** “Are there not twelve hours in the day?” etc. (Jn 11:7–9). These very suggestive words were spoken to His disciples, in answer to their alarm at His proposal to cross over from Peræa, where the Jews of late had sought to stone Him. There were to be twelve hours in His working day, and but eleven had passed. He must work the works of Him that sent Him while it is day (John 9:4). He did believe that His life was “immortal till His work was done,” and so He would walk in the day that He might stumble not. Faith in God never leads to laziness or fatalism. He that believeth shall not make the haste of flurried excitement, but they shall make steady progress, despite all the oppositions of the forces of Hell. “Are there not twelve hours in the day?”

**IV. His Joy.** “I am glad” (Jn 11:15). The conjunction here is most remarkable. “Lazarus is dead, and I am glad; glad for your sakes to the intent that ye might believe.” He was glad that He was not there to save Lazarus from dying, that He might have the opportunity of raising him from the dead, that they might see His glory and believe in Him. Mark the secret of Christ’s gladness—glad to have the chance of manifesting His power that others may believe in Him, so that they might be blessed by Him. This was the joy that was set before Him when He endured the Cross. The nature of Christ’s gladness is totally different from that which is sought for by the sinful sons of men.

**V. His Indignation.** “When Jesus saw her wailing, and the Jews also wailing, He was moved with indignation in the Spirit” (Jn 11:33, R.V., margin). Why all this wailing now that HE had said, “Thy brother shall rise again,” and that “I am the Resurrection and the Life?” In the face of His words and in His presence, this wailing was surely to Him the wailing of unbelief. He groaned in Spirit with a holy anger because of their slowness of heart to believe all that He had said unto them.

**VI. His Compassion.** “Jesus wept” (Jn 11:35). Those tears were as “drops of grief” from the loving heart of our Great High Priest, who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities (Heb. 4:15). What a contrast between the hypocritical tears of those would-be mourners and the tears of the pure-hearted Son of God. The voice of these tears seems to have spoken louder than His words, for, “Then said the Jews, Behold how He loved Him.” If these teardrops were pearls of love, what shall we say of those blood-drops wept in the Garden of Gethsemane? “Greater love hath no man than this.” There is a way through Christ’s tears, as well as through

His words, to the heart of God the Father.

**VII. His Power.** “He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus come forth, and he that was dead came forth” (Jn 11:43, 44). This was the cry of Him who is “the Resurrection and the Life.” “Resurrection,” one has said, “is not an impersonal fate, but a personal effect.” It is not the natural result of any known law, but the supernatural outcome of a Divine personal act. In Christ was life, and the life was the light of men. He speaks and it is done. As when Christ, who was the Life, appeared at the grave of Lazarus, Lazarus also appeared with Him, through the power of His Word; so “when Christ, who is our Life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory” (Col. 3:4). While on earth our Lord had to do with death in three different stages: the child on the death-bed, the young man on the bier, and the man in the grave. It was only in this last stage that He spoke with a loud voice. The raising of Lazarus was a manifestation of that power that shall one day with the voice of a trumpet awaken the dead, and as the vile body of Lazarus was changed (v. 30), so shall it be in the resurrection (Phil. 3:20, 21). This corruptible must put on incorruption. He that heareth His Word now, and believeth on Him ... is passed from death unto life (John 5:24).

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**Warren Wiersbe** reflects on the repeated word "love" in John 11 - This experience was difficult for the Bethany family, but look at it in the light of God's love (Jn 11:3, 5, 36).

- **Love hears** (Jn 11:1–3). The sisters sent their message to the Lord because they knew He was concerned about them. God's love keeps His ears open to our cries (Ps. 34:12–16).
- **Love waits** (Jn 11:4–6). We think that love must act immediately, but sometimes delay brings a greater blessing: “God's delays are not God's denials.” Jesus gave them a promise to encourage them while they waited (v. 4). The promise seemed to have failed, but Jesus knew what He was doing.
- **Love risks** (Jn 11:7–16). It was dangerous for Jesus to return to Judea, but He went just the same. The raising of Lazarus helped to precipitate the plans that led to His death (Jn 11:45–57).
- **Love comforts** (Jn 11:17–32). Jesus came to the sisters, listened to them, and assured them with His word. He cannot really help us until we move from “Lord, if . . .” (Jn 11:21, 32) to “Yes, Lord, I believe” (Jn 11:27).
- **Love weeps** (Jn 11:33–37). Jesus identifies with our sorrows (Heb. 4:15–16). He knew He would raise Lazarus from the dead, but He still wept with the sisters and their friends.
- **Love serves** (Jn 11:38–44). We today are not able to raise the dead, but we can serve others as they go through the valley (Rom. 12:15). A loving heart will always find a way to bear others' burdens (Gal. 6:2). (See [With the Word: The Chapter-by-Chapter Bible Handbook](#))

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#### QUESTION - [What is the significance of Bethany in the Bible?](#)

(ED COMMENT- 12x in Bible = Bethany - Matt. 21:17; Matt. 26:6; Mk. 11:1; Mk. 11:11; Mk. 11:12; Mk. 14:3; Lk. 19:29; Lk. 24:50; Jn. 1:28; Jn. 11:1; Jn. 11:18; Jn. 12:1)

**ANSWER** - Bethany was a village in Judea about two miles east of Jerusalem (John 11:18), a distance considered a “Sabbath day's journey” (Acts 1:12). Bethany was situated on the well-traveled road to Jericho. Some scholars think Bethany was more like a modern subdivision or a neighborhood rather than an entire town. The edges of Bethany reached to the [Mount of Olives](#) and also bordered **Bethphage**, a suburb of Jerusalem.

**Bethany** is probably best known for being the hometown of Jesus' good friends, **Mary, Martha, and Lazarus**. Bethany was the place where Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead (John 11:1, 41–44), it was the home of [Simon the leper](#) (Mark 14:3–10), and it was the place where Mary [anointed Jesus' feet](#) with perfume (Matthew 26:6–13). Other references to Bethany are Mark 11:1 and Luke 19:29, which describe the preparations for Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the cursing of the fig tree in Mark 11:11–13, and the place where Jesus stayed overnight during His final week of earthly ministry, between His triumphal entry and His crucifixion (Matthew 21:17).

The name **Bethany** is translated by some to mean “house of figs,” as there are many fig trees and palms in the area; others translate it as “house of misery,” speculating that Bethany was a designated place for the sick and those with contagious diseases.

**Bethany** is also significant as the place near which Christ ascended back into heaven (Luke 24:50). Forty days after His resurrection, Jesus gathered His eleven disciples to give them final instructions before He left the earth (Luke 24:50–51). He took them to the Mount of Olives, in “**the vicinity of Bethany**” (Lk 24:50), where He blessed them and [commissioned](#) them. The Lord was then lifted up into the clouds (Acts 1:9). As the disciples stood staring upwards, two angels appeared to them and said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11).

**Bethany** has an exciting future prophesied. Zechariah 14:4 says, “On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives that lies

before Jerusalem on the east.” When Jesus returns to set up His kingdom, it will be to the very place He left: **the Mount of Olives near Bethany**. Though the ancient town of Bethany may have been small and seemingly insignificant, it will be the scene of a world-changing event: the glorious return of Jesus Christ as King of Kings and Lord of Lords (Revelation 19:11–16). [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

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#### **QUESTION - [Who was Martha in the Bible?](#)**

**ANSWER** - Martha is a significant New Testament figure, a personal friend of Jesus, and someone with whom many women today identify. She lived in [Bethany](#) with her sister, [Mary](#), and her brother, Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from the dead ([John 11:1–15, 43–44](#)). We meet Martha three times in the Bible, and each event helps to build a profile of this interesting woman.

The Bible first mentions Martha in [Luke 10](#). She is in her home in Bethany, a small town near Jerusalem, where she is hosting Jesus and the disciples. Jesus was well-known to Martha and her siblings; in fact, Jesus loved this little family ([John 11:5](#)). On the day that Jesus visited, Martha’s desire was to be a good hostess—to serve the best meal with the best possible presentation, for Jesus’ sake. Her sister, Mary, however, was taking some time out to listen to Jesus ([Luke 10:39](#)). As Martha “was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made” ([Luke 10:40](#)), she became a little cross with Mary and spoke rather abruptly to the Lord: “Lord, don’t you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!” (verse 40). In this foolish utterance, Martha implied that Jesus did not care about her, and she gave the Lord a command, demanding that He force Mary to assist in the serving. In her busyness, Martha had taken her eyes off the Savior. Jesus, who was able to see into her soul, diagnosed her problem: she was worried and troubled about the serving and had no peace in her heart. He gently told Martha that a simple dinner was more than adequate, and He reminded her that Mary’s decision to sit at His feet and hear His word was the better choice (Luke 10:41–42).

We see Martha again just after her brother, Lazarus, had died ([John 11:1-57](#)). The sisters had sent for Jesus when Lazarus fell ill (verse 3), but He did not arrive in time to heal him. When Jesus finally approached Bethany, four days after Lazarus’ death, Martha ran out to meet Him and declared, “If you had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask” (John 11:21–22). Notice Martha’s faith: she firmly believed that Jesus could have healed Lazarus of his illness. And her faith is not diminished by the fact that Jesus had arrived “too late.” Jesus encourages Martha with one of His “I AM” statements: “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?” (John 11:25–26). Martha’s response is one of great faith and understanding of Jesus’ divine nature: “Yes, Lord . . . I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world” (John 11:27). Martha’s faith was rewarded that very day as she witnessed her brother’s miraculous resurrection from the dead (John 11:43–44).

The third time we encounter Martha in the Bible, she is doing what Martha was known to do—serving (John 12:2). Jesus is again attending a dinner in His honor in Bethany, and Martha is again serving. It is on this occasion that Martha’s sister, Mary, anoints Jesus’ feet with expensive perfume (verse 3). It becomes apparent that Martha was likely a woman of some means, evidenced by the size of her home, the frequency of her hosting dinners, and the expensive perfumed oil her sister owned.

In Martha’s life-changing encounters with Jesus, we see the importance of balancing service with worship, of trusting the Lord even when all seems lost, and of using our material resources for the glory of God. [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

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**Summary of Lessons from John 11:1-6** - See [Steven Cole's Loved, But Suffering \(John 11:1-6\) for exposition of the points below](#)

#### **1. The Lord Allows Those He Loves To Suffer.**

Excerpt - This refutes a popular, but spiritually destructive, heresy of our time: the teaching that it is God’s will for every believer to be healthy and wealthy. This falsehood is flooding into many poor nations, where it entices those who are suffering from disease or poverty with the false promise that if they will believe in Jesus, He will give them miraculous healing or financial success. The false teachers themselves flaunt their wealth, which they have gained from the gullible who contribute to their coffers. When health and wealth don’t happen, they teach that it’s because of your lack of faith. It’s hard to imagine a more heartless and cruel doctrine! Of course, the false teachers don’t mention the fact that they get sick and die with the same regularity as everyone else!

#### **2. We Cannot Always Know The “Why” Of Our Suffering.**

#### **3. We Can Always Take Our Troubles To Jesus.**

#### **4. Always Interpret Your Suffering By God’s Love; Don’t Interpret His Love By Your Suffering.**

#### **5. Realize That Love Sometimes Involves Delays That We Cannot Understand At The Time.**



**ILLUSTRATION** - A woman still overwhelmed with grief approached her church on the Sunday after her mother had died. Just outside the door, a 7-year-old boy met her. With tearful eyes he looked up at her: "I prayed for your mother," he said, "but she died." For a moment, the grieving woman wanted just to hug him and cry with him. But she could see that he was seriously disturbed because he thought his prayers had not been answered. So she silently prayed for wisdom and then said to the boy, "You wanted God to do His best for my mother, didn't you?" He nodded slowly. "Well, God answered your prayer. His best for her was to take her home to live with Him." The boy's eyes brightened as he replied, "That's right, He did!" Then he ran off to meet his friends, content that God had taken her to heaven. (Adapted from "Our Daily Bread," 5/77.) So although we often can't know why we're suffering, we always can take our troubles to Jesus and know that He loves us and will work for our good in His time, not our time.

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## ADRIAN ROGERS -

SERMON OUTLINE ON John 10:10; 11:14-44; 12:1-10 **Abundant Living Through Abundant Liberty** - [SCROLL TO PAGE 630](#)

**(ED: THIS IS A POWERFUL EVANGELISTIC SERMON!)**

### Introduction

- A. Jesus Is God's Answer to Man's Disappointment
- B. Jesus Is God's Answer to Man's Doubt
- C. Jesus Is God's Answer to Man's Disability
- D. Jesus Is God's Answer to Man's Desire
- E. Jesus Is God's Answer to Man's Despair
- F. Jesus Is God's Answer to Man's Darkness
- G. Jesus Is God's Answer to Man's Death
- I. There Must Be Life from Jesus
  - A. Example Won't Raise a Dead Man
  - B. Encouragement Won't Raise a Dead Man
  - C. Environment Won't Raise a Dead Man
  - D. Education Won't Raise a Dead Man
  - E. Only the Word of God Will Raise a Dead Man
- II. There Must Be Liberty Through Christ
- III. There Must Be Loyalty to Christ
- IV. There Must Be Love for Christ

### Conclusion

**John 11:2 It was the Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.**

BGT John 11:2 ἡ Μαρὶ μὲν ἠρώσασα τὸν Κύριον μετὰ κηξασσά τοις πεδασά τοις θριξίν ατς, ὁ δὲ ἄρως Ἰζαρος σθνεὶ.

KJV John 11:2 (It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)

NET John 11:2 (Now it was Mary who anointed the Lord with perfumed oil and wiped his feet dry with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)

CSB John 11:2 Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, and it was her brother Lazarus who was sick.

ESV John 11:2 It was Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill.

NIV John 11:2 This Mary, whose brother Lazarus now lay sick, was the same one who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair.

NLT John 11:2 This is the Mary who later poured the expensive perfume on the Lord's feet and wiped them

with her hair. Her brother, Lazarus, was sick.

NRS John 11:2 Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill.

NJB John 11:2 It was the same Mary, the sister of the sick man Lazarus, who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair.

NAB John 11:2 Mary was the one who had anointed the Lord with perfumed oil and dried his feet with her hair; it was her brother Lazarus who was ill.

YLT John 11:2 and it was Mary who did anoint the Lord with ointment, and did wipe his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ailing

MIT John 11:2 This Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair. It was her brother who was ill.

- **that Mary:** Jn 12:3 Mt 26:6-7 Mk 14:3
- **anointed:** Lu 7:37-38
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

John 12:3+ (CONTEXT - Jn 12:1-8) Mary (MARY OF BETHANY) then took a pound of very costly perfume of pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

Luke 7:37-38+ And there was a (UNNAMED) woman in the city who was a sinner; and when she learned that He was reclining at the table in the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster vial of perfume, 38 and standing behind Him at His feet, weeping, **she began to wet His feet with her tears, and kept wiping them with the hair of her head, and kissing His feet and anointing them with the perfume.**

## MARY THE ANOINTER IDENTIFIED

It was the **Mary** (Hebrew - Miriam) who anointed (**aleipho**) the Lord (**kurios**) with ointment (**muron**), and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother **Lazarus** was sick (**astheneo**) - John knows there **six Marys** in the New Testament and wants to make sure we identify the Mary who lives in Bethany. It is interesting that **Mary** is mentioned before Martha in Jn 11:1 and here in verse 2 she is the one on whom the Spirit focuses. Mary was the more devotional minded while Martha was the more action oriented (Just a thought to ponder if we desire to be more like Mary.) And so John adds this **prolepsis** (proleptic aorist) to identify **Mary** who would carry out her act of devotion in Jn 12:3+ (cf. Mt. 26:6-13, Mk 14:3-9), which Jesus predicted would make her "famous." For additional insights regarding the two sisters Martha and Mary see comments on Luke 10:38-42. The word **ointment** (**muron**) or perfume was used as incense and in cosmetics, medicine, and preparation for burial, the latter being notable in view of the nearness of the Cross.

**NET Note** - This is a parenthetical note by the author. It is a bit surprising that the author here identifies **Mary** as the one who **anointed the Lord** with perfumed oil and wiped his feet dry with her hair, since this event is not mentioned until later, in John 12:3. Many see this "proleptic" reference as an indication that the author expected his readers to be familiar with the story already, and go on to assume that in general the author in writing the Fourth Gospel assumed his readers were familiar with the other three gospels. Whether the author assumed actual familiarity with the synoptic gospels or not, it is probable that he did assume some familiarity with Mary's anointing activity. (**ED:** And clearly the Holy Spirit could give him knowledge of future events, something the Spirit certainly did in the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which John wrote - [cf 2Pe 1:21+]).

**Spurgeon** on **Lazarus** being sick - So you see that those whom Jesus loves may be themselves ill, or may have dear ones who are ill; ay, and the illness may be sent by God as a token and testimony of his affection for them. Men polish gems, but they do not take the trouble to polish common pebbles, and God sends affliction to his own beloved ones for their good and for his own glory.

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**Anointed** (218) **aleipho** (from same root as lipos - fat, oil) means to rub, to cover over, besmear (Mt. 6:17; Mark 6:13; 16:1; Luke 7:38, 46; John 11:2; 12:3; James 5:14; Sept.: Ge 31:13; Ezek. 13:10-12). **Aleipho** is used in Septuagint in Ge 31:13 of Jacob's anointing of a pillar in Bethel where he made a vow to God. Used of anointing the priests in Ex 40:15 and Nu 3:3 (interesting given Jesus is the Great High Priest - Heb 3:1, Heb 4:14, et al) which also uses the word **chrisma** (anointing). Ruth was to anoint herself

before going to meet Boaz (Ru 3:3). David anointed himself after his illicit son with Bathsheba died (2 Sa 12:20).

**Aleipho - 9x/8v - anoint(3), anointed(3), anointing(3).** Matt. 6:17; Mk. 6:13; Mk. 16:1; Lk. 7:38; Lk. 7:46; Jn. 11:2; Jn. 12:3; Jas. 5:14

**Marvin Vincent** - Three words for **anointing** are found in the New Testament: aleipho, [chrio](#) and its compounds, and murizo. The last is used but once, Mark 14:8+, of anointing the Lord's body for burying. Between the two others the distinction is strictly maintained. Χρίω, which occurs five times, is used in every case but one of the anointing of the Son by the Father with the Holy Spirit (Luke 4:18; Acts 4:27; 10:38; Heb. 1:9). In the remaining instance (2 Cor. 1:21) of enduing Christians with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Thus the word is confined to sacred anointing.\* λείψω is used of all actual anointings. See Matt. 6:17; Mark 6:13; Luke 7:38; Jas. 5:14. The same distinction is generally maintained in the Septuagint, though with a few exceptions, as Num. 3:3.

[SPECIAL TOPIC: "ANOINTING" IN THE BIBLE \(BDB 603\)](#)

**Ointment** ([3464](#)) [muron](#) is ointment, perfume, sweet-smelling substance made not from animal fats. Apart from a single reference in Revelation 18:13, muron occurs only in the four Gospels (13 times). The Synoptic Gospels record anointings of Jesus' head by Mary of Bethany. Matthew and Mark clearly link this anointing to Jesus' upcoming burial (Matthew 26:12; Mark 14:8). **Gilbrant - Muron** is the juice-like aromatic extract from plants, or perfumed oil. As a cosmetic muron could be translated "perfume." "Ointment" is perhaps a useful English translation, since muron was often medicinal and at times cultic in significance, being used for anointing (e.g., for burial). Another common use was in the embalming process (cf. Bauer). **Muron occurs 18 times in the Septuagint.** The Hebrew counterpart to muron is most regularly a form of shemen, usually denoting "oil" or "perfumed oil." A cultic use of muron in Israel's religion is attested on several occasions (e.g., Exodus 30:25, rōqach, "sacred anointing oil," NIV; 1 Chronicles 9:30, "spices," NIV; cf. Psalm 133:2). The cosmetic understanding occurs throughout the Song of Solomon (e.g., Song 1:3; 4:10,14; cf. Wisdom of Solomon 2:7; Amos 6:6). Oils were a priceless commodity in the ancient world ([Isaiah 39:2](#); cf. [Revelation 18:13](#) and the context of the Gospel accounts). ([Complete Biblical Library](#)) **Liddell-Scott** on **muron** - sweet juice extracted from plants, sweet-oil, unguent, balsam, Hdt., etc. 2. a place where unguents were sold, the perfume-market, **NET Note** - Nard or spikenard is a fragrant oil from the root and spike of the nard plant of northern India. This perfumed oil, if made of something like nard, would have been extremely expensive, costing up to a year's pay for an average laborer.

**Muron** - 14x in 13v - Usage: ointment(1), perfume(12), perfumes(1). Matt. 26:7; Matt. 26:12; Mk. 14:3; Mk. 14:4; Mk. 14:5; Lk. 7:37; Lk. 7:38; Lk. 7:46; Lk. 23:56; Jn. 11:2; Jn. 12:3; Jn. 12:5; Rev. 18:13

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### **C H Spurgeon - [Beloved, and yet afflicted](#) John 11:3**

Jesus may give healing. It would not be wise to live by a supposed faith, and cast off the physician and his medicines, any more than to discharge the butcher, and the tailor, and expect to be fed and clothed by faith; but this would be far better than forgetting the Lord altogether, and trusting to man only. Healing for both body and soul must be sought from God. We make use of medicines, but these can do nothing apart from the Lord, 'who healeth all thy diseases'. We may tell Jesus about our aches and pains, and gradual declinings, and hacking coughs. Some persons are afraid to go to God about their health: they pray for the pardon of sin, but dare not ask the Lord to remove a headache: and, yet, surely, if the hairs outside our head are all numbered by God it is not much more of a condescension for him to relieve throbs and pressures inside the head. Our big things must be very little to the great God, and our little things cannot be much less. It is a proof of the greatness of the mind of God that while ruling the heavens and the earth, he is not so absorbed by these great concerns as to be forgetful of the least pain or want of any one of his poor children. We may go to him about our failing breath, for he first gave us lungs and life. We may tell him about the eye which grows dim, and the ear which loses hearing, for he made them both. We may mention the swollen knee, and the sore finger, the stiff neck, and the sprained foot, for he made all these our members, redeemed them all, and will raise them all from the grave. Go at once, and say, 'Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.'

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**D L Moody** - THE communion those sisters had with Jesus brought them so near to His heart that when the time of trouble came they knew where to go for comfort. A great many people do not learn that secret in prosperity, and so when the billows come rolling up against them, they don't know which way to turn. The darkest and most wretched place on the face of the earth, is a home where death has entered, and where Christ is unknown. No hope of a resurrection, no hope of a brighter day coming.

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**Warren Wiersbe** has an interesting analysis of John 11-12 as they relate to Lazarus writing "Lazarus represents the salvation of the lost sinner in seven ways. Let's take a closer look at each of these." Below is Wiersbe's summary with a few notes but for the full explanation BORROW [Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the New Testament](#) and see page 240-242.

- I. He Was Dead (Jn 11:14)
  - II. He Was Decayed (Jn 11:39)
  - III. He Was Raised and Given Life (Jn 11:41–44)
  - V. He Witnessed to Others (Jn 11:45)
  - VI. He Fellowshiped with Christ (Jn 12:1–2)
  - VII. He Was Persecuted (Jn 12:10–11)
- 

**QUESTION - [Who was Mary of Bethany in the Bible?](#)**

**ANSWER** - Mary of [Bethany](#) is one of the most beautiful characters in all of Scripture, and we can learn valuable lessons from studying her life. Mary was the sister of Martha, and her brother was Lazarus whom Jesus raised from the dead. We see Mary three different times in the Bible, beginning with the incident in the home of her sister, Martha (Luke 10:38-42), where Jesus, and presumably the disciples who travelled with Him, were being entertained. Martha was so distressed and “distracted with much serving” and frustrated that her sister wasn’t helping that she actually rebuked Jesus, accusing Him of not caring that Mary sat at His feet while she did all the work. Jesus’ response gives us our first insight into Mary of Bethany. Jesus commended her for “choosing the better,” meaning that Mary’s desire to be near her Lord and hang onto His every word was far more beneficial than running herself ragged with preparations for a meal. Jesus further said that choosing the better thing, learning of the Lord, would not be taken away from Mary.

By “choosing the better,” Jesus meant that those whose priority in life is Christ, the knowledge of Him, and nearness to Him have chosen what will last through eternity, such as the “gold, silver and costly stones” referred to in 1 Corinthians 3:11-12. From this incident, we learn that those who are distracted with the mundane and earthly are building upon the foundation which is Christ with “wood, hay and straw,” materials which will not stand the fires that come to us in times of testing, nor will they be remembered in eternity. Martha’s rebuke of Jesus gives us insight into her heart and mind as she tried to make everything perfect and was so distracted that she lost sight of whom she was speaking to. Mary’s silence, which we will see again in another incident, indicates a lack of concern for herself, especially for defending herself. When we focus on Christ, He becomes our greatest passion and our tendency to self-absorption dims and fades.

The second incident in which Mary and Martha appear occurs in John 11 with the raising of their brother, Lazarus, from the dead. When Mary hears that Jesus has come and is calling for her, she immediately leaves the assembly of mourners in her home and rushes to meet Jesus. So great is her love for Him and her desire to please and obey Him that she leaves those who had come to comfort her to place herself in the arms of the greatest Comforter mankind has ever known. Jesus sees her great sorrow and weeps along with her, even though He knows her sadness is going to be short-lived and that her brother will be restored to her momentarily. In the same way, when we sorrow and grieve, our greatest comfort is found in Jesus, whose compassion is boundless. When we place our hand in the nail-scarred hand, we find comfort, peace and security, and we learn the truth of Psalm 30:5b: “Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning.”

The third and final time we see Mary of Bethany is just days before Christ’s crucifixion (John 12:1–8). A meal had been prepared, Martha was again serving while the resurrected Lazarus reclined at the table with Jesus and the disciples. At some point, Mary poured a pint of very expensive perfume on Jesus’ feet and wiped them with her hair. In spite of criticism from Judas Iscariot about the waste of the costly substance, Mary said nothing. Rather, Mary allowed Jesus to defend her, which He does, saying that she has kept this perfume for His burial and has done a beautiful act of service to Him.

We see two amazing things about Mary here from which we can take our example. First, she seems to know that the time of Jesus’ death on the cross was at hand, a fact that had escaped the disciples in spite of Jesus’ clear declaration of this truth. No doubt Mary contented herself with listening to her Lord and meditating on His words, while the disciples bickered about who would be greatest among them in the kingdom. By doing so, they missed the important truths Jesus was teaching them about His upcoming death and resurrection (Mark 9:30-35). How often do we miss spiritual truths because we are self-focused and overly concerned for our rewards, our status and our reputation among men?

Second, we see in Mary a settled conviction and confidence in her Lord, so much so that she is not compelled to defend herself in the face of criticism. How often do we jump at the chance to justify ourselves in the eyes of others who criticize and mock us, particularly where our faith is concerned? But if we, like Mary, make sitting at the feet of Jesus and listening to Him our priority, we will have her depth of understanding, her passion for Christ, and her complete faith in His plan for our lives. We may not have Jesus sitting in our living rooms in person, but we have His Word, the Bible, and from it we have all the knowledge and understanding we need to live a life of secure and confident faith like Mary of Bethany. [GotQuestions.org](#)

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## QUESTION - [How many Marys are in the Bible?](#)

**ANSWER** - *Mary* was a common female name in Israel during the time of Christ. The New Testament mentions six different women with the name *Mary*. The Hebrew form of the name is [Miriam](#) (or *Miryam*), given to the sister of Moses.

(1) The best-known Mary in the Bible is [Mary the mother of Jesus](#). She was the virgin chosen by God to bear His Son, the Savior of the world. Mary lived in Nazareth, a city of Galilee, when the angel Gabriel made the announcement to her of the virgin birth (Luke 1:26, 56). She married Joseph, a carpenter, but remained a virgin until after Jesus was born in Bethlehem (Matthew 1:25). Scripture reveals Mary as a humble, godly, and blessed woman. Mary was also present at Jesus' crucifixion. After Jesus' death, she was cared for by the apostle John (John 19:25–27).

(2) A second Mary in the Bible is [Mary Magdalene](#). This Mary was called "Magdalene" to help distinguish her from some of the other women named Mary in the Gospels. Magdala was a city on the southwest coast of the Sea of Galilee. This Mary was a follower of Christ, and Luke 8:2 says Jesus had cast seven demons from her. No doubt this deliverance increased her dedication to and love for the Lord. When Jesus arose from the dead, Mary Magdalene brought the news of the empty tomb to Peter and John, and she has the distinction of being the first person to see the risen Christ (John 20:1, 18).

(3) **A third Mary** in the Bible is [Mary of Bethany](#). This Mary was the sister of Lazarus and Martha. They lived in Bethany, a town near Jerusalem. Jesus and the disciples were frequent visitors in the home of Mary, Martha, and [Lazarus](#). Mary of Bethany was the one sitting at Jesus' feet listening to His words while [Martha](#) set up for dinner (Luke 10:38–42). Before Jesus' arrest, Mary of Bethany anointed Jesus' head with costly oil. Jesus told those gathered in the room that Mary had done so in preparation for His burial (Matthew 26:6–13).

(4) **A fourth Mary** in the Bible is identified as Mary the mother of [James](#) the younger and Joseph and the wife of Clopas (also called Alphaeus in Luke 6:15). She is mentioned in Mark 15:40, Matthew 27:56, and John 19:25 as watching the crucifixion of Christ. She is mentioned again in Mark 15:47 as seeing the place where Jesus was buried. And this Mary appears again in Mark 16:1 and Matthew 28:1 (where she is called "the other Mary") in connection with the empty tomb, as she was one of the women who brought spices for Jesus' body and met an angel instead.

(5) **A fifth Mary** in the Bible is Mary the mother of [John Mark](#). She is mentioned in Acts 12:12. She had opened up her home for believers to meet for prayer, and it was during one of their prayer meetings that Peter was miraculously released from prison. This Mary's son is the author of the Gospel of Mark.

(6) **A sixth Mary** in the Bible is mentioned as a member of the church at Rome. Paul includes her as one of the many people to greet at the end of his letter and describes her as one "who worked very hard" on behalf of the church (Romans 16:6). [GotQuestions.org](#)

**John 11:3 So the sisters sent word to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick."**

BGT John 11:3 π σειλαν ο ν α δελφα πρ ς α τ ν λ γουσαι· κ ριε, δε ν φιλε ς σθενε .

KJV John 11:3 Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.

NET John 11:3 So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, "Lord, look, the one you love is sick."

CSB John 11:3 So the sisters sent a message to Him: "Lord, the one You love is sick."

ESV John 11:3 So the sisters sent to him, saying, "Lord, he whom you love is ill."

NIV John 11:3 So the sisters sent word to Jesus, "Lord, the one you love is sick."

NLT John 11:3 So the two sisters sent a message to Jesus telling him, "Lord, your dear friend is very sick."

NRS John 11:3 So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, "Lord, he whom you love is ill."

NJB John 11:3 The sisters sent this message to Jesus, 'Lord, the man you love is ill.'

NAB John 11:3 So the sisters sent word to him, saying, "Master, the one you love is ill."

YLT John 11:3 therefore sent the sisters unto him, saying, 'Sir, lo, he whom thou dost love is ailing;'

MIT John 11:3 The sisters sent a message to Jesus: "Lord, take note, he whom you love is sick."

- **he whom You love:** Jn 11:1,5 13:23 Ge 22:2 Ps 16:3 Php 2:26,27 2Ti 4:20 Heb 12:6,7 Jas 5:14,15 Rev 3:19
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## SISTERS RELAY NEWS OF LAZARUS' SICKNESS

So ([oun](#) - term of conclusion) **the sisters sent** ([apostello](#)) *word to Him, saying, "Lord* ([kurios](#)), **behold** ([idou](#)) **he whom You love** ([phileo](#) - "Your dear friend" - NLT) **is sick** ([astheneo](#)) - Jesus is apparently on the east side of the Jordan River in the region known as [Perea](#) ([see map](#)) and most authorities say He was in a town named [Bethabara](#). **The sisters** (a joint communique) did not come at this time but instead used a messenger, which makes sense, since they wanted to give care to their brother. In addressing Jesus as **Lord** ([kurios](#)) it is very likely that they do not just mean "Sir" (one nuance of [kurios](#)), but that they acknowledge Jesus as Master. It is also interesting that the message was not "*Come quickly, he is dying.*" Instead they in a sense appealed to His **love** for Lazarus to beckon Him to Bethany. It is most likely the sisters knew that word of the one he loved being sick would bring Jesus to the scene. In saying **sick** ([astheneo](#)) the sister's gave no indication of that he is on "death's door," but Jesus in His omniscience knew that was the case. Notice also that the sisters simply express their need and do not tell Jesus what to do, which is a good example for all our prayers!

The **love** ([phileo](#)) Jesus had for Lazarus was that of a friend (so some version render it "Your friend") and is the same word John used later to describe his relation with Jesus as "the other disciple whom Jesus **loved** ([phileo](#))" (Jn 20:2), John of course referring to himself. As an aside there is nothing inappropriate intended by John's use of love of Jesus for Lazarus, and one is reminded of Jonathan's love for David (1Sa 18:1-3+). Even today it is (and should be) common for brothers in Christ to voice their love for one another (cf 1Jn 2:10, 3:11, 14, 23). In Jn 11:5 there is the other verb for love, [agapao](#) used to describe Jesus' love for "Martha and her sister and Lazarus." As an aside, the Father's love for His Son is described with both terms ([phileo](#) in Jn 5:20, [agapao](#) in Jn 3:35). ([See note by Vincent](#)).

**Newman** has an interesting note that "The participle "saying," (was) a Semitic way of introducing direct discourse."

**Johann Bengel** on why they did not say "come" - "They do not say, come. He who loves needs but know!" However, it is notable that they threw in the exclamatory, attention getting word **behold** ([idou](#)) which adds perhaps a sense of urgency to their message. Clearly, their goal was to attract Jesus' attention in the hope He would come. (Quoted by [Vincent](#))

**Jamieson** adds "a most womanly appeal, yet how reverential, to the known affection of her Lord for the patient. (See Jn 11:5, 11). "Those whom Christ loves are no more exempt than others from their share of earthly trouble and anguish: rather are they bound over to it more surely!"

**Spurgeon** - They did not say anymore. They felt that it was quite enough to tell him that Lazarus was sick, and they left it to the tender heart of Jesus to do whatever seemed good in his sight. Some prayers would be all the better if they were shorter — all the better if they did not so much declare our own will as declare our confidence in the good will of Christ. I like the omissions of Martha's and Mary's prayer.

**Bruce Barton** - We must remind ourselves that neither we nor our loved ones are exempt. These three disciples of Jesus were his close friends and associates. Jesus loved them. Yet he did not rush to spare them grief. The presence of pain and suffering in the lives of faithful disciples of Jesus can teach us that Christians do not have different experiences in life; rather, they experience life differently. Our hope in Jesus does not insulate us from life's difficulties, but it does provide a way through and beyond them. (BORROW [John - Life Application Commentary](#))

**Ray Stedman:** What John is trying to show us is that this home in Bethany, on the other side of the Mount of Olives from Jerusalem, was a love-filled home. That is the dominant note of this whole scene: a home filled with love. Martha loved Jesus; Mary loved Jesus; Lazarus loved Jesus; Jesus loved them; they loved each other. This was a home filled with love, therefore it was one of the most welcome havens for our Lord during his troubled earthly lifetime ([God's Strange Ways | John 11:1-16](#))

**Steven Cole** - they didn't "claim Lazarus' healing by faith" and command Jesus by a word of faith to do as they said. The "health and wealth" heretics tell people that we can command God: "Just speak the word of faith and it's already done." That's nonsense and presumption, not to mention the height of arrogance! God is the sovereign of the universe and He has plans and purposes that we cannot begin to fathom. I've heard such false teachers say that we should never preface our prayers with, "Your will be done," because that reflects a lack of faith. No, it reflects submission to the sovereign God. Also, note that the sisters did not say, "Lord, he who loves you is sick." That was true, of course. Lazarus loved Jesus. But rather they said (Jn 11:3), "Lord ... he whom You love is sick." They didn't appeal to the Lord on the basis of anything in them or in Lazarus, but rather on the basis of His great love. George Muller, the godly man of faith and prayer, set forth these conditions for prayer that I have found helpful (from [George Muller of Bristol](#) combined from pp. 170, 455, 456):

1. Ask only for that which it would be for the glory of God to give us.
2. Ask in dependence on the name of the Lord Jesus, that is, expect it only on the ground of His merits and worthiness.
3. Separation from all known sin.
4. Believe that God is able and willing to give us what we ask Him for.
5. Continue in prayer, expecting God to answer, until the blessing comes.

So, take your troubles to Jesus.

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**Love (5368) phileo** from **philos** = loved, dear, friend) means to be a friend to another, to be fond of (have a liking for) an individual or an object, to have or show affection for. In some contexts it means to kiss another as a mark of tenderness for that person. **Phileo** denotes personal attachment and is more a matter of sentiment or feeling. It is devotion based in the emotions distinguished from **agapao** which represents devotion based in the will. Stated another way **phileo** is chiefly of the heart whereas **agape** is chiefly of the head. **Phileo** is a love which is the response of the human spirit to what appeals to it as pleasurable. **Phileo** is a love which consists of the glow of the heart kindled by the perception of that in the object which affords us pleasure. **Phileo** is friendship love, this "friendship factor" sadly often missing in marriages. In Scripture **phileo** is used to describe the love of God the Father and the Son, of Jesus and Peter, and of Jonathan and David. **Phileo** love is basically emotional.

**Marvin Vincent** on **agapao** and **phileo** - **Agapao** indicates a reasoning, discriminating attachment, founded in the conviction that its object is worthy of esteem, or entitled to it on account of benefits bestowed. **Phileo** represents a warmer, more instinctive sentiment, more closely allied to feeling, and implying more passion. Hence **agapao** is represented by the Latin *diligo*, the fundamental idea of which is selection, the deliberate choice of one out of a number, on sufficient grounds, as an object of regard. Thus **phileo** emphasizes the affectional element of love, and **agapao** the intelligent element....Men are bidden to love (**agapao**) God (Matt. 22:37; 1 Cor. 8:3); never **phileo**, since love to God implies an intelligent discernment of His attributes and not merely an affectionate sentiment. Both elements are combined in the Father's love for the Son (Matt. 3:17; John 3:35; 5:20). **Agapao** is used throughout the panegyric of love in 1 Cor. 13, and an examination of that chapter will show how large a part the discriminating element plays in the Apostle's conception of love. (Note on John 5:20)

**Phileo - 25x/21v - kiss(3), love(13), loved(3), loves(6)**. Matt. 6:5; Matt. 10:37; Matt. 23:6; Matt. 26:48; Mk. 14:44; Lk. 20:46; Lk. 22:47; Jn. 5:20; Jn. 11:3; Jn. 11:36; Jn. 12:25; Jn. 15:19; Jn. 16:27; Jn. 20:2; Jn. 21:15; Jn. 21:16; Jn. 21:17; 1 Co. 16:22; Tit. 3:15; Rev. 3:19; Rev. 22:15

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**J C Ryle** on sickness - sickness, we must always remember, is no sign that God is displeased with us; nay, more, it is generally sent for the good of our souls. It tends to draw our affections away from this world, and to direct them to things above. It sends us to our Bibles, and teaches us to pray better. It helps to prove our faith and patience, and shows us the real value of our hope in Christ. It reminds us betimes that we are not to live always, and tunes and trains our hearts for our great change. Then let us be patient and cheerful when we are laid aside by illness. Let us believe that the Lord Jesus loves us when we are sick no less than when we are well.

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### **Seven Minutes of Terror**

Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. Hebrews 4:16

Today's Scripture & Insight: John 11:38–43

When the Mars rover Perseverance landed on that red planet on February 18, 2021, those monitoring its arrival endured "seven minutes of terror." As the spacecraft ended its 292-million-mile journey, it went through a complex landing procedure it had to do on its own. Signals from Mars to Earth take several minutes, so NASA couldn't hear from Perseverance during the landing. Not being in contact was frightening for the team who had put so much effort and resources into the mission.

Sometimes we may experience our own times of fear when we feel we're not hearing from God—we pray but we don't get answers. In Scripture, we find people getting answers to prayer quickly (see Daniel 9:20–23) and those not getting answers for a long time (see Hannah's story in 1 Samuel 1:10–20). Perhaps the most poignant example of a delayed answer—one that surely struck terror in the hearts of Mary and Martha—was when they asked Jesus to help their sick brother Lazarus (John 11:3). Jesus delayed, and their brother died (vv. 6–7, 14–15). Yet four days later, Christ answered by resurrecting Lazarus (vv. 43–44).

Waiting for answers to our prayers can be difficult. But God can comfort and help as we “approach [His] throne of grace with confidence, . . . [that] we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need” (Hebrews 4:16). By: Dave Branon (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

What are you praying for, but the answer doesn't seem to be coming? How can God increase your faith as you wait on Him?

Loving God, You know what's on my heart. Please help me trust You as I await Your answer.

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### **John Henry Jowett - SICKNESS AMONG CHRIST'S FRIENDS John 11:1-16.**

AND so sickness can enter the circle of the friends of the Lord. “He whom Thou lovest is sick.” My sicknesses do not mean that I have lost His favour. The shadow is His, as well as the sunshine. When He removes me from the glare of boisterous health it may be because of some spiritual fern which needs the ministry of the shade. “This sickness is ... for the glory of God.” Something beautiful will spring out of the shadowed seclusion, something which shall spread abroad the name and fame of God.

And, therefore, I do not wonder at the Lord's delay. He did not hasten away to the sick friend: “He abode two days still in the same place where He was.” Shall I put it like this: the awaking bulbs were not yet ready for the brighter light—just a little more shade! We are impatient to get healthy; the Lord desires that we become holy. Our physical sickness is continued in order that we may put on spiritual strength.

And there are others besides sick Lazarus concerned in the sickness: “I am glad for your sakes I was not there.” The disciples were included in the divine scheme. Their spiritual welfare was to be affected by it. Let me ever remember that the circle affected by sickness is always wider than the patient's bed. And may God be glorified in all!

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### **LOVE'S CONFIDENCE! F B Meyer - Our Daily Homily**

“His sisters sent unto Him saying, Lord, behold he whom Thou lovest is sick.”—Jn 11:3.

THE LAPSE of years made it possible for the Apostle to draw aside the veil which curtained the happy friendship and fellowship of Christ in the home at Bethany. It was the one green oasis in the rugged wilderness through which He passed to the Cross!

There were diversities in that home, Martha, practical, energetic, and thoughtful for all that could affect the comfort of those she loved and served; Mary, gifted with spiritual insight and tender sympathy; Lazarus, probably a man of few words, quiet and unobtrusive, but Jesus loved each one (Jn11:5).

The sisters never doubted that Christ would speed at all hazards to save Lazarus after the breathless messenger had brought the tidings of his sickness. Anything less than infinite Love would have rushed instantly to the relief of those troubled hearts; Divine Love alone could hold back the impetuosity of the Saviour's tender heart until the Angel of Pain had finished her work. He wanted to teach His disciples never-to-be-forgotten lessons, and also He was eager for the spiritual growth of the faith of the sisters.

This chapter might be more truly known as “The Raising of Martha,” for our Lord enabled her, matter-of-fact and practical as she was, to realize that He was the Resurrection and the Life. He insisted that her faith was an essential condition in the raising of her brother to life. The emphasis is on the word “thou” (Jn 11:40). Our Lord always needs the co-operating faith of some true heart to be with Him when He works a miracle, and He chose the least likely of the two sisters to supply the pivot on which He could rest the lever of His Divine help. As she withdrew her objection to the removal of the stone, her faith suddenly became capable of claiming the greatest of Christ's miracles.

He calls to us also to help our brethren. In many cases those who have received life from Christ are still bound about with grave-clothes, old habits and evil associations cling to them and impede their progress, and He bids us “Loose him and let him go.” He asks for our co-operation in the emancipation of those who have been held fast in the power of the Evil One.

PRAYER O God, we rejoice that we can turn to Thee in the midst of great anxiety, and commit all our troubles to Thy sure help. As Thou art with us in the sunlight, be Thou with us in the cloud. Sustain us by Thy near presence and let the comforts which are in Jesus Christ fill our hearts with peace. AMEN

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**John 11:4 But when Jesus heard this, He said, "This sickness is not to end in death, but for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it."**

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δοξαση υς το θεο δι αυτου.

KJV John 11:4 When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

NET John 11:4 When Jesus heard this, he said, "This sickness will not lead to death, but to God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it."

CSB John 11:4 When Jesus heard it, He said, "This sickness will not end in death but is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it."

ESV John 11:4 But when Jesus heard it he said, "This illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it."

NIV John 11:4 When he heard this, Jesus said, "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it."

NLT John 11:4 But when Jesus heard about it he said, "Lazarus's sickness will not end in death. No, it happened for the glory of God so that the Son of God will receive glory from this."

NRS John 11:4 But when Jesus heard it, he said, "This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it."

NJB John 11:4 On receiving the message, Jesus said, 'This sickness will not end in death, but it is for God's glory so that through it the Son of God may be glorified.'

NAB John 11:4 When Jesus heard this he said, "This illness is not to end in death, but is for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it."

YLT John 11:4 and Jesus having heard, said, 'This ailment is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.'

MIT John 11:4 When Jesus got word, he said, "This illness is not for death's triumph but for the glory of God, that God's son might be glorified through it."

- **This:** Jn 9:3 Mk 5:39-42 Ro 11:11
- **but for:** Jn 11:40 John 9:24 Jn 12:28 Jn 13:31-32 Php 1:11 1Pe 4:11,14
- **so that:** Jn 2:11 Jn 5:23 Jn 8:54 13:31-32 Jn 17:1,5,10 Php 1:20 1Pe 1:21
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

John 9:1-3+ (BLINDNESS WAS ALLOWED TO SHOW GOD'S WORKS - THAT HE MIGHT BE GLORIFIED) As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth. 2 And His disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?" 3 Jesus answered, "It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him.

John 2:11+ (JESUS' SIGNS MANIFESTED HIS GLORY) This beginning of His signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and **manifested His glory**, and His disciples believed in Him.

John 8:54+ Jesus answered, "If I **glorify** (doxazo) Myself, My **ais** nothing; it is **My Father Who glorifies** (doxazo) **Me**, of Whom you say, 'He is our God';

John 12:28 "Father, **glorify** (doxazo) Your name." Then a voice came out of heaven: "I have both **glorified** (doxazo) it, and will **glorify** (doxazo) it again."

John 21:18-19 (PETER'S DEATH WOULD ALSO GLORIFY GOD) "Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to gird yourself and walk wherever you wished; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will gird you, and bring you where you do not wish to go." Now this He said, signifying by what kind of death he would **glorify** (doxazo) God. And when He had spoken this, He \*said to him, "Follow Me!"

Romans 8:28+ And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

Genesis 50:20 "As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive.

## GOD'S WAY ARE HIGHER THAN OUR WAYS

**But when** - Term of contrast mixed with an expression of time. What is being contrasted? Why?

**Jesus** ([lesous](#)) **heard this, He said, "This sickness** ([astheneia](#)) **is** (ouk = absolutely) **not to end in death** ([thanatos](#)) - One might argue but it did end in death. That is not what Jesus was denying. Read the sentence again -- Jesus did not say Lazarus would not die. He knew Lazarus would die. But in fact that was not the end of the story for Lazarus was raised from the dead. To be sure death is the end of the story for most of humanity, but in this unique situation, death would not the end of the story for Lazarus! What Jesus was denying was that **death** ([thanatos](#)) will triumph in believers, which Paul echoed writing "O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?" (1Co 15:55+). Death is the end of physical life for believers, but marks our immediate entrance into eternal life. Sadly for all unbelievers **death** will "triumph" in the [Second Death](#) which will be their eternal state. Therefore, may God's Spirit grant us boldness (Acts 4:31+) to share the Gospel far and wide so men and women will not be defeated by the [Second Death](#)!

**John MacArthur** - Contrary to the teaching of some, Christ's response indicates that sickness and even death may sometimes be God's will for His people (cf. Jn 21:19; Ex. 4:11; Job 1; 2). (See [John Commentary](#))

Recall that when disciples saw the blind man in John 9, they immediately thought it was related to sin, and they may have initially thought that about Lazarus, but there is no suggestion Lazarus' sickness was related to sin. It is interesting to observe parallels in the John 9 passage and the passage in John 11, for we read....

As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth (Cf SICKNESS OF LAZARUS). 2 And His disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?" (NO QUESTION WITH LAZARUS' SICKNESS - THEY MAY HAVE LEARNED THEIR LESSON!) 3 Jesus answered, "It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him (THAT IS GOD WOULD BE GLORIFIED). 4 "We must work the works of Him who sent Me as long as it is day (COMPARE "TWELVE HOURS IN THE DAY"); night is coming when no one can work. 5 "While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world (COMPARE John 11:9)." (John 9:1-5+)

**But** (term of contrast) - In a sense this term of contrast actually introduces the purpose of the sickness. What is being contrasted? On one hand He describes sickness which He knows will lead to death. The contrast is with the glory of God. At first this does not make sense, but Jesus will go on to explain more and then to demonstrate how this event will bring glory to God.

## THE PRIMARY GOAL OF LAZARUS' RESURRECTION

**For the glory** ([doxa](#) - "praise") **of God** - Who does "**God**" refer to in this context? Jesus clearly is **God** (the God-Man) and it was for His glory (as explained in the next clause "the Son of God may be glorified"), but it was also for the glory of God the Father in Heaven. As Jesus declared in His great prayer to His Father "I glorified ([doxazo](#)) You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do." (Jn 17:4) The "work" Jesus would soon accomplish of raising Lazarus from the dead would glorify the Father. John explains the [actualization](#) of the **glory of God** in John 11:40 Jesus declaring to Martha "Did I not say to you that if you believe, you will see the **glory of God**?"

**NOTE** - The effect of miracles was to cause the people to glorify God, to express a proper opinion of Him - See Mt 9:8; Mt 15:31; Mk 2:12; Lk 5:25, 26; Lk 7:16; Lk 13:13; Lk 17:15; Lk 18:43;

**THOUGHT** - How do you (I) respond when affliction, trial, trouble, etc comes into our life? Do we respond with grumbling or gratitude (Jas 1:2-3)? Do we see the obstacles as opportunities to glorify Him?

**Spurgeon** - We should have said that the sickness was unto death, but, ultimately, to the glory of God. But he who sees the end from the beginning streaks with a grandeur of style which could not be imitated by us. So the Lord speaks of things, not as they seem to be, nor even as they are in the present moment, but as they shall be in the long run. ([Spurgeon's Exposition - Gospel of John](#))

**So that** ([hina](#) = term of purpose) - Jesus is clearly stating the purpose of Lazarus' death. Yes, he would die, but that would lead to the purpose He states.

**NET Note** adds "Johannine double-meanings abound here: Even though death would not be the end of the matter, Lazarus is going to die; and ultimately his death and resurrection would lead to the death and resurrection of the Son of God (11:45–53). Furthermore, the glorification of the Son is not praise that comes to him for the miracle, but his death, resurrection, and return to the

Father which the miracle precipitates (note the response of the Jewish authorities in 11:47–53)."

**The Son of God may be glorified (doxazo) by it** - Jesus calls Himself the Son of God so don't say that Jesus never claimed to be God as skeptics often assert! Jesus places Himself on the same level of God and His glory, clearly implying His deity. Glorify means in essence to give a correct opinion or correct estimate of someone, and in this case the that "someone" is Jesus Himself, especially both His omniscience and omnipotence. Therefore, the miracle that He was soon to carry out would give the witnesses a correct opinion of Who He was, resulting in some of them believing He was truly the Messiah (Jn 11:15,27,Jn 11:45) but others growing harder in their hearts and their hatred of Him (Jn 11:48)! The same sun that melts the wax hardens the clay. Some who saw (or heard about) this miracle had hearts of "wax" and others hearts of "clay!"

**THOUGHT** - This is a most encouraging passage. It teaches that God does not allow (or send) affliction in the lives of His own children without some high and holy purpose. We may not always see the purpose in this lifetime, but we can rest assured that He is truly working all things out for good to those who love Him and are called according to His purpose for them (Ro 8:28+). Affliction is not to make us bitter, but better, to conform us more to the image of His Son (Ro 8:29+). One other point might be mentioned - God does discipline sinning believers (Hebrews 12:5-10+), but even there we see His good purpose in Hebrews 12:11+ "All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful (CAN I HEAR AN "AMEN!"), but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, **afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness**."

**NET Note** on **Son of God may be glorified (doxazo)** - adds "Jesus plainly stated the purpose of Lazarus' sickness in the plan of God: The end of the matter would not be death, but the glorification of the Son. Johannine double-meanings abound here: Even though death would not be the end of the matter, Lazarus is going to die; and ultimately his death and resurrection would lead to the death and resurrection of the Son of God (11:45–53). Furthermore, the glorification of the Son is not praise that comes to him for the miracle, but his death, resurrection, and return to the Father which the miracle precipitates (note the response of the Jewish authorities in 11:47–53)." So that the **Son of God may be glorified** through it. These statements are highly ironic: For Lazarus, the sickness did not end in his death, because he was restored to life. But for Jesus himself, the miraculous sign he performed led to his own death, because it confirmed the authorities in their plan to kill Jesus (11:47–53). In the Gospel of John, Jesus' death is consistently portrayed as his 'glorification' through which he accomplishes his return to the Father.

**Warren Wiersbe** - When we find ourselves confronted by disease, disappointment, delay, and even death, our only encouragement is the Word of God. We must live by faith and not by sight. Their situation seemed hopeless, yet the sisters knew that Jesus was the Master of every situation. The promise in Psalm 50:15 finds a parallel here: "And call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me." ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Jonathan Edwards** said, "The object of all things is God's glory; and when God gets His glory - God's people get their joy!"

**Spurgeon** - Our Saviour speaks in a different style from us. He should have said that the sickness was unto death, but, ultimately, to the glory of God. But he who sees the end from the beginning streaks with a grandeur of style which could not be imitated by us. So the Lord speaks of things, not as they seem to be, nor even as they are in the present moment, but as they shall be in the long run. "Not unto death, but that the Son of God might be glorified."...That was not to be the end of it; God had quite another purpose in view in allowing Lazarus to be sick: "This sickness is not unto death,"- Jesus knew that Lazarus would die, but he also knew that his death would only be a kind of interlude; the great design of God was not to take Lazarus home at that time, but to glorify his Son in the resurrection of Lazarus from the dead.

**William Hendriksen**: The answer which Jesus gave indicates that he was looking beyond death. When he said, 'This illness is not unto death,' he did not mean, 'Lazarus is not going to die,' but 'Death will not be the final outcome of this illness.' The culmination will be 'the glory of God,' i.e., the manifestation of the power, love, and wisdom of God, so that men may see and proclaim these virtues. One should compare this with 9:3. (BORROW [Exposition of the Gospel according to John PAGE 138](#))

**Steven Cole** on why this suffering was allowed - "This sickness is not to end in death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified by it." We saw the same thing with the man born blind (Jn 9:3), "It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him." Does it shock you that God would allow a man to be born blind and live many years in that condition so that God would receive glory through his eventual healing? What about God taking all ten of a man's children, all of his material possessions, and his health, so that God would be vindicated before Satan and the angels? That's the story of Job. If that sort of thing bothers you, then you don't have a big enough view of God. That was the answer that God finally gave to Job: for several chapters God hits Job with questions like (Job 38:4), "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?" And (Job 40:2), "Will the faultfinder contend with the Almighty?" Job's final reply was (Job 42:6), "Therefore I retract, and I repent in dust and ashes." Although Job was the most righteous man on earth in his day, he had to learn that God's glory and God's purpose was far greater than any suffering or loss that Job endured. John Piper (from [This Illness is for the Glory of God](#) "This Illness is for the Glory of God") writes: "*Love means giving us what we need most. And what we need most is not healing, but a full*

*and endless experience of the glory of God. Love means giving us what will bring us the fullest and longest joy. And what is that? ... The answer of [John 11:4] is clear: a revelation to your soul of the glory of God—seeing and admiring and marveling at and savoring the glory [of] God in Jesus Christ.*

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**Glorified** (1392) **doxazo** from **doxa** = glory) has a secular meaning of to think, suppose, be of opinion, (Aeschylus, Sophocles, Xenophon, Plato, Thucydides) but generally is not used in this sense in Scripture. **Doxazo** means to praise, honor or magnify (Mt 5:16; 6:2; Lk 5:25f; Ac 11:18; Ro 11:13; 1 Cor 12:26; 1 Pt 4:16) and to clothe in splendor, glorify (John 8:54; 13:31f; 17:1, 4; 21:19; 2 Cor 3:10; 1 Pt 1:8; of life after death John 12:16, 23; Ac 3:13; Ro 8:30) One of the main senses of doxazo is to influence one's opinion about another so as to enhance the latter's reputation - most often referring to glorifying God the Father or His Son (John 11:4). Miracles caused people to glorify God. (Mt 6:2; Rev 18:7 Mt 5:16, Mt 9:8; Mt 15:31; Mk 2:12; Lk 5:25, 26; 7:16; 13:13; 17:15; 18:43; Lk 23:47; Ac 11:18; 21:20; Ro 15:6, 9; 1Pe 2:12; Gal 1:24 1Co 6:20; 1Pe 4:16. God's spirit is honored 1Pe 4:14, because of something seen and heard = Lk 2:20; Ac 4:21; 2Cor 9:13; 1Pe 4:11. Ro 1:21 (the cardinal sin is not to be grateful for benefactions; reciprocity requires glorification of the benefactor, hence the freq. reference to the effect that one knows how to acknowledge benefits, Rev 15:4 Of Christ Lk 4:15; Ro 11:13. 1Cor 12:26)

**Doxazo in John's Gospel** - Jn. 7:39 = "Jesus was not yet glorified"; Jn. 8:54; Jn. 11:4; Jn. 12:16; Jn. 12:23; Jn. 12:28; Jn. 13:31; Jn. 13:32; Jn. 14:13; Jn. 15:8; Jn. 16:14; Jn. 17:1; Jn. 17:4; Jn. 17:5; Jn. 17:10; Jn. 21:19;

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The following is a wonderful prayer by Norwegian Theologian Ole Hallesby: "Lord, if it will be to Your glory, heal suddenly. If it will glorify You more, heal gradually; if it will glorify You even more, may your servant remain sick awhile; and if it will glorify Your name still more, take him to Yourself in heaven."

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**Norman Geisler - JOHN 11:4—Did Jesus make a mistake when He said Lazarus' sickness was not unto death?** ([When Critics Ask](#) GO TO PAGE 354)

**PROBLEM:** Jesus at first said, "This sickness is not unto death" (John 11:4). However, later even Jesus admitted that "Lazarus is dead" (v. 14). Was Jesus mistaken when He thought Lazarus would not die?

**SOLUTION:** Jesus knew all along that Lazarus would die and that He would raise him from the dead so that God would receive the glory (v. 4). He used different figures of speech to teach the disciples that Lazarus' death was not final. He called it "sleep" (v. 11) and said it was "not unto death" (v. 4), meaning that it would not eventuate in Lazarus' being dead, but in his being alive by Jesus' resurrection power. That is, although Lazarus' sickness would temporarily bring death, Jesus' power would restore him to life.

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### **C H Spurgeon - Morning and Evening —John 11:4**

From our Lord's words we learn that there is a limit to sickness. Here is an "unto" within which its ultimate end is restrained, and beyond which it cannot go. Lazarus might pass through death, but death was not to be the ultimatum of his sickness. In all sickness, the Lord saith to the waves of pain, "Hitherto shall ye go, but no further." His fixed purpose is not the destruction, but the instruction of his people. Wisdom hangs up the thermometer at the furnace mouth, and regulates the heat.

1. The limit is encouragingly comprehensive. The God of providence has limited the time, manner, intensity, repetition, and effects of all our sicknesses; each throb is decreed, each sleepless hour predestinated, each relapse ordained, each depression of spirit foreknown, and each sanctifying result eternally purposed. Nothing great or small escapes the ordaining hand of him who numbers the hairs of our head.

2. This limit is wisely adjusted to our strength, to the end designed, and to the grace apportioned. Affliction comes not at haphazard—the weight of every stroke of the rod is accurately measured. He who made no mistakes in balancing the clouds and meting out the heavens, commits no errors in measuring out the ingredients which compose the medicine of souls. We cannot suffer too much nor be relieved too late.

3. The limit is tenderly appointed. The knife of the heavenly Surgeon never cuts deeper than is absolutely necessary. "He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men." A mother's heart cries, "Spare my child"; but no mother is more compassionate than our gracious God. When we consider how hard-mouthed we are, it is a wonder that we are not driven with a sharper bit. The thought is full of consolation, that he who has fixed the bounds of our habitation, has also fixed the bounds of our tribulation.

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### **Jesus, Man Of Faith**

This sickness is . . . for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it. — John 11:4

Today's Scripture: John 11:1-15

Jesus laid aside the privileges and glory of His deity when He became a man. As a result, He had to face life's trials and tests just as we do (Phil. 2:5-8). Like us, He had to exercise trust in God His Father.

I see this in the story about Lazarus. Jesus deliberately delayed departing for Bethany when He heard that Lazarus was sick. By waiting, He was exercising faith in His Father's wisdom and power. He knew it was His Father's will that Lazarus die so that God would be glorified (Jn. 11:4).

Because of His faith, Jesus returned to a place where an attempt had been made on His life (v.8). And even though He had never restored to life a person who had been buried, He declared confidently, "I go that I may wake him up" (v.11).

His disciples might have wondered why Jesus didn't heal Lazarus before he died. Why go into dangerous territory when He had the power to perform miracles from a distance? (Mt. 8:5-13). But Jesus didn't question His Father's leading. He went forward with perfect trust in His wisdom.

Although we may not see clearly the end result of the trials we face, we can have confident faith in our heavenly Father. We can trust God to glorify Himself and to work out His good purposes through us. By: Herbert Vander Lugt (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

God, give me that faith of a little child!  
A faith that will look to Thee—  
That never will falter and never fail,  
But follow Thee trustingly.  
—Showerman

Faith focuses on God instead of life's problems.

#### John 11:5 Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

BGT John 11:5 γ πα ὁ ἡσο ς τ ν Μ ρθαν κα τ ν δελφ ν α τ ς κα τ ν Α ζαρων.

KJV John 11:5 Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.

NET John 11:5 (Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.)

CSB John 11:5 Now Jesus loved Martha, her sister, and Lazarus.

ESV John 11:5 Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

NIV John 11:5 Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

NLT John 11:5 So although Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus,

NRS John 11:5 Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus,

NJB John 11:5 Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus,

NAB John 11:5 Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

YLT John 11:5 And Jesus was loving Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus,

MIT John 11:5 Jesus loved Martha, her sister, and Lazarus.

- **loved:** Jn 11:8,36 Jn 15:9-13 Jn 16:27 Jn 17:26
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

John 11 36 So the Jews were saying, "See how He loved [phileo](#) him!"

## JOHN'S PARENTHETICAL EXPLANATION

**Now Jesus ([lesous](#)) loved ([agapao](#) - see [note above](#)) [Martha](#) and her [sister](#) and [Lazarus](#) -** At first glance this statement would appear to be redundant for we know Jesus loved Lazarus (Jn 11:3), using the verb [phileo](#), while here using [agapao](#). Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit John reiterates that Jesus had a special love for this family because His action of delaying to come might be seen as harsh and unloving. Jesus was about to prove the truth of Romans 8:28+ that "God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."

*God's love for His own is not a pampering love; it is a perfecting love...*

*We must never think that love and suffering are incompatible.*

-- Warren Wiersbe

**THOUGHT** - When you or a family member becomes ill, possibly even seriously ill, how do you respond? Do you think this has occurred because the Lord is displeased with you? The story of Lazarus counters such a belief, because here sickness is linked with the love of the Lord. And recall that verse which I must admit is not one of my favorites that "those whom the Lord loves ([agapao](#)), He disciplines ([paideuo](#))." (Heb 12:6+). And such discipline has positive effects, proving we are legitimate sons or daughters (Heb 12:8+), enabling us to share in His holiness (Heb 12:10+) and ultimately bringing forth the peaceful fruit of righteousness in our lives (Heb 12:11+).

*God's love doesn't prevent God's people from experiencing pain, sickness, and sorrow.*

**A T Robertson on loved** - Imperfect active of [agapao](#) picturing the continued love of Jesus for this noble family where he had his home so often (Luke 10:38-42; John 12:1-8).

**NET Note** - This is a parenthetical note by the author. It was necessary for the author to reaffirm Jesus' love for Martha and her sister and Lazarus here because Jesus' actions in the following verse appear to be contradictory.

*Happy was the family at Bethany of which it could be said*

*that all the members of it were dear to Christ.*

-- C H Spurgeon

**Spurgeon** - Yet Lazarus died. Jesus loved Lazarus, yet Lazarus was sick. Jesus was not of that cruel sort of people, of whom we have some in these days, who call themselves saints, and who attribute all sickness among God's people to their sin or to their want of faith. Not He. Here was one that was sick, but Jesus loved him just as much for all that....Happy was the family at Bethany of which it could be said that all the members of it were dear to Christ. Is it so with your household, Martha? Or is it only Mary who is thus loved? Has Lazarus been left out? Then pray for your brother as these gracious sisters sent to tell Jesus about Lazarus.

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## Loving Correction

Whoever heeds life-giving correction will be at home among the wise. Proverbs 15:31

Today's Scripture & Insight: Luke 10:38-42

For more than fifty years, my dad strove for excellence in his editing. His passion wasn't to just look for mistakes but also to make the copy better in terms of clarity, logic, flow, and grammar. Dad used a green pen for his corrections, rather than a red one. A green pen he felt was "friendlier," while slashes of red might be jarring to a novice or less confident writer. His objective was to gently point out a better way.

When Jesus corrected people, He did so in love. In some circumstances—such as when He was confronted with the hypocrisy of the Pharisees (Matthew 23)—He rebuked them harshly, yet still for their benefit. But in the case of his friend Martha, a gentle correction was all that was needed (Luke 10:38-42). While the Pharisees responded poorly to His rebuke, Martha remained one of His dearest friends (John 11:5).

Correction can be uncomfortable and few of us like it. Sometimes, because of our pride, it's hard to receive it graciously. The book of Proverbs talks much about wisdom and indicates that "heeding correction" is a sign of wisdom and understanding (Pr 15:31-32).

God's loving correction helps us to adjust our direction and to follow Him more closely. Those who refuse it are sternly warned (v. 10), but those who respond to it through the power of the Holy Spirit will gain wisdom and understanding (vv. 31-32). By: Cindy Hess Kasper (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

How do you usually respond to loving correction from your heavenly Father? What correction have you received from someone that's made a significant difference in your life?

Father, help me learn to graciously accept Your loving correction so I can grow in wisdom and understanding.

**John 11:6 So when He heard that he was sick, He then stayed two days longer in the place where He was.**

BGT John 11:6 ζ ο ν κ ο υ σ ε ν τ ι σ θ ε ν ε , τ τ ε μ ν μ ε ι ν ε ν ν υ τ π ὁ μ ρ α ς,

KJV John 11:6 When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.

NET John 11:6 So when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he remained in the place where he was for two more days.

CSB John 11:6 So when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was.

ESV John 11:6 So, when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

NIV John 11:6 Yet when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days.

NLT John 11:6 he stayed where he was for the next two days.

NRS John 11:6 after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

NJB John 11:6 yet when he heard that he was ill he stayed where he was for two more days

NAB John 11:6 So when he heard that he was ill, he remained for two days in the place where he was.

YLT John 11:6 when, therefore, he heard that he is ailing, then indeed he remained in the place in which he was two days,

MIT John 11:6 After hearing he was sick, Jesus stayed put two days more.

- **He then stayed two days longer:** Ge 22:14 42:24 43:29-31 44:1-5 45:1-5 Isa 30:18 55:8,9 Mt 15:22-28
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **DELAY NOT DENIAL BUT THAT GOD WOULD BE GLORIFIED**

**So** ([oun](#)) or therefore, a term of conclusion. In other words it is a term which introduces Jesus' response related to the preceding truth, the news that Lazarus was sick.

*God's delays are not God's denials.*

-- William MacDonald

**When He heard** ([akouo](#)) **that he was sick** ([astheneo](#)), **He then stayed** ([meno](#)) **two days longer in the place where He was**- Recall He was east of the Jordan (Jn 10:40) in [Perea](#) ([map](#)). Jesus knew that Lazarus' sickness would take his life and He knew when this would occur, so He purposely does not run to the rescue, for part of God's plan for glory was that Lazarus had to die. Jesus teaches us that it is not wise to make decision based on our emotions when a crisis hits. We need to take the Jesus' approach "P.O.P." who practiced to the power of pause.

**Wiersbe** summarizes the timeline -Day 1— The messenger comes to Jesus (Lazarus dies). Day 2—The messenger returns to Bethany. Day 3—Jesus waits another day, then departs. Day 4—Jesus arrives in Bethany. When the messenger arrived back home, he would find Lazarus already dead. What would his message convey to the grieving sisters now that their brother was already dead and buried? Jesus was urging them to believe His word (ED: WHICH THE MESSENGERS WOULD HAVE CARRIED BACK = Jn 11:4 "*This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God*") no matter how discouraging the circumstances might appear. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

*Christ—was never in a hurry,*

*never impressed by numbers, never a slave to the clock.*

-- 6000 Plus Illustrations

**THOUGHT** - The story of Lazarus reminds me of the story of [Joni Eareckson Tada](#) who became paralyzed (quadriplegic) from a dive into the shallow waters of [Chesapeake Bay](#). She fought through her disability and depression so that she was able to be used by God to bring hope to all handicapped people and great glory to

the God Who allowed her tragic accident. Joni and Lazarus shed new light on what James meant when he commanded us as believers to consider it all joy when we encounter various trials (Jas 1:2-4+)! What affliction has overtaken you? What tragedy have you experienced? Remember the sovereign God Who is jealous for His Name (Ex 34:14+) is able (Heb 2:18+, Heb 7:25+) to take His children's tragedies and turn them into triumphs for them and for His great Name. You can read her incredible, God glorifying story in (BORROW BOOK [Joni: The Unforgettable Story of a Young Woman's Struggle Against Quadriplegia & Depression](#)).

[Joni Eareckson Tada](#) chronicles the agony she went through in the aftermath and how eventually she came to trust in Christ and submit to Him. She ends the book by telling of speaking at a rally to hundreds of young people and her hope that scores of them would come to faith in Christ. Then she adds (see [page 178](#)), "But I will be pleased if only one person is drawn to Christ. Even one person would make the wheelchair worth all that the past eight years have cost." That was many years ago and she is still using her suffering to bring others to faith in Christ.

**William MacDonald** - When sickness enters our homes, we are not to conclude that God is displeased with us. Here sickness was directly linked with His love rather than His anger. (BORROW [Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**Paul Apple** - We want to manipulate the Lord like a rabbit's foot to act in our timing and to accomplish our own agenda. We fail to see the bigger picture and find fault with the Lord for not taking what we view to be the simplistic approach.

**Ray Stedman:** The remarkable thing about that is, if you carefully check out the schedule of timing of this event, Lazarus was already dead when the message reached Jesus. It took two days for the messenger to get to the Jordan, so when Jesus returned to Bethany, Lazarus had been dead four days. It is difficult for us to believe that Jesus did not know that because of the insight that the Spirit of God had given him on numerous occasions. But he sees this as a signal from the Father that something tremendous is going to happen in connection with it, thus he sent back this remarkable word, "This illness is not unto death.".....Have you noticed the many times in the gospels when Jesus confounds his disciples? They do not understand his actions. These are those hard moments when God does things we do not understand. We cannot figure them out. They are beyond us. They baffle us and discourage us at times. Yet what they reveal is how little we understand. It is God who is the realist. He never deceives himself. He always acts in perfect accord with what the situation demands. He does not suffer from illusions and fantasies like we do. He does not pursue hopeless aims like we do. He acts in line with reality. ([God's Strange Ways | John 11:1-16](#))

**Lightfoot** quotes a remarkable tradition of Ben Kaphra: 'Grief reaches its height on the third day. For three days the spirit hovers about the tomb, if perchance it may return to the body. But when it sees the fashion of the countenance changed, it retires and abandons the body.'

**John MacArthur** - The delay did serve several purposes: it strengthened the sisters' faith in the Lord by forcing them to trust Him; it made it clear that Lazarus was truly dead (cf. [the discussion of v. 17 in chapter 39 of this volume](#)) and hence that Jesus' raising of him was indeed a miracle; and, as always, Jesus operated according to God's timetable, not man's.

**Lowell Johnson** - Our Lord's delays are always purposeful. Love always has a purpose. Therefore, we are always right to seek the purposes for our Lord's delays.

- (1) Jesus delayed because He knew that Lazarus was already dead.
- (2) Jesus delayed because He purposed to raise Lazarus from the grave. Most Jews believed that the spirit of a person lingered near the body of the dead for three days. Jesus would wait for four days to give absolute assurance that His raising of Lazarus was by His power.
- (3) Jesus delayed that God would get glory from the miracle. Could He have healed Lazarus from a distance?" Of course. But everything He did, He did for the glory of God.
- (4) Jesus delayed because raising Lazarus after being dead for four days would inspire others to have faith in Him.

**Steven Cole** - Jesus' love for these dear friends was the reason He stayed two days longer where He was, allowing Lazarus to die (Jn 11:6). Love always seeks the highest good for the one loved, and the highest good for anyone is that he or she gets a greater vision of God's glory and thus grows in faith. Both of these aims were behind Jesus' delay in going to Bethany (John 11:4, 15, 40).

**Spurgeon** - Notice the connection. "Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus"; and yet when he had heard that Lazarus was sick, "he abode two days still in the same place where he was." Sometimes true love may think fit to make us wait. It may be the truest love on God's part to let us lie sick, and not to come post-haste to us to make us well. Ay, the truest love may demand that the sickness should turn to death, for out of the death he may bring the greater glory. The Lord acts not upon the scale of man, for he sees not as man sees. He sees the end as well as the beginning.....We cannot always understand what our Master does. It seemed a strange thing that, when Jesus heard that Lazarus was sick, he stopped where he was, yet there was a good reason for the delay,



Christ was waiting in wisdom and in love. I think I see Mary and Martha, day after day wondering where Jesus could be; perhaps thinking hard thoughts of him, and saying, "He loved us, and he loved our brother, why did he not come directly we sent to him?"

*Christ knows best at what time to do anything for His people*

-- J C Ryle

**THOUGHT - God's delays are not God's denials.** If our prayers are not answered immediately, perhaps He is teaching us to wait, and if we wait patiently, we will find that He will answer our prayers in a much more marvelous way than we ever anticipated. Not even His love for Martha, Mary, and Lazarus could force Christ to act ahead of the proper time. Everything He did was in obedience to His Father's will for Him, and in keeping with the divine timetable. (BORROW [Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**Ray Stedman:** For me, the hardest problem I have to handle as a Christian is what to do when God does not do what I have been taught to expect him to do; when God gets out of line and does not act the way I think he ought. What do I do about that? ... We cannot believe that God is not going to work according to the logic of the situation as we understand it. The incredible arrogance of the human mind, including my own, that thinks it knows more than the mighty, infinite mind of God never fails to amaze me. But everywhere Scripture drives us back to this: believe his word. Trust his word. It will not fail. It will not leave us in the lurch at last. We cannot understand the delays, but we must never question God's ways or lose faith in his word. ([God's Strange Ways | John 11:1-16](#))

**David Guzik** point out that "In John's Gospel there are three times when someone dear to Jesus asked Him to do something (John 2:1-11, John 7:1-10). In each of these three cases, Jesus responded in the same way. Jesus first refused to grant their request and then He fulfilled it after showing that He does things according to the timing and will of God, not man. Through His actions Jesus demonstrated that His delays were not denials. They would bring greater glory to God.

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**J C Ryle** - Nothing so helps us to bear patiently the trials of life as an abiding conviction of the perfect wisdom by which everything around us is managed. Let us try to believe not only that all that happens to us is well done, but that it is done in the best manner, by the right instrument, and at the right time. We are all naturally impatient in the day of trial. We are apt to say, like Moses, when beloved ones are sick, "Heal her now, Lord, we beseech thee." (Num. 12:13.) We forget that Christ is too wise a Physician to make any mistakes. It is the duty of faith to say, "My times are in Thy hand. Do with me as Thou wilt, how Thou wilt, what Thou wilt, and when Thou wilt. Not my will, but Thine be done." The highest degree of faith is to be able to wait, sit still, and not complain.

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**Streams in the Desert** - "When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was." (John 11:6.)

IN the forefront of this marvelous chapter stands the affirmation, "Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus," as if to teach us that at the very heart and foundation of all God's dealings with us, however dark and mysterious they may be, we must dare to believe in and assert the infinite, unmerited, and unchanging love of God. Love permits pain. The sisters never doubted that He would speed at all hazards and stay their brother from death, but, "When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was."

What a startling "therefore"! He abstained from going, not because He did not love them, but because He did love them. His love alone kept Him back from hasting at once to the dear and stricken home. Anything less than infinite love must have rushed instantly to the relief of those loved and troubled hearts, to stay their grief and to have the luxury of wiping and stanching their tears and causing sorrow and sighing to flee away. Divine love could alone hold back the impetuosity of the Savior's tender-heartedness until the Angel of Pain had done her work.

Who can estimate how much we owe to suffering and pain? But for them we should have little scope for many of the chief virtues of the Christian life. Where were faith, without trial to test it; or patience, with nothing to bear; or experience, without tribulation to develop it?—Selected.

"Loved! then the way will not be drear;  
For One we know is ever near,  
Proving it to our hearts so clear  
That we are loved.

"Loved when our sky is clouded o'er,  
And days of sorrow press us sore;  
Still we will trust Him evermore,  
For we are loved.

“Time, that affects all things below,  
Can never change the love He’ll show;  
The heart of Christ with love will flow,  
And we are loved.”

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**George Matheson** - And so, the silence of God was itself an answer. It is not merely said that there was no audible response to the cry from Bethany; it is distinctly stated that the absence of an audible response was itself the answer to the cry—it was when the Lord heard that Lazarus was sick that therefore He abode two days still in the same place where He was. I have often heard the outward silence. A hundred times have I sent up aspirations whose only answer has seemed to be the echo of my own voice, and I have cried out in the night of my despair, “Why art Thou so far from helping me?” But I never thought that the seeming farness was itself the nearness of God—that the very silence was an answer. It was a very grand answer to the household of Bethany. They had asked not too much, but too little. They had asked only the life of Lazarus; they were to get the life of Lazarus and a revelation of eternal life as well.

There are some prayers which are followed by a Divine silence because we are not yet ripe for all we have asked; there are others which are so followed because we are ripe for more. We do not always know the full strength of our own capacity; we have to be prepared for receiving greater blessings than we have ever dreamed of. We come to the door of the sepulchre and beg with tears the dead body of Jesus; we are answered by silence because we are to get something better—a living Lord.

My soul, be not afraid of God’s silence; it is another form of His voice; God’s silence is more than man’s speech; God’s negative is better than the world’s affirmation. Have thy prayers been followed only by a calm stillness? Well, and is not that God’s voice—a voice that will suffice thee in the meantime till the full disclosure come? Has He moved not from His place to help thee? Well, but His stillness makes thee still, and He has something better than help to give thee. Wait for Him in the silence, and ere long it shall become vocal; death shall be swallowed up in victory.

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**Brian Bell** has some interesting thoughts on Jesus' delay - **God waits** - Was he too busy? - Was He attending to other matters of greater importance? No! In times of crisis its essential we understand some important facts about time & perspective. Because if you've been a Christian any amount of time you know, w/o a shadow of a doubt “God is always late!...according to our standards!” **Regarding Time** - Our Lord is never late. He often delays His response, but is never late. His watch is merely set to a different timetable, calibrated to matters of eternal rather than temporal consequence. God’s delays are not His denials! **Regarding Perspective** - We can adopt either a human or a divine outlook. (1)**Human perspective** focuses on the urgent & blurs the important. (a) It concentrates on our immediate rather than our ultimate welfare. (b) It aims at our temporary good instead of God’s eternal glory. (2) **Divine perspective** factors eternity into the mysterious equations of life. The **Human perspective** pleads “My will be done, now!” The **Divine perspective** makes its request, then patiently adds, “Nevertheless, not my will be done, but Yours!” Have you checked your spiritual watch lately? Is it synchronized with eternity? Is it keeping His time - or your own? God’s timing - God was orchestrating an incredible moment & needed to set the stage! And since the corpse must be center stage before this drama can begin, Jesus must wait until Lazarus dies before He can make His entrance. But Mary & Martha can’t see backstage in heaven. All they can see is an expansive, black curtain drawn across their lives. They sit at home, despondent, as in an empty theater.

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### **Oswald Chambers - After God’s silence—what?**

When He had heard therefore that he was sick, He abode two days in the same place where He was. John 11:6.

Has God trusted you with a silence—a silence that is big with meaning? God’s silences are His answers. Think of those days of absolute silence in the home at Bethany! Is there anything analogous to those days in your life? Can God trust you like that, or are you still asking for a visible answer? God will give you the blessings you ask if you will not go any further without them; but His silence is the sign that He is bringing you into a marvellous understanding of Himself. Are you mourning before God because you have not had an audible response? You will find that God has trusted you in the most intimate way possible, with an absolute silence, not of despair, but of pleasure, because He saw that you could stand a bigger revelation. If God has given you a silence, praise Him, He is bringing you into the great run of His purposes. The manifestation of the answer in time is a matter of God’s sovereignty. Time is nothing to God. For a while you say—‘I asked God to give me bread, and He gave me a stone.’ He did not, and to-day you find He gave you the bread of life.

A wonderful thing about God’s silence is that the contagion of His stillness gets into you and you become perfectly confident—‘I know God has heard me.’ His silence is the proof that He has. As long as you have the idea that God will bless you in answer to prayer, He will do it, but He will never give you the grace of silence. If Jesus Christ is bringing you into the understanding that prayer

is for the glorifying of His Father, He will give you the first sign of His intimacy—silence.

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### **Delay May Not Mean Denial**

When [Jesus] heard that [Lazarus] was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was. — John 11:6

Today's Scripture & Insight: John 11:21-35

My sons' birthdays are in December. When they were small, Angus quickly learned that if he didn't receive a longed-for toy for his birthday at the beginning of the month, it might be in his Christmas stocking. And if David didn't receive his gift for Christmas, it might appear for his birthday 4 days later. Delay didn't necessarily mean denial.

It was natural for Martha and Mary to send for Jesus when Lazarus became seriously ill (John 11:1-3). Perhaps they looked anxiously along the road for signs of His arrival, but Jesus didn't come. The funeral service had been over for 4 days when Jesus finally walked into town (v.17).

Martha was blunt. "If You had been here," she said, "my brother would not have died" (v.21). Then her faith flickered into certainty, "Even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You" (v.22). I wonder what she expected. Lazarus was dead, and she was wary about opening the tomb. And yet at a word from Jesus, Lazarus' spirit returned to his decaying body (vv.41-44). Jesus had bypassed simply healing His sick friend, in order to perform the far greater miracle of bringing him back to life.

Waiting for God's timing may also give us a greater miracle than we had hoped for. By: Marion Stroud (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

My Savior hears me when I pray,  
Upon His Word I calmly rest;  
In His own time, in His own way,  
I know He'll give me what is best.  
—Hewitt

Time spent waiting on God is never wasted.

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### **Unfailing Love**

[Jesus] stayed two more days in the place where He was. — John 11:6

Today's Scripture: John 11:1-6,17-27

Why does God wait when we plead for His swift response?

When Jesus' good friend Lazarus lay desperately ill, He was told about it by Lazarus' two sisters. They must have hoped He would come immediately. But in John 11:5-6 we read, "Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was." While Jesus lingered, Lazarus died.

At times it is very difficult for us to reconcile God's perfect love with His perfect timing. We may struggle to understand why He would delay when His intervention could save those we love. Like Martha and Mary, we tell Jesus, in effect, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died" (vv.21,32).

No one involved in this situation could imagine the miracle Jesus would perform. Nor could they fathom what He wanted to teach them—that He is "the resurrection and the life" for all who believe (v.25).

We may never fully understand why God waits when we plead with Him to act swiftly. But when the mystery of His timing remains hidden, we can cling to the certainty of His matchless wisdom and His unfailing love. By: David C. McCasland (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

O God, make me one of those rarest of souls  
Who willingly wait for Thy time;  
My impatient will must be lost in Thine own,  
And Thy will forever be mine.  
—Bowser

When we can't see God's hand, we can trust His heart.

---

## Silence And Trust

When [Jesus] heard that [Lazarus] was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was. —John 11:6

Today's Scripture: John 11:1-11

In one of Joe Morgenstern's weekly Wall Street Journal columns about movies, he considered the impact of the great film stars in close-up scenes where they said nothing at all. "Movie stars," he wrote, "can do as little as they do at crucial moments because, having already earned our respect, they can assume that we're paying attention." This quality of powerful silence that we admire in actors and actresses, however, can be frustrating or disappointing in our relationship with God when He is silent.

When Lazarus, a close friend of Jesus, became seriously ill, his sisters Mary and Martha sent word to Jesus. But "when [Jesus] heard that [Lazarus] was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was" (John 11:6).

Commenting on this passage, Oswald Chambers said: "Has God trusted you with a silence—a silence that is big with meaning? . . . Think of those days of absolute silence in the home at Bethany! Is there anything analogous to those days in your life? . . . His silence is the sign that He is bringing you into a marvellous understanding of Himself. . . . If God has given you a silence, praise Him, He is bringing you into the great run of His purposes." We can trust our loving Lord, even when He is silent. By: David C. McCasland (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

God is waiting in the silence  
For a heart that He can fill;  
He must find it cleansed and empty,  
With a spirit calm and still.  
—Smith

True trust in God stays strong even when He is silent.

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## Pressures And Priorities

Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. — Matthew 6:33

Today's Scripture: John 11:1-7

While visiting a friend's office, I noticed that the standard In-Out baskets had been replaced by a five-tiered set of trays labeled Critical, Urgent, Important, Back-burner, Long-term. Those trays reminded me that unless I have God's perspective each day, pressures will always determine my priorities.

John 11:1-7 reminds us of how radically different God's sense of urgency is from our own. Notice the chain of events: Lazarus was sick. His two sisters, Mary and Martha, sent word of his illness to Jesus. Then we see two seemingly incompatible statements: "Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was" (vv.5-6).

A dying man—a delaying Lord. Jesus' priorities were determined not by pressure but by perfect communion with His heavenly Father.

"But I'm not Jesus," we are quick to say. "I drive the freeways and don't have enough hours in the day." But Christ calls us to consult Him in every urgency and emergency, to listen for His wise direction, and to make time for the truly important things of life.

What priorities need our attention today? By: David C. McCasland (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Thinking It Over

What types of pressures tend to confuse my priorities? Am I giving adequate time to my relationships with Christ, with my family, with my friends?

Focusing on Christ puts everything else in perspective.

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**John 11:7 Then after this He said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again."**

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BGT John 11:7 πειτα μετ το το λ χει το ς μαθητα ς· γωμεν ε ς τ ν ουδα αν π λιν.

KJV John 11:7 Then after that saith he to his disciples, Let us go into Judaea again.

NET John 11:7 Then after this, he said to his disciples, "Let us go to Judea again."

CSB John 11:7 Then after that, He said to the disciples, "Let's go to Judea again."

ESV John 11:7 Then after this he said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again."

NIV John 11:7 Then he said to his disciples, "Let us go back to Judea."

NLT John 11:7 Finally, he said to his disciples, "Let's go back to Judea."

NRS John 11:7 Then after this he said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again."

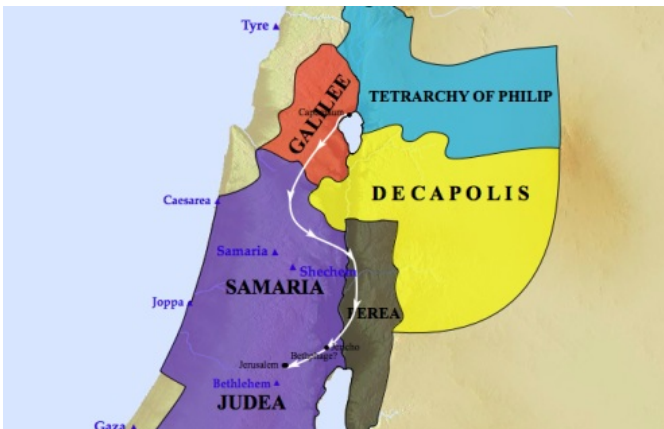
NJB John 11:7 before saying to the disciples, 'Let us go back to Judaea.'

NAB John 11:7 Then after this he said to his disciples, "Let us go back to Judea."

YLT John 11:7 then after this, he saith to the disciples, 'We may go to Judea again;'

MIT John 11:7 Then after that, he said to his disciples, "Let us take to the road to Judaea again."

- **Let:** Jn 10:40-42 Lu 9:51 Ac 15:36 20:22-24
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



Jesus' (Probably now in Perea) Calls for Return to Judea

### Related Passages:

John 10:39-40 Therefore they (THE JEWS IN JERUSALEM) were seeking again to seize Him, and He eluded their grasp. 40 And He went away again beyond the Jordan (EAST OF THE JORDAN RIVER - [REGION OF PEREA](#)) to the place where John was first baptizing, and He was staying there.

**Then** - ([epeita](#)) - An expression of time. In this context, it marks progression in the narrative (and after 2 days had passed).

**After this** - Simple phrases like this should always prompt a simple question in your mind as you are reading (don't *speed* read, *smart* read) in effect performing a mini-meditation (realtime) as you read the verse (**P.O.P.** - for "power of pause" or "power of pondering" see Joshua 1:8+, Psalm 1:2-3+!) So the simple question is "After what?" This will usually force you to re-read the prior context and repetition of the Word is always a good thing as it facilitates memorization (Ps 119:9,11+) and helps renew your mind (Eph 4:23+)(gives the Spirit time to do His transforming work - cf 2Co 3:18+), although of course He could do it instantaneously without you practicing **P.O.P.**! But when you carry out the practice of **P.O.P.**, you are demonstrating to God your love for His Word, your desire to sit and soak in the eternal, living and energetic Word of Life. It is in a sense an act of (mini-) worship and adoration. All this from just learning to discipline yourself to slow down and "[smell the roses](#)", so to speak! So the **after this** is after He had heard of Lazarus' sickness and delayed going for two days.

**He said to the disciples** ([mathetes](#)), "**Let us go to Judea again**" - Lazarus' home was in Bethany which was in the district of **Judea**. Jesus of course is speaking about returning to the region of Judea (see map above) which He had just departed from because the Judean Jews were seeking to kill Him (Jn 8:59, Jn 10:31). However, Jesus Who was always in the center of His Father's will, knew that He was on the "last lap" of His earthly race and thus His face was resolutely set (Lk 9:51+) to go to Jerusalem and finish His Father's work (cf Jn 4:34+, Jn 17:4) and cry "**It is finished.**"

**Spurgeon** - and that because he loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. If that love in its wisdom made him tarry, yet that love in

its sincerity at last moved him to seek the house of grief.

**Bob Utley** on **Let us go** - the "let's go" of John 11:7 is modified to the "but I go" of John 11:11. The disciples were afraid and doubtful, but Jesus was confident. It is Thomas who joins with Jesus (let's go) in John 11:16!

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**Then** (1899) (**epeita** from **epi** - on, upon + **eita** - then, next, an adv. denoting sequence) adverb meaning then, thereupon. Epeita marks the sequence of one thing after another either temporally (later, next, after that) (Jn 11:7, Gal 1.18, 21; Gal 2.1) or in enumeration, i.e., being next in position of an enumeration of items (then, next, in the next place) (Heb 7.2, Jas 3:17) It means being next in order of time, then, thereupon without specific indication of chronological sequence (Mk 7:5; Lk 16:7; Gal 1:21; Jas 4:14) or used with indications of chronological sequence (Heb 7:27; 1Co 15:23)

**Epeita - 16x/15v - after (2), then (14).** Lk. 16:7; Jn. 11:7; 1 Co. 12:28; 1 Co. 15:6; 1 Co. 15:7; 1 Co. 15:23; 1 Co. 15:46; Gal. 1:18; Gal. 1:21; Gal. 2:1; 1 Thess. 4:17; Heb. 7:2; Heb. 7:27; Jas. 3:17; Jas. 4:14. In the Septuagint only in Isaiah 16:2.

**Disciples** (3101) **mathetes** from **manthano** = to learn which Vine says is "from a root *math*, indicating thought accompanied by endeavor". Gives us our English = "*mathematics*" - see **matheteuo** describes a person who learns from another by instruction, whether formal or informal. Another sources says mathetes is from from **math**- which speaks of "mental effort that thinks something through" and thus describes is a learner; a follower who learns the doctrines and the lifestyle of the one they follow. Discipleship includes the idea of one who intentionally learns by inquiry and observation (cf **inductive Bible study**) and thus **mathetes** is more than a mere pupil. A **mathetes** describes an adherent of a teacher. As discussed below **mathetes** itself has no spiritual connotation, and it is used of superficial followers of Jesus as well as of genuine believers. The Lord calls everyone to grow as a disciple (a learner of Christ; cf. also Mt 11:29,30), one who lives in faith, who lives in and by His Word in the power of the Holy Spirit. Note in the Great Commission that the implication is that the disciple is not just a hearer and a learner from another, but is a doer of what he learns for Mt 28:20 says "teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

**Mathetes in John** - Jn. 1:35; Jn. 1:37; Jn. 2:2; Jn. 2:11; Jn. 2:12; Jn. 2:17; Jn. 2:22; Jn. 3:22; Jn. 3:25; Jn. 4:1; Jn. 4:2; Jn. 4:8; Jn. 4:27; Jn. 4:31; Jn. 4:33; Jn. 6:3; Jn. 6:8; Jn. 6:12; Jn. 6:16; Jn. 6:22; Jn. 6:24; Jn. 6:60; Jn. 6:61; Jn. 6:66; Jn. 7:3; Jn. 8:31; Jn. 9:2; Jn. 9:27; Jn. 9:28; Jn. 11:7; Jn. 11:8; Jn. 11:12; Jn. 11:54; Jn. 12:4; Jn. 12:16; Jn. 13:5; Jn. 13:22; Jn. 13:23; Jn. 13:35; Jn. 15:8; Jn. 16:17; Jn. 16:29; Jn. 18:1; Jn. 18:2; Jn. 18:15; Jn. 18:16; Jn. 18:17; Jn. 18:19; Jn. 18:25; Jn. 19:26; Jn. 19:27; Jn. 19:38; Jn. 20:2; Jn. 20:3; Jn. 20:4; Jn. 20:8; Jn. 20:10; Jn. 20:18; Jn. 20:19; Jn. 20:20; Jn. 20:25; Jn. 20:26; Jn. 20:30; Jn. 21:1; Jn. 21:2; Jn. 21:4; Jn. 21:7; Jn. 21:8; Jn. 21:12; Jn. 21:14; Jn. 21:20; Jn. 21:23; Jn. 21:24

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### Oswald Chambers - Isn't there some misunderstanding?

Let us go into Judea. His disciples say unto Him ... Goest Thou thither again? John 11:7-8 .

I may not understand what Jesus Christ says, but it is dangerous to say that therefore He was mistaken in what He said. It is never right to think that my obedience to a word of God will bring dishonour to Jesus. The only thing that will bring dishonour is not obeying Him. To put my view of His honour in place of what He is plainly impelling me to do is never right, although it may arise from a real desire to prevent Him being put to open shame. I know when the proposition comes from God because of its quiet persistence. When I have to weigh the pros and cons, and doubt and debate come in, I am bringing in an element that is not of God, and I come to the conclusion that the suggestion was not a right one. Many of us are loyal to our notions of Jesus Christ, but how many of us are loyal to Him? Loyalty to Jesus means I have to step out where I do not see anything (cf. Matt. 14:29); loyalty to my notions means that I clear the ground first by my intelligence. Faith is not intelligent understanding, faith is deliberate commitment to a Person where I see no way.

Are you debating whether to take a step in faith in Jesus or to wait until you can see how to do the thing yourself? Obey Him with glad reckless joy. When He says something and you begin to debate, it is because you have a conception of His honour which is not His honour. Are you loyal to Jesus or loyal to your notion of Him? Are you loyal to what He says, or are you trying to compromise with conceptions which never came from Him? "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it."

**John 11:8 The disciples said to Him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone You, and are You going there again?"**

BGT John 11:8 λ γουσιν α τ ο μαθητα · αββ , ν ν ζ τουν σε λιθ σαι ο ουδα οι , κα π λιν π γεις κε ;

KJV John 11:8 His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?

NET John 11:8 The disciples replied, "Rabbi, the Jewish leaders were just now trying to stone you to death! Are you going there again?"

CSB John 11:8 " Rabbi," the disciples told Him, "just now the Jews tried to stone You, and You're going there again?"

ESV John 11:8 The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone you, and are you going there again?"

NIV John 11:8 "But Rabbi," they said, "a short while ago the Jews tried to stone you, and yet you are going back there?"

NLT John 11:8 But his disciples objected. "Rabbi," they said, "only a few days ago the people in Judea were trying to stone you. Are you going there again?"

NRS John 11:8 The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?"

NJB John 11:8 The disciples said, 'Rabbi, it is not long since the Jews were trying to stone you; are you going back there again?'

NAB John 11:8 The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just trying to stone you, and you want to go back there?"

YLT John 11:8 the disciples say to him, 'Rabbi, now were the Jews seeking to stone thee, and again thou dost go thither!'

MIT John 11:8 The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, so recently the Jews there were intent on stoning you. Are you going to lead the way there again?"

- **the Jews:** Jn 10:31,39 Ps 11:1-3 Mt 16:21-23 Ac 21:12,13
- **going:** Ac 20:24
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

John 8:59+ Therefore they **picked up stones to throw at Him**, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple.

John 10:31+ The Jews **picked up stones again to stone Him**

John 10:39+ Therefore they **were seeking again** to seize Him, and He eluded their grasp.

## THE SURPRISE OF JESUS' DISCIPLES

The disciples ([mathetes](#)) said (present tense - continually saying) to Him, "Rabbi ([rhabbi](#)), the Jews ([loudaios](#)) were just now seeking ([zeteo](#)) to stone ([lithazo](#)) You, and are You going there again? - Why were the disciples so surprised? He said to Judea and not to Bethany or to Lazarus. And note He had also said "LET US GO," not just "I must go." So the disciples knew this could be life threatening. The Jews ([loudaios](#)) in this context refers to the leaders who sought to murder Jesus. On one hand the disciples were correct in their assessment (the Jews would kill Jesus), but they were wrong in thinking that it was "suicidal madness" for Him to go back now. They did not understand the timing of God and His sovereign control over the coming events in Jerusalem. Jesus was fully aware that this trip would indeed end in His death ironically even as He saved Lazarus' life. But it would not be by stoning but by the Cross. Seeking ([zeteo](#)) is in the vivid imperfect tense which depicts the attitude/action as occurring over and over.

[Steven Cole](#) quips on the fearful response of the disciples - "Their reply reminds me of the joke about the Lone Ranger and Tonto, his Indian sidekick. The Lone Ranger said, "Tonto, we're surrounded by hostile Indians. What are we going to do?" Tonto replied, "What do you mean 'we;' White Man?"

**NET Note on the Jews ([loudaios](#))** - Or "the Jewish authorities"; Greek "the Jews." In NT usage the term οὗδαίῳι (loudaioi) may refer to the entire Jewish people, the residents of Jerusalem and surrounding territory, the authorities in Jerusalem, or merely those who

were hostile to Jesus. (For further information see R. G. Bratcher, " 'The Jews' in the Gospel of John," BT 26 [1975]: 401–9.) Here the phrase refers to the Jewish leaders. See the previous references and the notes on the phrase "Jewish people" in Jn 11:19, and "Jewish religious leaders" in Jn 11:24, 31, 33.

**Spurgeon** - Christ felt that his day was not over, and that he could not die before his work was done, and therefore he did not fear the stones cast by unbelieving foes. So, my brother, at all risks go on with your God-given work; you will live through your twelve hours, and you will not live a moment longer. Be so much a believer in predestination that, even if duty calls you to risk your life, you will bravely do it, knowing that you are in the hands of God, and that your life cannot end until your appointed twelve hours have expired.

Surely this dangerous trip to Bethany for His friend Lazarus would come to mind in the Upper Room Discourse when Jesus told His disciples "'Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.'" (John 15:13) Compare the statement by the Jews "'See how He loved him!'" (Jn 11:36)

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### **SPECIAL TOPIC: STONE TO DEATH** (from Deut. 13:10)

The MT has the verb for "stoning to death" (BDB 709, KB 768, *Qa*/perfect) and the term for "stone" (BDB 6), which literally would be "stone him with stones." Stoning was a capital punishment which was done by the whole covenantal community (cf. Lev. 20:2,27; 24:13-23; Num. 15:32-36; Deut. 13:10; 21:21; Jos. 7:22-26) to rid itself of evil.

This is not the regular term used for judicial capital punishment. This term speaks of the urgency of immediate, radical purging of evil (cf. Exod. 32:27; Lev. 20:15,16; Num. 25:5; Deut. 13:10; Ezek. 9:6).

Persons were stoned by the community for:

1. idolatry, Lev. 20:2-5 (also possibly 6-8); Deut. 13:1-5; 17:2-7
2. blasphemy, Lev. 24:10-23; 1 Kings 11-14; Luke 4:29; Acts 7:58 (both reflect Exod. 22:28); also note John 8:59; 10:31; 11:8
3. rejection of parental authority, Deut. 21:18-21 (possibly Lev. 20:9)
4. marital unfaithfulness, Deut. 22:22,23-27 (possibly Lev. 20:10-16)
5. treason (known disobedience to YHWH), Joshua 7

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**Rabbi** (4461) **rhabbi** from Hebrew [rab 07227](#) = >400x in OT - great one, master, chief) means my master (most common rendering in KJV) or my teacher. It was an respectful title of honor by which one would address a teacher who was recognized for their expertise in the Mosaic Law or Scriptures. Jesus' disciples repeatedly address Him as **Rabbi** (Jn. 4:31; Jn. 6:25; Jn. 9:2; Jn. 11:8) The suffix **-bi** signified "my master" "and was a title of respect by which teachers were addressed. The suffix soon lost its specific force, and in the NT the word is used as courteous title of address." (Vine) It is interesting that In Mt. 23:7-8 Jesus forbade His disciples to desire to use it ("do not be called **Rabbi**"). " ([Was Jesus a rabbi?](#))

**Rhabbi** primarily denoted a "master, chief," or "captain," someone who occupied an elevated position. With the added pronominal suffix (-bi or -bei) it signifies "my master." Thus it was a respectful title used in addressing teachers. The address denoted "my great one" or "my honorable sir." It was appropriate for outstanding teachers of the Law (Bauer). Theologians were held in such high regard that according to Talmudic tradition even King Jehoshaphat addressed them as "my father, my teacher, my lord." Since the scribes were generally addressed as rabbi in the presence of others, it gradually became a term used for those who had completed their studies and were ordained teachers of the Law ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**Zodhiates** adds that **RHABBI** "was introduced as a title into the Jewish schools under a three-fold form, **Rab**, as the lowest degree of honor; **Rab** with the first person suffix **i**, **Rabbi**, my master, with higher dignity; and **Rabboni**, meaning my great master, the most honorable of all. This was publicly given to only seven persons, all of the school of Hillel and of great eminence. In the days of Christ the title was misused by Jewish teachers in that they used it to require implicit obedience to their decisions and traditions and words rather than to those of the law and the prophets. Our Lord charged the Jewish scribes and Pharisees with being very fond of this presumptuous title, but commands His disciples not to be called Rabbi in the Jewish acceptance of the word (Matt. 23:7, 8). Although the title Rabbi was often given to the Lord Jesus, we do not find that He ever rebuked those who gave it to Him because He was in truth the Teacher sent from God, even that great Prophet who should come into the world, and of whom the Lord had said by Moses in Deut. 18:18, 19: "It shall come to pass that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him."" (BORROW [The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament](#))

**Rhabbi** - 15x/15v - Matt. 23:7; Matt. 23:8; Matt. 26:25; Matt. 26:49; Mk. 9:5; Mk. 11:21; Mk. 14:45; Jn. 1:38;



Jn. 1:49; Jn. 3:2; Jn. 3:26; Jn. 4:31; Jn. 6:25; Jn. 9:2; Jn. 11:8

**Jews** (2453) **loudaios** ultimately derived from Hebrew Yehudi = a member of the tribe of Judah) is an adjective refers to one who belongs to the Jewish race with focus on adherence to Mosaic tradition (Acts 10:28, 22:3, 21:39). A Jew in respect to race or religion (as opposed to Gentiles). In the plural, it means the Jews, the people of ancient Palestine. In John's Gospel loudaios was used of those hostile to Jesus, especially the Jewish leaders (Jn 2:18, 5:16ff, 6:41, 7:1, 10:31ff, 19:7). Jesus is referred to as **King of the Jews** (Mt 2:2, Mt 27:11, Mk 15:2, Lk 23:3, Jn 18:33). Jews hated the Samaritans (Jn 4:9) and the missionary activity of Paul (Acts 9:23, 13:45, 14:19, 20:3, 21:27, 23:12, 25:7).

The phrase "**THE JEWS**" in John's Gospel often refers to the group that wanted to seize and kill Jesus. But you will to [check the context](#) because the phrase "of the Jews" may have a different sense and simply speak of the Jews in general without any negative meaning (e.g. "Passover **of the Jews**" Jn 2:13, "king of the Jews" Jn 2:2, Jn 7:2, Jn 11:19, 45, 55, etc) -- Jn. 1:19; Jn. 2:13; Jn. 2:18; Jn. 2:20; Jn. 3:1; Jn. 4:22; Jn. 5:1; Jn. 5:10; Jn. 5:15; Jn. 5:16; Jn. 5:18; Jn. 6:4; Jn. 6:41; Jn. 6:52; Jn. 7:1; Jn. 7:2; Jn. 7:11; Jn. 7:13; Jn. 7:15; Jn. 7:35; Jn. 8:22; Jn. 8:48; Jn. 8:52; Jn. 8:57; Jn. 9:18; Jn. 9:22; Jn. 10:19; Jn. 10:24; Jn. 10:31; Jn. 10:33; Jn. 11:8; Jn. 11:19; Jn. 11:31; Jn. 11:33; Jn. 11:36; Jn. 11:45; Jn. 11:54; Jn. 11:55; Jn. 12:9; Jn. 12:11; Jn. 13:33; Jn. 18:12; Jn. 18:14; Jn. 18:20; Jn. 18:31; Jn. 18:33; Jn. 18:36; Jn. 18:38; Jn. 18:39; Jn. 19:3; Jn. 19:7; Jn. 19:12; Jn. 19:14; Jn. 19:19; Jn. 19:20; Jn. 19:21; Jn. 19:31; Jn. 19:38; Jn. 19:40; Jn. 20:19;

**To stone** (3034)(**lithazo** from **lithos** = stone) means to fling a stone at someone with desire to kill them. To kill by pelting with stones, as a means of capital punishment. In the OT and the Mishnah (Sanhedrin 6; 7, 4-8, 5) a means of capital punishment for certain crimes: adultery (Jn 8:5) and especially defamation of God. Sometimes the populace became aroused and took upon itself the task of pronouncing and carrying out such a sentence (Jn 10:31-33; 11:8). Also with the apostles (Acts 5:26; 14:19; 2 Corinthians 11:25).

**Lithazo - 9v - stone(4), stoned(4), stoning(1)**. Jn. 8:5; Jn. 10:31; Jn. 10:32; Jn. 10:33; Jn. 11:8; Acts 5:26; Acts 14:19; 2 Co. 11:25; Heb. 11:37. Twice in the Septuagint - 2 Sam. 16:6; 2 Sam. 16:13;

**John 11:9 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.**

BGT John 11:9 περὶ ἧς ὁ χθρὸς δεκά ῥα ἔστιν ἡ ἡμέρα; ἢ τις περιπατῶν τὴν ἡμέραν, οὐ προσκίπτει, τὴν φεῦγον κίτον τοῦ βίου.

KJV John 11:9 Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.

NET John 11:9 Jesus replied, "Are there not twelve hours in a day? If anyone walks around in the daytime, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world.

CSB John 11:9 "Aren't there 12 hours in a day?" Jesus answered. "If anyone walks during the day, he doesn't stumble, because he sees the light of this world.

ESV John 11:9 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.

NIV John 11:9 Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? A man who walks by day will not stumble, for he sees by this world's light.

NLT John 11:9 Jesus replied, "There are twelve hours of daylight every day. During the day people can walk safely. They can see because they have the light of this world.

NRS John 11:9 Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world.

NJB John 11:9 Jesus replied: Are there not twelve hours in the day? No one who walks in the daytime stumbles, having the light of this world to see by;

NAB John 11:9 Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in a day? If one walks during the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world.

YLT John 11:9 Jesus answered, 'Are there not twelve hours in the day? if any one may walk in the day, he doth not stumble, because the light of this world he doth see;

MIT John 11:9 Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? If anyone moves about in daylight, he does not stumble because he sees by natural light.

- **Are:** Jn 9:4 Lu 13:31-33
- **he does not stumble:** Jn 12:35 Pr 3:23 Jer 31:9
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

John 2:4+ (WHEN JESUS MOTHER SAID "THEY HAVE NO WINE") And Jesus \*said to her, "Woman, what does that have to do with us? My hour has not yet come."

#### JEWISH RECKONING OF TIME

### THERE IS THE FATHER'S WORK TO ACCOMPLISH

**Jesus (Iesous) answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day?"** -Jesus asked a rhetorical question to draw His disciples in as the question expects a "YES" answer. In a day without watches and clocks, days were divided into 12 equal hours from sunrise to sunset, regardless of the time of the year. Depending on the time of the year, the actual length of daylight was from 9 hours 41 minutes to 14 hours 12 minutes. Jesus is speaking figuratively here for He knows that He has only a short time remaining before He is crucified (cf Jn 12:27). He is referring to the time allotted by His Father to accomplish His mission on earth.

**Barclay** - "Jesus is saying that a man must finish the day's work within the day, for the night comes when work is ended."

**Henry Alford** interpreted Jesus this way "I have a fixed time during which to work, appointed me by my Father; during that time I feel no danger, I walk in His light, even as the traveller in the light of this world by day."

**THOUGHT** - One application of Jesus' words is that we each only have so much time allotted to us. Every believer has only a "short time" left on earth. And as Jesus' declared in John 9:4+ night is coming when no man can work. This reminds me of Jesus' words in Jn 4:34+ "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work." (cf Jn 17:4) As David declared "in Your book were all written The days that were ordained." (Ps 139:16) We each have a finite amount of time and a divine plan of work we are to do (Eph 2:10+), so in light of an imminent eternity, we each must make wise decisions with our time, and treasure, fully surrendered to our Father's will to accomplish His Work for His glory. How much time do you (I) have left to redeem (Eph 5:16+)? God Alone knows. But one thing we can know is that our life is "immortal" until we have accomplished His work (cf the 2 witnesses in Rev 11:7+), because God is sovereign over time/eternity and life/death. Another principle to remember is "when life gets hectic it's helpful to remember that God never gives us more to do than the time that we have to do it....we all have been given a certain amount of time to be used in light of eternity. But how we use our time depends on the decisions that we make." (Cole)

**NEGATIVE ILLUSTRATION** -J. Vernon McGee once told of a man who had been studying the doctrine of predestination and he had become so convinced of God's sovereign protection of the believer under any and every circumstance that he said to Dr. McGee, "You know, sir, I'm so convinced that God is keeping me no matter what I do that I think I could step out right into the midst of the busiest traffic and if my time had not come, I would be perfectly safe." In his folksy manner, Dr. McGee replied, "Brother, if you step out into the midst of busy traffic, your time has come!" Principle - there is a balance between God's sovereign protection and our being prudent and sensible.

**David Guzik** has an excellent application of Jesus' word on time - There are many practical applications of this wise statement. (1) Nothing can shorten our time. (2) There is enough time for everything that needs to be done (3) We only have that time, so it must not be wasted (**ED:** The [upshot?](#) Redeem the Time!)

*The very fact of a Christian being here, and not in heaven,  
is a proof that some work awaits him.*

-- William Arnot

**THOUGHT** - The quote by Arnot begs the question, what are you waiting for? Ask the Lord to show you His work you are to accomplish. How sad to enter Heaven and (potentially) realize the wonderful work He had for

you and me, but we were short-sighted, seeing the temporal and missing the eternal! I have often wondered (and this is speculation) why twice in the Revelation it records He will wipe away "every tear from their eyes." (Rev 7:17+, Rev 21:4+).

**Morrison** - "There are but twelve hours in the day, and it will be sunset before you dream of it. Get done what God has sent you here to do."

If (3rd class condition = potential action) **anyone walks** ([peripateo](#)) **in the day, he does not stumble** ([proskopto](#)), **because he sees the light of this world** - He is speaking not only of physical truth (we tend to stumble in the dark but not in the day), but is speaking figuratively of a deeper spiritual truth He wants to teach His disciples (and us). His disciples had heard Him describe Himself as the Light of the world (Jn 8:12+). Keeping the context in mind (the disciples had just reminded Jesus of the danger of returning to Jerusalem), what Jesus is saying is that as long as He was doing the Father's will (walking in the day, walking in the light), He would be safe and not killed until His time (His hour) had arrived.

**Edwin Blum** on John 11:9-10 - Jesus spoke in a veiled way to illustrate that (ED: CONTRARY TO THE FEAR VOICED BY HIS DISCIPLES) it would not be too dangerous to go to Bethany. In one sense He was speaking of walking (living) in physical light or darkness. In the spiritual realm when one lives by the will of God he is safe. Living in the realm of evil is dangerous. As long as He followed God's plan, no harm would come till the appointed time. Applied to people then, they should have responded to Jesus while He was in the world as its Light (cf. Jn 1:4-7; 3:19; 8:12; 9:5). Soon He would be gone and so would this unique opportunity. (SEE [Bible Knowledge Commentary - Page 313 - Google Book](#))

**John MacArthur** - 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 (Jn 7:30; 8:20). The night, signifying the end of His earthly ministry (cf. Jn 12:35), would come at the precise time set by God's eternal plan, and only then would the Lord stumble in death. (SEE [John Commentary](#))

**Steven Cole** on the one who walks in the day "**sees the light of this world.**" - There is a double reference here. On one level, Jesus is saying that those who walk during daylight hours do not stumble in the dark. But on a deeper level, since Jesus is the Light of the world (Jn 8:12), those who walk in the light of His presence and His purposes do not stumble. It's always wise to make decisions based on whether you can do it with the assurance of God being with you because you are seeking to do His will. ([Using Time Rightly John 11:7-16](#))

**Henry Morris - walk in the day** - This was a proverbial expression which Jesus applied to His ministry. There was no danger as long as He was doing the Father's will, walking in the light. The time was coming, however, when He would have to walk in darkness, but even this was the Father's will.

**R V G Tasker:** for while the time allotted to Him by His Father for the display upon earth of divine power is still present, no harm can come to Him. He can travel safely, as a man walking in the sunlight, unmolested by the powers of darkness. (BORROW [The Gospel according to St. John PAGE 138](#))

**J Oswald Sanders** - The Lord's corrective word to His disciples, "Are there not twelve hours in the day?" (John 11:9KJV), seems to suggest a quiet, steady confidence in His Father's purpose and a resulting courage even in face of enemies and danger. Interruptions could not disturb His peace because they had already been provided for in the Father's planning, and the wrath of enemies would have to await His "hour." Thus He could pursue His work undisturbed, knowing it would be "finished." There would be time for all that God meant Him to do, though there might not always be "leisure so much as to eat" (Mark 6:31KJV) (Earthen Vessels)

**William MacDonald** - The spiritual meaning of the Lord's words is as follows: The Lord Jesus was walking in perfect obedience to the will of God. There was thus no danger of His being killed before the appointed time. He would be preserved until His work was done. In a sense this is true of every believer. If we are walking in fellowship with the Lord and doing His will, there is no power on earth that can kill us before God's appointed time (ED: compare the work of the 2 witnesses in Rev 11:7+). (BORROW [Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**ESV Study Bible** has a slightly different interpretation - If Jesus is the "light of the world" (Jn 8:12+), then to walk in the day means to walk in the light that Jesus gives; that is, to walk in fellowship with him, believing and obeying his words. In contrast, walks in the night means to walk apart from Jesus, not believing him and not obeying him. This is an indication that the person has no spiritual life, for the light is not in him. Most people at this time worked as long as there was daylight; once it was dark, it was time to stop working. Jesus is divinely called to go to Judea; it is part of what constituted walking "in the day" for him, even though he is heading toward the cross (Jn 11:7-8). (BORROW [ESV Study Bible](#))

**THOUGHT** - Let us make a personal application of Jesus' words about walking in the light, knowing He is the spiritual Light of this world, and there is only one way to keep from stumbling and that is by continually fixing our eyes on Jesus the Author and Perfecter of our faith (Heb 12:2+) and be led by His Spirit (Gal 5:18+, Ro 8:14+). Are the eyes of your heart fixed on Jesus today? Or are you looking at the babbles and glitz of this passing world? You can't focus on both at the same time (cf Mt 6:24+, Josh 24:15+, 1Ki 18:21, Jas 4:4+, 1 Jn 2:15-16+)! How can we accomplish this grand objective of fixing our eyes on Jesus? The best way is to daily, prayerfully, fix your eyes on the living Word, for He Himself is the Word of God (Jn 1:1+, Rev 19:13+) of Life. In truth He is our life (Col 3:4+, 1Jn 1:1+, 1Jn 5:12+, Jn 20:31, Gal 2:20+, cf Dt 32:47+)! So daily fix your eyes on Jesus. And all during the day, keep refocusing on Him and the things (including the temptations) of this world will grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace (this is the principle of the Expulsive Power of a New Affection and also relates to Vertical Vision that empowers "Horizontal" living). Amen? Amen!

**NET Note** - What is the **light of this world**? On one level, of course, it refers to the sun, but the reader of John's Gospel would recall Jn 8:12+ and understand Jesus' symbolic reference to Himself as the light of the world. There is only a limited time left **Are there not twelve hours in a day?** until the Light will be withdrawn (until Jesus returns to the Father) and the one who walks around in the dark will trip and fall (compare the departure of Judas by night in Jn 13:30+).

**A T Robertson** - The words of Jesus here illustrate what he had said in John 9:4. It 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.

**Spurgeon** - Is there not a time in which the sun will not go down — in which it is safe and right for men to work? (The apostle John answers Spurgeon's question in the Revelation explaining that "there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever." [Rev 22:5+]

**THOUGHT** - A better day is coming when there is no longer night and darkness! Hallelujah!

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**Stumble** (4350) **proskopto** from **prós** = to, against + **kópto** = cut, strike) means literally to strike against and so to dash against something as one's foot against a stone. **Proskopto** in its literal use pictures a traveler who bumps against an obstacle and is caused to stumble (Lxx - Ps 91:12). Most of the NT passages use **proskopto** in a figurative sense, so that in Romans Paul pictures Israel stumbling spiritually (cf Lxx of Jer 13:16). When **proskopto** has a direct object it usually means "to strike one thing against another." Used without an object it means "to stumble" (*Liddell-Scott*). Matthew and Luke both recall Satan's misuse of Psalm 91:12 as an attempt to trick Jesus into testing God (Matthew 4:6; Luke 4:11). Jesus told the parable concerning the wise and foolish builders with vivid imagery; when the "rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash" (Matthew 7:27NIV).

**Proskopto - 8v - slammed against(1), strike(2), stumble(2), stumbled over(1), stumbles(2).** Matt. 4:6; Matt. 7:27; Lk. 4:11; Jn. 11:9; Jn. 11:10; Ro 9:32; Rom. 14:21; 1 Pet. 2:8

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**ILLUSTRATION** - Have you read the instruction manual on how to keep your "light bright"? A man returning from a journey brought his wife a matchbox that would glow in the dark. After he gave it to her, she turned out the light, but it could not be seen. Both thought they had been cheated. Then the wife noticed some French words on the box and asked a friend to translate them. The inscription said: "If you want me to shine in the night, keep me in the light." So it is with us! We must expose ourselves to Jesus, delight in His Word, and spend time in prayer soaking up His rays (Phil 2:15, Mt 5:16)

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**ILLUSTRATION** - Of the famous missionary, C. T. Studd (1860-1931) was so consumed with redeeming the time and reaching the lost that he left his wife, who was suffering from a heart condition, in England while he went to Africa. When he received word there that she had suffered further heart complications, he refused to return home. He worked 18-hour days, took no time off, had no time for diversions, and expected all his fellow workers to do the same. (Ruth Tucker - [From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya](#) - BORROW - VERY INTERESTING BOOK IF YOU ARE INTERESTING IN MISSIONS)

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**William MacDonald - John 11:9 - Are there not twelve hours in the day? John 11:9)**

When Jesus suggested going back to Judea, the disciples were terrified. The Jews had tried to stone Him there only recently, and now He was talking about a return visit. In answer to the disciples' apprehension, Jesus said, Are there not twelve hours in the day? At first glance, the question seems to be completely disconnected from the conversation. But what the Savior was saying was this! The working day is made up of twelve hours. When a person is yielded to God, every day has its appointed program. Nothing can thwart the accomplishing of that program. So even if Jesus went back to Jerusalem, and even if the Jews tried to kill Him again, they

could not succeed. His work was not finished. His hour had not yet come.

For every child of God it is true that he is immortal till his work is done. This should impart great peace and poise to our lives. If we are living in the will of God, and if we follow reasonable rules of health and safety, we will never die a moment ahead of time. Nothing can come to us apart from His permissive will.

Many Christians worry themselves sick over the food they eat, the water they drink, the air they breathe. In our pollution-conscious society there is always something to suggest that death is knocking at the door. But this anxiety is unnecessary. Are there not twelve hours in the day? Hasnt God placed a hedge around the believer (Job 1:10) which the devil is powerless to penetrate?

If we believe this, it will save us from a lot of second-guessing. We will not say, If the ambulance had only arrived sooner or If the doctor had only detected the growth four weeks earlier or If my husband had only taken a different airline. Our lives are planned by infinite wisdom and in infinite power. He has a perfect timetable for each of us, and His trains run on perfect schedule.

## IMAGERY OF LIGHT

### [Dictionary of Biblical Imagery - page 1722 - LIGHT](#)

The Bible is enveloped by the imagery of light, both literally and figuratively. At the beginning of the biblical narrative, physical light springs forth as the first created thing (Gen 1:3–4). At the end of the story the light of God obliterates all traces of darkness: “And night shall be no more; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light” (Rev 22:5RSV). Between these two beacons the imagery of light makes nearly two hundred appearances, with light emerging as one of the Bible’s major and most complex symbols.

**Physical Light.** Light in the Bible is first of all physical, the very basis of life on the earth. This primacy of light to life itself is signaled in the Bible by the fact that God’s creation of light is the first recorded event: “And God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good” (Gen 1:3–4RSV). Here is the wonder of existence springing from nonexistence, breathtaking in its suddenness and illuminating power. The apostle Paul conveys this sense of wonder over the primal creation of physical light when he links it to the life-transforming experience of conversion: “For it is God who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ” (2 Cor 4:6RSV).

The first thing that biblical writers note about physical light is thus that God made it. In contrast to the pagan impulse to deify the heavenly bodies for their light-giving properties, the writers of the Bible consistently separate light from its Creator, making it an index to the divine instead of deity itself. The greatest example is Psalm 148, where the sun, moon and stars are commanded to praise the Lord. And why are they thus commanded? “For [God] commanded and they were created” (Ps 148:5RSV).

**The Conflict Between Light and Darkness.** Primitive thinking begins by dividing reality into a dichotomy between light and darkness, viewed as combatants in a perpetual battle for dominance. When light dawns, chaos is again averted. We catch the strains of this primitive outlook in the Bible’s creation story, where “God separated the light from the darkness” (Gen 1:4). It is impossible to understand the biblical imagery of light without seeing it as the great antithesis and conqueror of darkness.

With the conflict between light and darkness as a context, light has the properties of rulership over the universe, with an accompanying sense of awe such as a subject might feel toward a benevolent king. We find this motif of rulership in the creation account when on the fourth day of creation God “made the two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night” (Gen 1:16RSV). As an image of order, light is the ally of people and their civilized enterprises, protecting them as they battle the forces of chaos and danger.

To the primitive mind, moreover, light is shrouded in mystery, and it retains this quality in the Bible. The voice from the whirlwind in the book of Job includes in its catalog of questions about the mystery of the origin of natural forces the query, “Where is the way to the dwelling of light?” (Job 38:19 RSV). And again, “What is the way to the place where the light is distributed?” (Job 38:24RSV).

Along with reverence before the mystery of light, biblical writers express a terror about its absence. We catch this strain, for example, in Job’s picture of deposed rulers who “grope in the dark without light” (Job 12:25 RSV) or in Isaiah’s apocalyptic vision of light “darkened by its clouds” (Is 5:30) or in Jesus’ metaphoric vision of good eyesight’s producing a “whole body” full of light and its opposite producing a “whole body” full of darkness (Mt 6:22–23). Related are Jesus’ memorable pictures of the futility of lighting a lamp and putting it under a basket (Mt 5:15) and of the need to work “while it is day; night comes, when no one can work” (Jn 9:4 RSV).

**Physical Light in the Biblical Story.** Physical light retains its life-giving and protective qualities throughout the Bible, and the people who inhabit the biblical world, along with the writers who tell their story, are filled with a sense of reverential dependence on physical light. In such a world, light denotes safety. While the Egyptians were enshrouded in darkness, “all the people of Israel had light where they dwelt” (Ex 10:23 RSV). On the Israelites’ subsequent march through the wilderness, God led the traveling community “by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel” (Ex 13:21RSV).

In the elemental world of the Bible, people live in close correspondence to the daily cycle of sunrise and nightfall. The light of dawn signals the beginning of momentous human activity. Thus it is in the early morning that Abraham sets out on his quest to sacrifice his son Isaac (Gen 22:3), that David sets out with his army (1 Sam 29:10–11), that God protects his holy city (Ps 46:5, dawn being the customary time to attack a city) and that Jesus rose from the grave. The light of dawn is also universally a time when the catastrophes of the preceding night are revealed—when the negligent Levite discovers his abused concubine dead at the doorstep (Jdg 19:26–27) and the survivors of the Assyrian army find 185,000 dead bodies in their camp (2 Kings 19:35).

The book of Job is a case study in the imagery of light versus darkness. Job’s early speech of despair in which he laments that he was born (Job 3) is a curse on light, which is associated with life, and a plea for darkness, which is associated with nonbeing or death. Job’s deficient pictures of the afterlife are similarly pictured as the extinguishing of light, as in the description of death as “the land of gloom and chaos; where light is as darkness” (Job 10:22 RSV). The ruin of the wicked is portrayed by Bildad in terms of light being put out and of the light being “dark in his tent” (Job 18:5–6RSV).

Not surprisingly, the poets of the Bible give us the most rapturous pictures of the life-giving and illuminating properties of physical light. The nature poetry of the Bible and the psalms of praise are the greatest repository: God has “prepared the light and the sun” (Ps 74:16KJV); God covers himself “with light as with a garment” (Ps 104:2RSV); God’s omnipresence is so powerful that “darkness is as light with thee” (Ps 139:12RSV). The ultimate praise of light comes from the pen of an author who is mistakenly considered by some to be a nihilist: “Light is sweet, and it is pleasant for the eyes to behold the sun” (Eccles 11:7RSV).

If the birth of light energized the Bible’s stories of origin, the extinguishing of light is one of the notable archetypes in the Bible’s apocalyptic visions of the end. In the OT visions we read that “the stars of the heavens ... will not give their light; the sun will be dark at its rising” (Is 13:10RSV) and that the heavens will have no light (Jer 4:23). The NT concurs: “The sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven” (Mt 24:29 RSV); “The light of a lamp shall shine in thee no more” (Rev 18:23RSV).

**Physical Light and the Sacred.** A final cluster of images of physical light focuses on worship and spiritual encounters with God. It would not be inappropriate to think in terms of “holy light” in these contexts, for although light is physical rather than symbolic, it expresses the mystery of divine presence. Lamps were prominent, for example, in the worship prescribed for the tabernacle: “You shall make the seven lamps for [the golden lampstand]; and the lamps shall be set up so as to give light upon the space in front of it” (Ex 25:37 RSV); “Command the people of Israel to bring you pure oil from beaten olives for the lamp, that a light may be kept burning continually” (Lev 24:2 RSV). The worship at the temple likewise featured lighted lamps (1 Kings 7:49; 2 Chron 4:20). Both the tabernacle and the temple, moreover, faced eastward to allow the sunrise to filter into them.

Most notable among the lights of the temple was the Shekinah, the glory of God. This was not ordinary physical light, but it was visible in the form of a luminous cloud that filled holy space. When Solomon dedicated the temple, it “was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God” (2 Chron 5:13–14 RSV). This is similar to the glorious cloud that settled on Mount Sinai when Moses ascended to receive the law from God (Ex 24:15–18), after which “the skin of [Moses’] face shone because he had been talking with God” (Ex 34:29RSV).

In the NT the ritual light of tabernacle and temple worship is replaced by the appearance of extraordinary light on people who encounter the supernatural directly. At the nativity of Jesus, light accompanies the appearance of the angels to the shepherds (Lk 2:9), and a star lights the way of the Magi to the house where they find Jesus (Mt 2:9–10). At the conversion of Paul a light from heaven flashes about him (Acts 9:3). When an angel rescues Peter from prison, a light shines in the cell (Acts 12:7).

**The Primacy of Physical Light in the Bible.** Although references to physical light in the Bible are outnumbered by symbolic references, it would be wrong to minimize the importance of the physical imagery of light that has just been traced. As we travel through the world of the Bible, we move in a world where physical light is a primary stage prop.

Furthermore, the symbolic associations of light to which we now turn would never have arisen if light did not possess the physical properties that characterize it: light is insubstantial but real; it emanates from a source; it illuminates darkness and allows people to see; it is a source of life. The writer of Colossians is able to speak of “the inheritance of the saints in light” and of how God “has delivered us from the dominion of darkness” (Col 1:12–13RSV) only because of our experience of the physical properties of light and darkness.

**Light as Symbol of Goodness and Blessing.** At its most general level of symbolism, light represents goodness and holiness as

opposed to evil. Evildoers are people “who rebel against the light ... and do not stay in its paths” (Job 24:13RSV). “Every one who does evil,” Jesus explained, “hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed” (Jn 3:20RSV). When applied politically light becomes a symbol for the goodness that flows from a ruler who rules justly over his people: “He dawns on them like the morning light, like the sun shining forth upon a cloudless morning” (2 Sam 23:4RSV).

In the NT the sanctified life is repeatedly associated with light. In the famous passage on holy living that concludes the epistle to the Romans, believers are commanded to “cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light” (Rom 13:12RSV). Equally evocative is the picture in Ephesians 5:8–9: “Once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and true)” (RSV). The calling of Christians is to “shine as lights in the world” (Phil 2:15RSV).

**Light is also a symbol of God’s favor and the joy this favor brings.** When the Jews were rescued from Haman’s planned genocide, they “had light and gladness and joy and honor” (Esther 8:16RSV). The psalmist does not hesitate to limit the gift of this light to those who live in fellowship with God: “Light dawns for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart” (Ps 97:11RSV; Ps 112:4). Similarly, the book of Proverbs asserts that “the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, which shines brighter and brighter until full day” (Prov 4:18 RSV). When Job pictures his former prosperity, God’s favor assumes the qualities of light: “His lamp shone upon my head, and by his light I walked through darkness” (Job 29:3 RSV).

In other contexts light is associated with life, and darkness with death. In the book of Job, to be redeemed from going down to the grave is parallel to one’s life seeing the light (Job 33:28), and to be brought back from the Pit is to “see the light of life” (Job 33:30RSV). When the psalmist imagines the rich person’s going “to the generation of his fathers,” it calls to mind the picture that he “will never more see the light” (Ps 49:19RSV).

**Light as Symbol of Truth.** A further cluster of images links light with truth and understanding as opposed to error and ignorance, and to the illumination that comes from embracing the truth. For example, “The unfolding of thy words gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple” (Ps 119:130RSV). An OT pilgrim equates truth and light when praying that God will “send out thy light and thy truth” to “bring me to thy holy hill” (Ps 43:3RSV). Daniel is commended as a person in whom are found “light and understanding and excellent wisdom” (Dan 5:14RSV).

Because truth is represented in the Bible as being a revelation from God, that revelation itself is pictured as light: “Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path” (Ps 119:105 RSV). God’s law can be characterized as “enlightening the eyes” (Ps 19:8RSV). As with the law, so with the prophets: Peter describes “the prophetic word” as “a lamp shining in a dark place” (2 Pet 1:19RSV).

A related cluster of images associates light with revelation of something that had been secret or hidden. In the hymn to wisdom in Job 28, one of the powers attributed to human ingenuity is the ability to bring to light the “thing that is hid” (Job 28:11RSV). In the NT this bringing to light is applied to God’s judgment of the individual heart. The Lord “will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then every man will receive his commendation from God” (1 Cor 4:5RSV). The same motif appears in the OT: “He will bring forth your vindication as the light, and your right as the noonday” (Ps 37:6RSV).

**God as Light.** Light also symbolizes God. In the OT we find the evocative image of “the light of [God’s] countenance” (Ps 4:6; cf. Num 25–26). Isaiah’s vision of the final triumph of goodness includes the assertion that “the LORD will be your everlasting light” (Is 60:19, 20). The most succinct statement is found in 1 John 1:5: “God is light and in him is no darkness at all” (RSV). James speaks of God as “the Father of lights” (Jas 1:17). Elsewhere God is simply associated with light as an image of divine glory: he covers himself “with light as with a garment” (Ps 104:2); “his brightness was like the light” (Hab 3:4); “the light dwells with him” (Dan 2:22). Ezekiel’s vision of the divine chariot (Ezek 1) is a riot of brightness, flashing fire, shining jewels and gleaming metals.

By extension, God who is light inhabits a heaven bathed in light. Here light becomes the preeminent symbol for transcendence, dear to the mystics’ and poets’ expressions through the ages. The classic passage is 1 Timothy 6:16, which speaks of God as the one “who alone has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light” (RSV). Colossians 1:12 speaks of the believer’s being qualified “to share in the inheritance of the saints in light” (RSV).

As a symbol for God, light takes the more specific form of representing the Messiah. Isaiah’s prophecy predicted, “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined” (Is 9:2 RSV). Jesus applied this prophecy to himself (Mt 4:15–16). The song of Simeon calls Christ “a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to thy people Israel” (Lk 2:32 RSV). John’s great prologue in praise of the incarnate Word repeatedly applies the mystical language of light to Christ (Jn 1:4, 5, 7, 8, 9). Christ declared himself to be “the light of the world” (Jn 8:12). Elsewhere he claimed, “I have come as light into the world, that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness” (Jn 12:46 RSV).

**The Community of Light.** If God and his Son are light, light becomes a natural symbol for salvation and the new life. “The LORD is my light and my salvation,” the psalmist testifies (Ps 27:1 RSV). The person “who does what is true comes to the light, that it may be

clearly seen that his deeds have been wrought in God" (Jn 3:21 RSV). In Christ's great discourse on himself as the light of the world, those who follow Christ are defined as people who "will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (Jn 8:12 RSV). According to 1 Peter 2:9, believers are those who have been called "out of darkness into his marvelous light" (RSV). An early liturgical formula, accompanied by its lead-in, is a fitting summary of this motif: "When anything is exposed by the light it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it is said, 'Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light' " (Eph 5:13–14 RSV). The implied message is clear: if God is light, to come to God is to come to the light and to receive life. We might note also the echo of Christ's resurrection in the picture of the sleeper's arising from the dead.

Those who have been delivered "from the dominion of darkness" and transferred "to the kingdom of his beloved Son" (Col 1:13 RSV) are thus strongly associated with light as the thing that defines their very essence. Jesus called John the Baptist "a burning and shining lamp" in whose light people rejoiced (Jn 5:35). After painting a composite portrait of the ideal disciple in his beatitudes, Jesus added, "You are the light of the world.... Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (Mt 5:14, 16 RSV).

It is not inaccurate, therefore, to view the church as portrayed in the NT Epistles as the possessor and giver of light. Paul writes to the Thessalonian church, "For you are all sons of light and sons of the day" (1 Thess 5:5 RSV). As prototypical convert, Paul was sent by God to the Gentiles "to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light" (Acts 26:18 RSV). This light is not only part of the church's evangelistic proclamation but also characterizes life within the church: "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 Jn 1:7 RSV).

**Light in the Coming Age.** The final pictures of light that we find in the Bible appear in the eschatological visions of the new age in the book of Revelation. The New Jerusalem comes down from heaven "having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel" (Rev 21:11). The city, moreover, "has no need of sun or moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb" (Rev 21:23 RSV; cf. Is 60:19). To climax the motif, we read that "night shall be no more; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light" (Rev 22:5 RSV). This echoes Zechariah's similar vision of a coming time when "there shall be continuous day" and that "at evening time there shall be light" (Zech 14:7 RSV).

**Summary.** In all of the Bible's references to light, light is not self-generated. It comes (usually unbidden) from outside the earthly and human sphere and transforms that sphere with a transcendent splendor. As a symbol light thus pictures the simultaneous transcendence and immanence of God: it is from above, but it permeates everyday life.

A survey of light imagery in the Bible illustrates the implied thesis of this dictionary—that the main outline of biblical belief and the feelings it generates can be traced by following the Bible's master images. Light in its varied meanings is at the heart of such central biblical themes as creation, providence, judgment, redemption and sanctification. It embodies much of the theological teaching of the Bible about God, which explains why light has been prominent in the history of theology (Pelikan). In its literal, physical manifestations, moreover, light contributes significantly to the elemental quality of the biblical world, keeping spiritual reality rooted in the lives that people actually live.

The text within the Bible itself that comes closest to summarizing the range of meanings of light is 2 Corinthians 4:6: "For it is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ" (RSV). Here is the link between creation and the new creation, between OT and NT, between the physical reality and the spiritual symbol.

See also [DARKNESS](#); [FIRE](#); [GLORY](#); [LAMP](#), [LAMPSTAND](#); [MOON](#); [STARS](#); [SUN](#).

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**John 11:10 "But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him."**

BGT John 11:10 ν δ τις περιπατ ν τ νυκτ , προσκ πτει, τι τ φ ς ο κ στιν ν α τ .

KJV John 11:10 But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.

NET John 11:10 But if anyone walks around at night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him."

CSB John 11:10 If anyone walks during the night, he does stumble, because the light is not in him."

ESV John 11:10 But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him."



NIV John 11:10 It is when he walks by night that he stumbles, for he has no light."

NLT John 11:10 But at night there is danger of stumbling because they have no light."

NRS John 11:10 But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them."

NJB John 11:10 anyone who walks around at night stumbles, having no light as a guide.

NAB John 11:10 But if one walks at night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him."

YLT John 11:10 and if any one may walk in the night, he stumbleth, because the light is not in him.'

MIT John 11:10 If anyone walks about at night, he stumbles because he lacks light."

- Ps 27:1 Pr 4:18-19 Ec 2:14 Jer 13:16 Jer 20:11 1Jn 2:10-11
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

Psalm 27:2 A Psalm of David. **The LORD is my light** and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The LORD is the defense of my life; Whom shall I dread?

Proverbs 4:18-19 But the **path of the righteous** is like the light of dawn, That shines brighter and brighter until the full day (cf Eph 5:8+). 19 The **way of the wicked is like darkness**; They do not know **over what they stumble**.

Ecclesiastes 2:14 The wise man's eyes are in his head, but **the fool walks in darkness**. And yet I know that one fate befalls them both.

Jeremiah 13:16 Give glory to the LORD your God, **Before He brings darkness** And **before your feet stumble** On the dusky mountains, And while you are hoping for light **He makes it into deep darkness, And turns it into gloom**.

Jeremiah 20:11 But the LORD is with me like a dread champion; Therefore (FUNCTIONS HERE MORE LIKE A TERM OF EXPLANATION) **my persecutors will stumble and not prevail**. They will be utterly ashamed, because they have failed, With an everlasting disgrace that will not be forgotten.

1 John 2:10-11+ The one who loves his brother **abides in the Light** and there is no cause for **stumbling** in him. 11 But the one who hates his brother **is in the darkness** and **walks in the darkness**, and does not know where he is going because the **darkness has blinded his eyes**.

Jeremiah 13:16 (SPEAKING TO SOUTHERN NATION OF JUDAH) Give glory to the LORD your God, Before He brings darkness And **before your feet stumble** (Lxx = [proskopto](#)) On the dusky mountains, And while you are hoping for light He makes it into deep darkness, And turns it into gloom.

### JEWISH RECKONING OF TIME

**But** - Term of contrast. What is the "change of direction?" Walking in light of day versus walking in night where there is no light.

Jesus was saying, "I have a little window of opportunity to accomplish my remaining work before night falls on my earthly work."

[Bob Utley](#) - There is an obvious contrast between those who are following God's will (i.e., Jesus) and those who are not (John 11:10, the Jews). Jesus is not making a mistake in going where God leads Him, because He is the light of the world!

**If** (3rd class condition = potential action) **anyone walks** ([peripateo](#)) **in the night, he stumbles** ([proskopto](#)) - Jesus uses the physical picture of working in day versus night, a picture His disciples understood, to speak figuratively of a spiritual truth His disciples (and everyone) needs to understand. He is not speaking of physically stubbing your big toe but of the stumbling in a moral/ethical sense. He is explaining to His dense disciples (which too often includes yours truly) that when one walks in the night, or figuratively lives in spiritual darkness out of the will of God, they will reap what the sow, which will be sore "spiritual toe" (so to speak). The upshot is that He was safe going to Bethany because He was walking in the light, walking in the will of His Father and nothing could happen to Him before the Hour appointed by His Father.

**William MacDonald** adds that "The person who **walks in the night** is one who is not faithful to God, but is living in self-will. This man **stumbles** easily **because** he does not have divine guidance to illuminate his pathway." (BORROW [Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

Jesus' description here in John 11:9,10 resonates with the metaphoric use of [proskopto](#) in the Septuagint of Jeremiah 13:16 ("Give glory to the LORD your God, Before He brings darkness And before your feet stumble On the dusky mountains, And while you are hoping for light He makes it into deep darkness, And turns it into gloom. "). Without the light (i.e., Jesus) men will "stumble" in this dark world. The corollary is walking in spiritual darkness is potentially dangerous!

In the upper room, Jesus dipped the morsel and gave it to Judas, saying "What you do, do quickly." (Jn 13:27), "And so after receiving the morsel he went out immediately; and it was **night**." (Jn 13:30+). Judas filled with, possessed by, controlled by Satan (Jn 13:27) was walking in the the darkest night any human has ever walked in, walking into **the night** to betray the Son of Man and it cost Judas his life in time but also in eternity.

**Because** - Term of explanation. What is Jesus explaining?

**The light is not in him** - Now we know Jesus is using dark/light metaphorically because men do not have physical lights within their being. Therefore, by default, this statement can only be referring to spiritual light. And one who does not have the light in them is one who does not believe in Jesus, the Light of the world (Jn 8:12+) and this why he stumbles (spiritually speaking).

*Without that inner light we are sure to stumble.*

-- C H Spurgeon

Paul described believers in Ephesians 5:8+ as those "were formerly darkness, but now you are **Light in the Lord**; **walk** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) as **children of Light**." What an amazing description of us as believers (but don't miss the incredible responsibility we have now to walk accordingly)! It is not that we are like lights, but we are "**Light in the Lord**." ("in the Lord" is locative of sphere = He is the "Socket" so to speak, we are the electric plugs, plugged into Him, so to speak) We shine as "[incandescent](#)" ones because we are electrified" or energized by the infinite One, His Spirit continually empowering (cf Php 2:13NLT+) our spiritual light to shine before men and women who are enshrouded in darkness and blinded by darkness (cf 1Jn 2:11+, cf 2Co 4:4+).

*When there is darkness in the soul, then we will stumble indeed.*

-- Leon Morris

Jesus commanded His disciples "**Let** your light **shine** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) before men in such a way that they may see your (VISIBLE) good works, and glorify (GIVE A PROPER OPINION OF) your (INVISIBLE) Father Who is in heaven." (Mt 5:16+).

**Spurgeon** - There is a singular turn, is there not, in that expression (**because the light is not in him**)? We expected it to be "Because he seeth not the light of the world," instead of which the Saviour says, "Because there is no light in him" — **because** in spiritual things our light not only comes from above, but it shines within; and without that inner light we are sure to stumble.

**John 11:11 This He said, and after that He said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I go, so that I may awaken him out of sleep."**

BGT John 11:11 Τα τα ε πεν, κα μετ το το λ γει α το ς· Λ ζαρος φ λος μ ν κεκο μηται· λλ πορε ομαι να ξυπν σω α τ ν.

KJV John 11:11 These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.

NET John 11:11 After he said this, he added, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep. But I am going there to awaken him."

CSB John 11:11 He said this, and then He told them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I'm on My way to wake him up."

ESV John 11:11 After saying these things, he said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him."

NIV John 11:11 After he had said this, he went on to tell them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up."

NLT John 11:11 Then he said, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but now I will go and wake him up."

NRS John 11:11 After saying this, he told them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to

awaken him."

NJB John 11:11 He said that and then added, 'Our friend Lazarus is at rest; I am going to wake him.'

NAB John 11:11 He said this, and then told them, "Our friend Lazarus is asleep, but I am going to awaken him."

YLT John 11:11 These things he said, and after this he saith to them, 'Lazarus our friend hath fallen asleep, but I go on that I may awake him;'

MIT John 11:11 He made those remarks, and after that, he said to them: "Lazarus our friend has fallen asleep. But I am going to arouse him."

- **he said:** Jn 3:29 15:13-15 Ex 33:11 2Ch 20:7 Isa 41:8 Jas 2:23
- **fallen asleep:** Jn 11:13 De 31:16 Da 12:2 Mt 9:24 Mk 5:39 Ac 7:60 1Co 15:18,51 1Th 4:14-15 1Th 5:10
- **awaken:** Jn 11:43-44 Jn 5:25-29 Da 12:2 1Co 15:34 Eph 5:14
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages: EXAMPLES OF METAPHORICAL MEANING OF SLEEP TO DESCRIBE DEATH

Acts 7:60+ Then falling on his knees, he (STEPHEN) cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!" Having said this, **he fell asleep**.

Acts 13:36+ "For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, **fell asleep**, and was laid among his fathers and underwent decay;

Matthew 9:24+ (JARIUS' DAUGHTER) He said, "Leave; for the girl has not died, but **is asleep**." And they began laughing at Him.

1 Corinthians 15:51+ **Behold**, I tell you a mystery (NOTE: MYSTERY IN NT IS A HIDDEN TRUTH REVEALED TO THOSE WHO HAVE EARS TO HEAR); we will **not all sleep** (ONE GENERATION OF BELIEVERS WILL NOT DIE BUT BE RAPTURED), but we will all be changed,

1 Thessalonians 4:13-14+ But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those (BELIEVING BRETHREN) **who are asleep** (HAVE DIED IN THE LORD), so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope (WORLD HAS NO HOPE; BELIEVERS HAVE A SURE HOPE!). 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him **those who have fallen asleep** in Jesus (NOTE WHO COMES BACK WITH JESUS? ONLY BELIEVERS).

Daniel 12:2+ "Many of those **who sleep** in the dust of the ground **will awake**, these to everlasting life (BELIEVERS), but the others (REFUSE TO BELIEVE IN MESSIAH) to disgrace and everlasting contempt.

John 5:28+ "Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His (JESUS CHRIST'S) voice, and will come forth; those who did the good deeds (GOOD DEEDS DIDN'T SAVE OR MERIT SALVATION BUT DEMONSTRATED THEIR FAITH WAS GENUINE) to a resurrection of life (THE [FIRST RESURRECTION](#)), those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment (THE [SECOND RESURRECTION](#)). ([SEE THIS VERSE DEPICTED](#))

"THE AWAKENING"  
An illustration to writing by Leo Tolstoy

## JESUS SPEAKS OF BELIEVER'S DEATH AS FALLING ASLEEP

**This He said, and after that He said to them, "Our friend ([philos](#)) [Lazarus](#) has fallen asleep ([koimao](#) not [katheudo](#))** - Here we see an example of Jesus' [omniscience](#) (He is fully God-fully Man), even though He had emptied Himself and become a bondservant (Php 2:7+ - see [kenosis = Jesus "emptying" Himself](#)). Jesus knew Lazarus had died.

Jesus speaks in veiled figures of speech giving us a beautiful metaphor for the death of believers. We simply **fall asleep** in Jesus (1Co 15:18+). There is no fear in death for believers. Death is only the doorway of our instant transport into the presence of our King, and that, forever! As Paul writes "we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body ("ASLEEP" ~ DEAD) and to be at home with the Lord." (2Cor 5:8+) Note that this in no way supports the heretical doctrine of [soul sleep](#), for we all (believers and non-believers) will remain **consciously aware** after we die (and for believers we will all be in His very presence! 2Co 5:8b+, cf Php 1:21+) while our physical body "sleeps" in the grave. As an aside, the somewhat related teaching

of [annihilationism](#) is also a lie from the pit of hell (it is nothing more than wishful thinking - for sadly, once unbelievers are in eternal torment, they will surely wish that they had ceased to exist!)

[Lowell Johnson](#) - Sleep is harmless and temporary. It speaks of Rest, Relief, and Rising again. Our word cemetery comes from the Greek word that means "sleeping places" or "sleeping chambers." (from a Greek word related to [koimao](#), koimeterion, a place of sleep. ) The word "resurrection" means "to stand up." After death, we will stand up again.

[NET Note](#) on **asleep** - The verb κοιμάω (koimaō) literally means "sleep," but it is often used in the Bible as a euphemism for death when speaking of believers. This metaphorical usage by its very nature emphasizes the hope of resurrection: Believers will one day "wake up" out of death. Here the term refers to death, but "asleep" was used in the translation to emphasize the metaphorical, rhetorical usage of the term, especially in light of the disciples' confusion over what Jesus actually meant (see Jn 11:13).

*Sleep is only used to refer to the death of believers,  
because for unbelievers death will be their worst nightmare!*

**Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown** - These things said he: and after that he saith, **Our friend Lazarus** - illustrious title from such Lips! To Abraham only did the Lord under the Old Testament accord this, and not until hundreds of years after his death (2Chr 20:7; Isa 41:8); to which, as something very unusual, our attention is called in the New Testament (Jas 2:23). When Jesus came in the flesh, His forerunner applied this name, in a certain official sense, to himself (John 3:29); and into the same fellowship the Lord's chosen disciples are declared to have come (John 15:13-15). Lampe well remarks that the phrase here employed - "our friend Lazarus" - means more than "he whom Thou lovest" (John 11:3); because it implies that Christ's affection was reciprocated by Lazarus.

[Adrian Rogers \(page 632\)](#) - Lazarus is dead. May I say, dear friend, there was really only one thing wrong with Lazarus: he was dead. And so, since there was only one thing wrong with him, there was nothing right with him. May I say to you that how many things that you think may be right with you, if you're not saved, there's one thing wrong with you that makes everything else wrong with you that you may think is right with you? You are "dead in trespasses and sins." (Ephesians 2:1) You see, I preached a funeral this past Friday for a dear friend and brother in Christ, a comrade, Bill Harrison. Bill's body was right down there. **Many people came to hear me who were dead, and Bill wasn't. Bill wasn't dead.** Jesus said, "[He that lives] and [believes] in me shall never die." (John 11:26) Bill Harrison—it was impossible for him to die. But a lot of dead people were here at the funeral, but they didn't think they were dead; they thought he was dead, but he wasn't dead. He's kicking gold dust on the streets of glory. He wasn't dead, but a lot of dead people were here at the funeral, saying, "Poor Bill. He is dead."....Jesus broke up every funeral He ever attended.

**E H Harding** - Jesus called Lazarus His **friend**,—blessed title, glorious privilege, friend of Jesus! Am I His friend? He gives us the test,—“Ye are My friends if ye do whatsoever I command you.” His command is, Trust Me, love Me, serve Me. Do I obey this? Then I am Jesus' friend, and still more, He is my friend. This friendship is a treasure neither time nor chance, men nor devils, life nor death can take away. Let us not imagine Christ is not our friend because we suffer. He allowed Lazarus to die, yet we are told, Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. Jesus' friends now on earth may all die, may all sleep; but He has not forgotten them. One day He will say to the angels: "My friends sleep, but I go to awake them." Then "the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Someone has well said that man is the only creature who knows he is going to die and he tries desperately to forget it. Mention death and people will try to change the subject. When Hardly Denham was pastor of FBC Newton, MS., he was told by one of the leaders of the church to never preach on the subject of death. He said, "I wish I never had to preach on death or dying, but as long as men die, I must." Death and dying are not pleasant topics, but unless Jesus returns in our lifetime, every person will experience death.

**But** - Great term of contrast! What's the dramatic contrast Jesus is predicting?

**I go, so that** ([hina](#) = term of purpose - what purpose?) **I may awaken him out of sleep** - Jesus always lived purposely and here His purpose is to carry out one of His great miracles of raising Lazarus from the dead. Awaken is the verb *exupnizo* (only here) which was used of arousing a sleeping person! In this context clearly the sense is figurative, meaning to "arouse" Lazarus from the dead or cause him to come to life again.

**Spurgeon** - It is the Saviour's way to use terms concerning His miracles, which, so far from exaggerating them, even appear to depreciate them. He is about to raise a man from the dead, but He says, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep." I am afraid that our tendency is always to describe our actions in the largest possible terms consistent with truth (**ED: ARE YOU AS CONVICTED AS I AM?**); perhaps, sometimes forgetting those last words. But the Saviour describes truthfully what He does, but still in terms which, like His humanity, seem to veil the glory. Wonderfully condescending is it of him to speak thus...."**Our friend.**" Why, Lazarus was Christ's friend. Yes; but those who are Christ's friends are our friends too if we belong to

Christ. I have recently met with a large number of persons from different countries; but, the moment we discovered that we loved the same Lord, we seemed to be as intimate as if we had been next-door neighbours for the last fifty years.

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**Friend** (5384) **philos** means loved (loved one), dear, befriended, friendly, kind. **Philos** can mean kindly disposed or devoted (Acts 19:31). **Philos** describes one having special interest in someone else. One who is on intimate terms or in close association with someone else **Philos** can describe a love which is emotional and conditional. **Philos** refers to one who has a liking for, is fond of something or someone. **Aristotle** defined a "**friend**" as "one soul inhabiting two." (cp use in Lxx of Dt 13:7) One can be a **friend** of God (Jas 2:23) or a **friend** of the world (Jas 4:4), but not of both!

John 15:13-15 (JOHN USED THE WORD **FRIEND**) "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his **friends**. 14 "You are My **friends** if you do what I command you. 15 "No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you **friends**, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.

**Philos** - 29x/27v -friend(12), friends(17) - Matt. 11:19; Lk. 7:6; Lk. 7:34; Lk. 11:5; Lk. 11:6; Lk. 11:8; Lk. 12:4; Lk. 14:10; Lk. 14:12; Lk. 15:6; Lk. 15:9; Lk. 15:29; Lk. 16:9; Lk. 21:16; Lk. 23:12; Jn. 3:29; Jn. 11:11; Jn. 15:13; Jn. 15:14; Jn. 15:15; Jn. 19:12; Acts 10:24; Acts 19:31; Acts 27:3; Jas. 2:23; Jas. 4:4; 3 Jn. 1:15

**Fallen asleep** (2837) **koimao** related to **keimai** = to lie outstretched, to lie down) means to cause to sleep, is the word from which we get our word cemetery (see note below) which it was the early Christians optimistic name for a graveyard. It meant a sleeping place. It really was a synonym for a dormitory, a place where people sleep. This metaphorical use of the word sleep is appropriate because of the similarity in appearance between a sleeping body and a dead body; restfulness and peace normally characterize both. The object of the metaphor is to suggest that as the sleeper does not cease to exist while his body sleeps, so the dead person continues to exist despite his absence from the region in which those who remain can communicate with him, and that, as sleep is known to be temporary, so the death of the body will be found to be. Sleep has its waking, death will have its resurrection. In short, death to the believer is a sleep for his body—a period of rest to be followed by a glorious day.

As **Chrysostom** says "What is death at most? It is a journey for a season; a sleep longer than usual! So that if you fear death, you should also fear sleep!"

**Koimao** - 18x/18v - asleep(3), dead(1), fallen asleep(7), fell asleep(3), sleep(2), sleeping(2). Matt. 27:52; Matt. 28:13; Lk. 22:45; Jn. 11:11; Jn. 11:12; Acts 7:60; Acts 12:6; Acts 13:36; 1 Co. 7:39; 1 Co. 11:30; 1 Co. 15:6; 1 Co. 15:18; 1 Co. 15:20; 1 Co. 15:51; 1 Thess. 4:13; 1 Thess. 4:14; 1 Thess. 4:15; 2 Pet. 3:4

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**ILLUSTRATION** - Peter Marshall told a story of a lady who was in his congregation. This lady had a boy who was incurably ill and in some near distant time would die. She ministered to him as best she could, but she watched him week after week and day by day and soon saw that her son that she loved so much get weaker and weaker and she knew that the time would soon come. One night as she sat with her son, he was more quiet than usual and she knew something was on his mind, so she said, "Son, what's the matter?" He looked up into his mother's eyes and he said, "Mother, what is it going to be like to die? Will it hurt?" For a moment, she said that she couldn't speak. Then it was as if God gave her a revelation and she began to share that thought with her son. She said, "Listen. Remember those times when you come in from playing, and you've played all day and you fall on the couch and go to sleep. Remember those times." She said, "You know that's not where you belong, that's not your bed, and you're not dressed right, but you go to sleep there. And then you wake up in the morning and low and behold, you are in your own bed and you have your own PJ's on and you are in your own room, just where you are supposed to be! The reason that happens is because somebody loves you and cares for you and the big strong arms of your father has picked you up and taken you to your bed and has fixed you the way you ought to be." She said, "Son, that's what death is going to be like. Someday you will go to sleep and you will wake up in the other room – your own room – the place where you are supposed to be. And it will be because somebody loves you and cares for you and the strong arms of God have taken you there.

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**ILLUSTRATION** - Peter Marshall tells the story of a young boy about four years old who had a terminal disease. At first he didn't understand his condition, but finally he realized that he wasn't going to get better and would never again play with his friends. So one morning he asked his mother, "Am I going to die?" And she said, "Yes, dear." "Momma, what is death like? Will it hurt?" The mother ran out of the room to the kitchen and leaned against the refrigerator, her knuckles gripped white to keep from crying. She prayed and asked the Lord to give her an answer for her son. Suddenly, an idea came and she went back in his room and sat down on the bed. "Timmy, do you remember how you used to play outside all day and when you came inside at night you were so tired you just fell down on the couch and slept? In the morning you woke up in your own bed and you wondered how you got there. During the night your father would pick you up and carry you to your own bed." "That's what death is like. One night you lie down and go to sleep and in the middle of the night your Heavenly Father comes and picks you up and carries you to your own bed. In the morning

when you wake up, you're in your own room in heaven." The little boy smiled and nodded. Several weeks later he died peacefully. That's what death is like for the Christian. Satan's hold is broken. The fear is taken away.

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**ILLUSTRATION** - A young boy saw a well-known T.V. preacher in a hospital. He said to the preacher, "I have watched you on T.V. And heard you talk about Heaven and Hell and eternity. Tell me, how far off is Heaven? How far off is Hell? How far off is eternity?" The wise preacher said, "Son, put your hand on your heart. What do you feel?" The boy said, "I feel a heartbeat." The preacher said, "That's it, son. How far off is Heaven? How far off is Hell? How far off is eternity? Just one heartbeat."

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**Norman Geisler - JOHN 11:11-14—Does this passage prove there is no conscious existence following death, as the Jehovah's Witnesses teach?** (See [When Cultists Ask](#))

**MISINTERPRETATION:** In John 11:11-14 Jesus said that Lazarus had "fallen asleep"—meaning that he had died. The Jehovah's Witnesses argue that, since death is described as "sleep," this proves there is no conscious existence of the soul following death (Mankind's Search for God, 1990, 128).

**CORRECTING THE MISINTERPRETATION:** Scripture consistently teaches that the souls of both believers and unbelievers are conscious between death and the resurrection. Unbelievers are in conscious woe (Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:22-23; Rev. 19:20) and believers are in conscious bliss (2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23).

*The term **sleep** when used in contexts of death in Scripture, always refers to the body, not the soul.*

The term **sleep** when used in contexts of death in Scripture, always refers to the body, not the soul. Sleep is an appropriate figure of speech for the death of the body since the body takes on the appearance of sleep.

For strong evidence that the soul (or spirit) is conscious between death and resurrection, see the discussion of 1 Thessalonians 4:13+

**Related Discussions by Dr Norman Geisler:**

- [1 THESSALONIANS 4:13 —Did Paul teach the doctrine of soul-sleep?](#) GO TO PAGE 218
  - [PSALM 146:3-4—Does this verse prove there is no conscious existence after death? GO TO PAGE 57](#)
  - [ECCLESIASTES 9:5 — Does the fact that the dead do not remember anything prove there is no conscious existence after death? GO TO PAGE 61](#)
  - [LUKE 23:43 —Does this verse indicate there is no conscious existence after death? GO TO PAGE 123](#)
- 

**Cyril Hocking - John 11:1-18 OUR FRIEND LAZARUS SLEEPS** ([Day by Day: Moments with the Master](#))

HERE FOR THE FIRST TIME we are introduced to Lazarus and all the relevant details concerning him. He was sick, and this worried his two sisters, who knowing where Jesus was and His power to heal, sent Him their petition. Meantime, Lazarus died, and Jesus had not come in response to the sisters' request. It is important that when we are aware of need we should bring it to the Lord's attention, yet at the same time we are not to be surprised if He does not immediately respond. In the event Lazarus had deteriorated and died. As far as Mary and Martha were concerned they had done what they could, but humanly speaking the matter, by the passage of time, had become impossible.

After two days Jesus voices His intention to go to Judaea, and while the disciples are loyal, they do question His judgement. They are reassured by the mini-parable of '12 hours in a day', which simply indicates that the Lord knew what He was doing. Often we may feel loyal to the Lord, yet really wonder if He is in control of the things that affect us personally! Well, He is!—and He will prove it in His own good time; we must be loyal, patient and trusting.

Jesus' words, 'Our friend Lazarus sleepeth', gave rise to a misunderstanding, and eventually Jesus says plainly—'Lazarus is dead'. With what sensitivity the Lord leads the disciples a step at a time until they appreciate the real situation. It also enables them to see that, while they understand the state of death and the sense of finality it produces, their Lord would have them see it as though it was a passing sleep. Thus they arrive at Bethany to find Lazarus had died four days previously—yet they had heard the promise of the Lord 'this sickness is not unto death'. What could it mean?

Surely this, that the sickness would not end in death because death would be followed by resurrection. As a result God would be glorified; the Son would be glorified; Lazarus would have a new life; the sisters and friends would be comforted; and the disciples would be convinced of His power.

Do you feel that someone or something in your life has gone beyond the point of no return? Leave the outcome with Him, for with Him nothing shall be impossible!

## IMAGERY OF SLEEP

The human "[biological clock](#)"

**CLICK TO ENLARGE**

[Dictionary of Biblical Imagery - PAGE 2684](#) (See "[Sleep](#)" in Wikipedia)

Since sleep is a nightly human need, it is not surprising that it receives frequent mention in the Bible. Sleep may be divinely-induced, as when God "caused the man [Adam] to fall into a deep sleep" (Gen 2:21 NIV). Sleep may also prompt dreams and visions. Jacob (Gen 28:10–22), Joseph (Gen 37:5–11, 19), Ezekiel (Ezek 1:1–3:15), Daniel (Dan 7:1–8:27), Zechariah (Zech 1:7–6:8), Joseph (Mt 1:18–25), Peter (Acts 10:9–23) and John (Rev) are among the Bible's more notable dreamers and visionaries. As Pharaoh's baker discovered (Gen 40:16–22), not all dreams are good dreams—some are nightmares.

Biblical sleep usually has negative connotations. Nightmares are not the only calamities that befall those who slumber. During sleep a dead baby might be swapped for a live one (1 Kings 3:20), a tent peg might be driven through one's skull (Judg 4:21), the bridegroom might return unexpectedly (Mt 25:5) or one might fall from a window during a long sermon (Acts 20:9).

Too much snoozing may also result in poverty. "How long will you lie there, you sluggard? When will you get up from your sleep? A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest—and poverty will come on you like a bandit and scarcity like an armed man" (Prov 6:9–11 NIV; cf 19:15, 20:13). Here the rhythm of the poetic verse contrasts the slowness of sluggard's nodding off to sleep with the swiftness with which poverty will overtake him.

Given the hazards of sleep, it is little wonder that the wicked—like anxious King Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 2:1)—struggle with insomnia. Evil-doers "cannot sleep till they do evil; they are robbed of slumber till they make someone fall" (Prov 4:16 NIV).

Sleep is altogether sweet for the righteous, since the Lord "grants sleep to those he loves" (Ps 127:2 NIV). The righteous may sleep peacefully because they know that "he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep" (Ps 121:4 NIV). So Jesus napped in a boat during a terrible storm (Lk 8:22–25), both receiving and trusting in his Father's watchful and unsleeping care. In its positive associations sleep is a sign of spiritual and psychic health: "I will both lie down and sleep in peace; for you alone, O Lord, make me lie down in safety" (Ps 4:8 NRSV). The wise person "will not be afraid" when lying down, and his or her "sleep will be sweet" (Prov 3:24 NIV). Sleep is also the reward of the honest laborer: "The sleep of a laborer is sweet, ... but the abundance of a rich man permits him no sleep" (Eccles 5:12 NIV).

The Bible also uses sleep as a metaphor for the death of the righteous. "Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Cor 15:20). In Christ, death is nothing more than a nap from which the righteous will awaken to endless day.

See also AWAKENING; BED, BEDROOM; DREAMS, VISIONS; NIGHT; REST; SLEEPING GOD MOTIF; SLEEPLESS NIGHT.

**John 11:12 The disciples then said to Him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover."**

BGT John 11:12 ε παν ο νο μαθητα ατ κ ριε, ε κεκο μηται σωθ σεται.

KJV John 11:12 Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.

NET John 11:12 Then the disciples replied, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover."

CSB John 11:12 Then the disciples said to Him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will get well."

ESV John 11:12 The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover."

NIV John 11:12 His disciples replied, "Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better."

NLT John 11:12 The disciples said, "Lord, if he is sleeping, he will soon get better!"

NRS John 11:12 The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right."

NJB John 11:12 The disciples said to him, 'Lord, if he is at rest he will be saved.'

NAB John 11:12 So the disciples said to him, "Master, if he is asleep, he will be saved."

YLT John 11:12 therefore said his disciples, 'Sir, if he hath fallen asleep, he will be saved;'

MIT John 11:12 The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he gets his rest, he will get better."

- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## SLOW TO HEAR QUICK TO SPEAK!

The disciples ([mathetes](#)) then said (plural) to Him, "Lord ([kurios](#)), if (1st class condition - assumed true) he has fallen asleep ([koimao](#), perfect tense), he will recover ([sozo](#)) - Said is plural (they all said), so while Peter was likely the spokesman, the other disciples were chimed in. As often, in their interactions, Jesus means one thing and the disciples interpret it to mean another (See Jn 4:31-32; Jn 6:6,7; Jn 9:2,3; Jn 13:8, 9)! In this case, Jesus uses a beautiful [euphemism](#) for a believer's death, falling asleep. Jesus was teaching spiritual truth (on the "FM" band, so to speak), but the 12 are still tuned in to the fleshly "AM" station so they missed His message!

**Recover** ([sozo](#)) is the verb used for spiritual salvation (Jn. 3:17 = "that the world might be **saved** through Him"; cf Jn. 5:34; Jn. 10:9; Jn. 12:47), but, as shown here, has wider sense including physical healing.

There is another way to read the disciple's response "**He will recover.**" This nuance is picked up by the MIT (MacDonald Idiomatic Translation) which paraphrases it as "Lord, if he gets his rest, he will get better." The idea is He will better and we won't have to go. They believed that to return to Bethany which was only 2 miles from Jerusalem ("enemy territory") was dangerous and perhaps they were hoping Lazarus would recover and they would not have walk into the [mouth of the lion's den](#), so to speak.

**Spurgeon** - It is considered to be a sign of getting better when a patient can sleep.....Let me remind you, my dear brethren who preach the gospel, that you will have to preach very plainly, for you see that even the apostles could not understand a figure of speech. When Christ said, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth," they mistook his meaning, so he had to say plainly, "Lazarus is dead." That is how we must preach the gospel; not only so that our hearers can understand it, but so that they cannot misunderstand it.

**THOUGHT** - When various circumstances, trials (loss of job, etc), afflictions occur in our lives are we not a lot like the disciples, for we too far too often fail to understand why they Lord allowed something to happen. Where to we go for understanding? "From Thy precepts I get understanding." (Ps 119:104) "Cry for discernment, lift your voice for understanding." (Pr 2:3-6). Control your temptation to become anger for Pr 14:29 "He who is slow to anger has great understanding," and "he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding." (Pr 17:27). And pray Col 1:9 asking "that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding." Asking in faith (Jas 1:5-8)

**Rodney Whitacre** on the disciples' misinterpretation - This misunderstanding is quite amazing. Who could think that Jesus was concerned about Lazarus's merely falling asleep? And even if this were an acceptable concern—perhaps they think Jesus means Lazarus is now sleeping peacefully after his illness—who could think Jesus would need to be informed that Lazarus would wake up, especially since it would take Jesus up to four days to get to Lazarus, depending on where one thinks Jesus was when he received the news about Lazarus? So it appears the disciples are thinking that Jesus had preternatural knowledge that Lazarus had fallen asleep and that he wanted to go wake him up! There must have been no dull moments with Jesus. He was doing incredible miracles, he was a marked man in the eyes of the authorities, and one never knew what he would say next. The disciples are very disoriented, which should be of some encouragement to us when we feel the same way. Jesus' patience with them is a manifestation of God's grace for which we can only be thankful. "Christ's kindness in putting up with such stupidity in the disciples was remarkable" (Calvin 1959:5). ([Jesus Raises Lazarus 11:1-54](#))

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### [Dictionary of Biblical Imagery - page 2684](#) - SLEEP

Since sleep is a nightly human need, it is not surprising that it receives frequent mention in the Bible. Sleep may be divinely-induced, as when God "caused the man [Adam] to fall into a deep sleep" (Gen 2:21 NIV). Sleep may also prompt dreams and visions. Jacob (Gen 28:10–22), Joseph (Gen 37:5–11, 19), Ezekiel (Ezek 1:1–3:15), Daniel (Dan 7:1–8:27), Zechariah (Zech 1:7–6:8), Joseph (Mt 1:18–25), Peter (Acts 10:9–23) and John (Rev) are among the Bible's more notable dreamers and visionaries. As Pharaoh's baker discovered (Gen 40:16–22), not all dreams are good dreams—some are nightmares.



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See also AWAKENING; BED, BEDROOM; DREAMS, VISIONS; NIGHT; REST; SLEEPING GOD MOTIF; SLEEPLESS NIGHT.

#### **John 11:13 Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that He was speaking of literal sleep.**

BGT John 11:13 ε ρ κ ει δ η σο ς πε ρ το θ αν του α το , κε νο ι δ δο ξ αν τι πε ρ τ ς κοι μ σε ω ς το π νου λ γει.

KJV John 11:13 Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.

NET John 11:13 (Now Jesus had been talking about his death, but they thought he had been talking about real sleep.)

CSB John 11:13 Jesus, however, was speaking about his death, but they thought He was speaking about natural sleep.

ESV John 11:13 Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he meant taking rest in sleep.

NIV John 11:13 Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep.

NLT John 11:13 They thought Jesus meant Lazarus was simply sleeping, but Jesus meant Lazarus had died.

NRS John 11:13 Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep.

NJB John 11:13 Jesus was speaking of the death of Lazarus, but they thought that by 'rest' he meant 'sleep';

NAB John 11:13 But Jesus was talking about his death, while they thought that he meant ordinary sleep.

YLT John 11:13 but Jesus had spoken about his death, but they thought that about the repose of sleep he speaketh.

MIT John 11:13 But Jesus had alluded to his death. They thought he had spoken about natural rest one gets when asleep.

- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Related Passage:**

1 Corinthians 11:30+ For this reason (FAILURE TO SELF-JUDGE - 1Co 11:28-29) many among you are weak and sick, and a number **sleep** (HAVE DIED).

## JOHN CLARIFIES JESUS' FIGURE OF SPEECH

Now Jesus ([lesous](#)) had spoken of his death ([thanatos](#)), but they thought ([dokeo](#) - supposed) that He was speaking of literal sleep (KJV = "rest of sleep" - Literally = "the sleep of slumber" translates 2 related Greek words [koimesis](#) and [hupnos](#)) - John who was one of the 12 who had initially misunderstood Jesus' figure of speech, now gives us a parenthetical explanation of what Jesus meant by saying "Lazarus has fallen asleep." **Literal sleep** is [koimesis](#) (used only here and from [koimao](#)) means taking rest in sleep, but used figuratively as found on inscriptions on Jewish graves in Rome, with the idea of "rest in death." This is sadly wishful thinking and is **not true** for most people, for most people refuse to believe in Christ as Savior and suffer the agonies of eternal punishment!

[Lowell Johnson](#) His sickness INCLUDED death, but it DID NOT END in death!" Death is a phrase; not a finality. It's temporary; not terminal.

Compare other metaphorical statements by Jesus which the apostles were later able to interpret correctly, as in the cases of the temple (Jn 2:21-22), of the living water (Jn 4:11-15, cf Jn 7:37-38, 39), of food (Jn 4:31-33), and of the expression "a little while" (Jn 16:17).

**Chrysostom** says that since Christ died for the life of the world, we no longer call death **thanatos** (death) but **hyptos kai koimesis** (two words for sleep)

**John 11:14 So Jesus then said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead,**

BGT John 11:14 τ τε ο ν ε π εν α το ς ησο ς παρρησ · Λ ζαρος π θανεν,

KJV John 11:14 Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

NET John 11:14 Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus has died,

CSB John 11:14 So Jesus then told them plainly, "Lazarus has died.

ESV John 11:14 Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus has died,

NIV John 11:14 So then he told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead,

NLT John 11:14 So he told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead.

NRS John 11:14 Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead.

NJB John 11:14 so Jesus put it plainly, 'Lazarus is dead;

NAB John 11:14 So then Jesus said to them clearly, "Lazarus has died.

YLT John 11:14 Then, therefore, Jesus said to them freely, 'Lazarus hath died;

MIT John 11:14 Then Jesus said to them bluntly, "Lazarus died,

- **plainly:** Jn 10:24 Jn 16:25,29
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## PLAIN TALK FROM JESUS

**So** - Or "then" which marks progression in narrative. Jesus will clear up the fuzzy thinking of His disciples!

**Jesus** ([lesous](#)) **then said to them plainly** ([parrhesia](#) - frankly, openly), "**Lazarus is dead** ([apothnesko](#)) - Again His declaration demonstrates His deity, for no one had come to tell them of Lazarus' death. One can only imagine the surprised looks on the faces of His dimwitted disciples. Now they understood the situation. And notice that not one of the disciples ask "How do You know?" By this time in their journey with Jesus they had come to understand that when He spoke, He spoke with authority and fidelity!

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**Warren Wiersbe** - The unsaved person is not just sick; he or she is spiritually dead (Eph. 2:1–3; Col. 2:13). When a person is physically dead, she does not respond to such things as food, temperature, or pain. When a person is spiritually dead, he does not respond to spiritual things. She has no interest in God, the Bible, Christians, or church until the Holy Spirit begins to work in her heart. God warned Adam that disobedience would bring death (Gen. 2:15–17)—physical death (the separation of the soul from the body) and spiritual death (the separation of the soul from God). Revelation 20:14 calls hell the second death, that is eternal death. What sinners dead to God's ways need is not education, medicine, morality, or religion; they need new life in Jesus Christ. (BORROW [Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the New Testament](#) page 240).

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**Dead** (599) **apothnesko** from **apo** = marker of dissociation implying a rupture from a former association, separation, departure, cessation + **thnesko** = die) literally means to die off (that is, to die and thus be *away from* this earthly realm). Apothnesko speaks of literal physical death (Ro 6:9+) but figuratively (metaphorically) of a believer's death to **sin** (Ro 6:2+, Ro 6:7+, Ro 6:8+, Col 3:3+), **self, Satan, the law** (Ro 7:6+, Gal 2:19) and **the world** (Col 2:20+, cp Gal 6:14+ - *crucified* used instead of *died*) which was effected when Christ was crucified and when by faith we believed in Him and in God's reckoning (albeit a "mysterious" teaching) were crucified with Him (Ro 6:6+). It is notable that as life was never meant to be merely existence, death which is the antonym of life does not mean non-existence. The important point is that to die does not mean one is annihilated as some would falsely teach. Everyone who has ever been born will continue to exist, either in the presence of God or to experience conscious existence in separation from God (see 2Th 1:9).

### Summary of apothnesko

(1) **Literally** - To die referring to natural death (opposite of *zao* = to live), a permanent cessation of all vital functions resulting in the end of life, with a **separation** of one's soul from their physical body (Mt 8:32, 22:24, 27, 26:35, Heb 9:27, 1Co 15:32, 36; Paul in Php 1:21). Christ's death (Ro 5:6, Ro 5:8, Gal 2:21, 1Co 8:11, 15:3, 2Co 5:15, 1Th 4:14, 1Th 5:10). It should be emphasized that although these passages refer to literal physical death of Christ, they have profound spiritual implications. Note that literal death pictures a **separation** of the spiritual from the material part of man, the soul from the body.

Most of the uses of apothnesko in the gospels refer to literal physical death (exceptions include Jn 6:50 cp Jn 6:58 not die = live forever = speaks of spiritual rebirth, cp Jn 11:26)

(2) **Figuratively** - speaks of **separation** - of not responding to something due to separation from it (1Co 15:31). Separation from God because of sin (Adam died the day (i.e., when, cp. Ezek 33:12) he disobeyed God, Ge 2:17.), which speaks of spiritual death (Ro 7:9, 1Co 15:22 - Death in this sense describes the present condition of all men for all have sinned - see Ro 5:12). Ro 5:15 speaks of the spiritual death all men suffered because of Adam's sin (cp Ro 5:12).

(3) **Mixture of literal and figurative** - Christ's literal death (first use) and figuratively of death to rule and reign and power of sin (the second use of apothnesko in Ro 6:10, cp similar mixture in 2Co 5:14)

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### Chris Tiegreen - Circumstantial Deceit (from [One Year At His Feet Devotional](#))

"Lazarus is dead, and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe." John 11:14-15

"Real trust in God is above circumstances and appearances." —George Müller

IN WORD Circumstances don't get much worse than this. The loved one Mary and Martha had been praying for had died. Jesus was four days late and under fire from those who had come to expect miracles. Mary's pointed words are sadly resentful: "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died" (v. 32). Defeat apparently reigned. But circumstances don't tell the whole story. How often in the Gospels were appearances deceiving? Wind and waves threatened to capsize a boat; thousands hungered; disease ravaged its helpless victims; demons held hopeless captives. And, don't forget, God was executed by men. In all of these situations, those who stared at the problems despaired. Those who stared at the Truth found hope. And hope was fulfilled.

An acquaintance of George Müller once told a story of going from England to Quebec for an important engagement. The ship was stuck in the North Atlantic fog and Müller was told by the captain he would by no means make it to his meeting on schedule. Müller's response? "My eye is not on the density of the fog, but on the living God who controls every circumstance of my life." The fog cleared.<sup>3</sup>

IN DEED Our human tendency is to feel trapped by visible situations. But circumstantial evidence is not the truth of a matter. It is deceptive. God's assessment is always the truth of every situation. And it doesn't include our being trapped by superficial appearances.

Are circumstances threatening what you know to be God's plan? They lie. As surely as the North Atlantic fog lifted, and as surely as Lazarus was raised, circumstances are unreliable measures of reality. God's plan, when believed, is immovable. Those who focused on their problems in the Gospels found those problems to be overwhelming. Those who focused on Jesus found their problems to be illusory. Focus on Jesus. There is no deceit in Him. Just ask Lazarus.

**John 11:15 and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, so that you may believe; but let us go to him."**

BGT John 11:15 καὶ χαρῶ διὰ μὴ εἶναι ἐκεῖ ἵνα πιστεύητε, ὅτι οὐκ ἦν ἐκεῖ· ἀλλ' ἵνα γένηται ἡ πίστις ἐν ἑμοί.

KJV John 11:15 And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him.

NET John 11:15 and I am glad for your sake that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him."

CSB John 11:15 I'm glad for you that I wasn't there so that you may believe. But let's go to him."

ESV John 11:15 and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him."

NIV John 11:15 and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him."

NLT John 11:15 And for your sakes, I'm glad I wasn't there, for now you will really believe. Come, let's go see him."

NRS John 11:15 For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him."

NJB John 11:15 and for your sake I am glad I was not there because now you will believe. But let us go to him.'

NAB John 11:15 And I am glad for you that I was not there, that you may believe. Let us go to him."

YLT John 11:15 and I rejoice, for your sake, (that ye may believe,) that I was not there; but we may go to him;'

MIT John 11:15 and for your sake it makes me glad I was not there, for you must (learn to) believe. But let us go to him.

- **I am glad:** Jn 11:35,36
- **for:** Jn 12:30 17:19 Ge 26:24 39:5 Ps 105:14 Isa 54:15 65:8 2Co 4:15 2Ti 2:10
- **to:** Jn 11:4 2:11 14:10,11 1Jn 5:13
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

John 2:11+ This beginning of His signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and **His disciples believed in Him**.

John 6:69+ "**We have believed** and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God."

## JESUS' PARADOXICAL REJOICING

**And I am glad** ([chairo](#) - "I rejoice") **for your sakes that I was not there** - Note Jesus did not say He was **glad** Lazarus had died but just that He was not there. **For your sakes** is the reason He rejoiced, not because Lazarus had died. He wanted His disciples to witness Lazarus being raised from the grave, not just raised from a sick bed. Such a witness of a man's resurrection would strengthen their faith and achieve His main goal, which was to glorify His Father (Jn 11:4, 40). The One Who controls life could also say He was **glad** (sometimes rendered "rejoice" and here in present tense "I am rejoicing") in the face of death because He was about to demonstrate His power over the last enemy, death (1Co 15:26, 55+). Presumably if Jesus had been "[johnny on the spot](#)," Lazarus would have been healed, thus preventing the far greater miracle of the resurrection.

[David Guzik](#) on **I am glad...that I was not there** - Jesus could be glad, even in the death of a dear friend, because He was certain of the outcome. We see at the end of the events of this chapter that grief was comforted, life was restored, many more believed, and

the necessary death of Jesus was set in motion. All of these were reasons to be glad.

As **Bengel** notes below, there is no NT record of anyone dying in the presence of Jesus. I find this such a tragic paradox, that during His life no one died, but after His death and resurrection when He sits on the Great White Throne, EVERY soul who stands before Him will die eternally ([second death](#))! The message is clear that you must believe in Him now while you are alive dear reader!

**Johann Bengel** has a fascinating comment - "It accords beautifully with divine propriety that we read of no one having died while the Prince of life was present. If you suppose that death could not, in the presence of Jesus, have assailed Lazarus, the language of the two sisters, Jn 11:21, 32, attains loftier meaning; and the Lord's joy at His own absence is explained."

## WHY JESUS WAS GLAD

**So that** ([hina](#) - purpose clause) **you may believe** ([pisteuo](#)) - Jesus explains the purpose for His delay - it was to grow their faith. The delay was necessary that He might perform a miracle that would help His disciples believe in Him to an even greater degree (Note how often Jesus referred to His disciples as "men of little faith" - Mt 8:26, Mt 14:31, Mt 16:8, Lk 12:28). Beloved, faith is not a static entity but is progressive, something that can be "nourished" and grow. If faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of Christ (which it does - Ro 10:17+), it follows that the more we are in the Word (and the Word is in us; i.e., not just in one ear and out the other!), the more our faith will grow. **THOUGHT** - If you feel like your faith is small (keeping in mind that even small faith will gain you entrance to heaven), you might check your time in the Word of Christ. **Believe** ([pisteuo](#)) is a key verb in John 11 occurring 8 times (Jn. 11:15; Jn. 11:25; Jn. 11:26; Jn. 11:27; Jn. 11:40; Jn. 11:42; Jn. 11:45; Jn. 11:48)

The concept of faith fills John 11 in an "[antithetical](#)" way. And so in John 11:1-17 we see the faith of the disciples. In John 11:17-44 we see the faith of two sisters and family and friends. Finally in John 11:45-57 we sadly see the lack of faith of some of the witnesses and of the religious leaders. Which group are you in dear reader?

**Bob Utley** - Jesus asserts that the raising of Lazarus was not because of His friendship with Lazarus or because of the grieving of Mary and Martha, but to (1) enhance the disciples' faith (Jn 11:14) and (2) encourage the faith of the Jewish crowd at Lazarus' funeral (John 11:42) Faith is a process in John. Sometimes it develops (i.e., disciples, cf. John 2:11), sometimes not (i.e., the bystanders, cf. John 8:31-59).

I like what **Rodney Whitacre** says about faith - Faith must be exercised in the face of each new revelation, and each new revelation is taking the disciples nearer to the ultimate revelation in the most extremely scandalous event, the **Cross**—the ultimate revelation of God's light and life and love and thus the ultimate manifestation of God that faith must grasp hold of. As God reveals more of Himself and his ways to us we must likewise have a faith that both grasps firmly onto him as He is revealed in Jesus and also is able to be stretched and deepened (**ED**: cf Jn 7:17+). Faith enables us to rest in God, but God Himself also keeps us on the move as we continue to grow closer to Him forever. ([Jesus Raises Lazarus 11:1-54](#)) And beloved one day our faith will be instantly transformed into sight (1Cor 13:12,13+, cf 1Jn 3:2+! Hallelujah.

**THOUGHT** - It is interesting that the disciples had already begun to believe in Him, but clearly their faith was not fully formed. One wonders exactly when they were born again, but the Scripture is not clear for most of the apostles (except for someone like the apostle Paul on the Damascus Road and possible Thomas in John 20:28). This is encouraging to me, because I can't give an exact date as to when I was born again and can see my faith growing over a period of time as I was reading the Scriptures. Perhaps you too don't know the exact day you were born again, but that should not disturb you. The real question has your (my) life demonstrated a radical change for pursuing darkness to pursuing light? If not read 2Co 13:5+.

**NET Note** on **so that you may believe** - Why does Jesus make this statement? It seems necessary to understand the disciples' belief here in a developmental sense, because there are numerous references to the disciples' faith previous to this in John's Gospel, notably Jn 2:11+. Their concept of who Jesus really was is continually being expanded and challenged; they are undergoing spiritual growth; the climax is reached in the confession of Thomas in John 20:28.

Jn 2:11+ This beginning of His signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and **His disciples believed in Him.**" So almost 3 years earlier they had believed in Jesus but Jesus' purpose that they may "believe" would seem to be so that their faith would grow and be strengthened.

**THOUGHT** - As we spend time with Jesus in His Word, listening to and obeying His voice, we increase in our knowledge of Him and our faith becomes more founded on the truth of Who He is. Paul writes "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." (Ro 10:17+). Are you in His Word, so that His Word might get into your innermost being and stabilize your faith in Him? If your faith is shaky or a bit on the fickle side, could

the problem be your paucity of pondering His voice?

**But let us go to him** - Don't miss what Jesus is saying here. He knows Lazarus is dead, but so vital and real is His relationship, He is saying (in essence) tht death did not (and could not) break His personal relationship with His friend Lazarus.

**THOUGHT** - This truth should infuse your heart with joy and hope and anticipation. We are His friend today (Jn 15:13-15+), but when we fall asleep it will not sever the cord of communion, but only solidify and strengthen it, for when we see Him face to face, we will be like Him and that change will last forever (1Jn 3:2+). Let this future hope fortify your faith in your present trials (cf Vertical Vision), which are "light," "momentary" and will yield "an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison!" (2Cor 4:17+).

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**Believe** (4100) **pisteuo** from **pistis**; **pistos**; related studies [the faith](#), the [obedience of faith](#) means to consider something to be true and therefore worthy of one's trust. To accept as true, genuine, or real. To have a firm conviction as to the goodness, efficacy, or ability of something or someone. To consider to be true. To accept the word or evidence of. **Vincent** notes that **pisteuo** "means to persuade, to cause belief, to induce one to do something by persuading, and so runs into the meaning of to obey, properly as the result of persuasion. In secular Greek literature, as well as in the New Testament, **pisteuo** (pistis, pistos) has a basic meaning of an intellectual assent or a belief that something is true.

Jn. 1:7; Jn. 1:12; Jn. 1:50; Jn. 2:11; Jn. 2:22; Jn. 2:23; Jn. 2:24; Jn. 3:12; Jn. 3:15; Jn. 3:16; Jn. 3:18; Jn. 3:36; Jn. 4:21; Jn. 4:39; Jn. 4:41; Jn. 4:42; Jn. 4:48; Jn. 4:50; Jn. 4:53; Jn. 5:24; Jn. 5:38; Jn. 5:44; Jn. 5:46; Jn. 5:47; Jn. 6:29; Jn. 6:30; Jn. 6:35; Jn. 6:36; Jn. 6:40; Jn. 6:47; Jn. 6:64; Jn. 6:69; Jn. 7:5; Jn. 7:31; Jn. 7:38; Jn. 7:39; Jn. 7:48; Jn. 8:24; Jn. 8:30; Jn. 8:31; Jn. 8:45; Jn. 8:46; Jn. 9:18; Jn. 9:35; Jn. 9:36; Jn. 9:38; Jn. 10:25; Jn. 10:26; Jn. 10:37; Jn. 10:38; Jn. 10:42; Jn. 11:15; Jn. 11:25; Jn. 11:26; Jn. 11:27; Jn. 11:40; Jn. 11:42; Jn. 11:45; Jn. 11:48; Jn. 12:11; Jn. 12:36; Jn. 12:37; Jn. 12:38; Jn. 12:39; Jn. 12:42; Jn. 12:44; Jn. 12:46; Jn. 13:19; Jn. 14:1; Jn. 14:10; Jn. 14:11; Jn. 14:12; Jn. 14:29; Jn. 16:9; Jn. 16:27; Jn. 16:30; Jn. 16:31; Jn. 17:8; Jn. 17:20; Jn. 17:21; Jn. 19:35; Jn. 20:8; Jn. 20:25; Jn. 20:29; Jn. 20:31

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#### **C H Spurgeon - [A mystery! Saints sorrowing and Jesus glad!](#) John 11:14–15**

Jesus is talking of the death of his friend; let us listen to his words; perhaps we may find the key to his actions in the words of his lips. How surprising! He does not say, 'I regret that I have tarried so long.' He does not say, 'I ought to have hastened, but even now it is not too late.' Hear and marvel! Wonder of wonders, he says, 'I am glad that I was not there.' Glad? The word is out of place. Lazarus, by this time, is stinking in his tomb, and here is the Saviour glad! Martha and Mary are weeping their eyes out for sorrow, and yet their friend Jesus is glad. It is strange, it is passing strange. However, we may rest assured that Jesus knows better than we do, and our faith may therefore sit still and try to spell out his meaning, where our reason cannot find it at the first glance. 'I am glad,' says he, 'for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe.' We see it now: Christ is not glad because of sorrow, but only on account of the result of it. He knew that this temporary trial would help his disciples to a greater faith, and he so prizes their growth in faith that he is even glad of the sorrow which occasions it. He does as good as say, 'I am glad for your sakes that I was not there to prevent the trouble, for now that it is come, it will teach you to believe in me, and this shall be much better for you than to have been spared the affliction.' We have thus plainly before us the principle, that our Lord in his infinite wisdom and superabundant love, sets so high a value upon his people's faith, that he will not screen them from those trials by which faith is strengthened.

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**John 11:16 Therefore Thomas, who is called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, so that we may die with Him."**

BGT John 11:16 ε πεν ο ν Θωμ ς λεγ μενος Δ δυμος το ς συμμαθητα ς γωμεν κα με ς να ποθ νωμεν μετ α το .

KJV John 11:16 Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellowdisciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.

NET John 11:16 So Thomas (called Didymus) said to his fellow disciples, "Let us go too, so that we may die with him."

CSB John 11:16 Then Thomas (called "Twin") said to his fellow disciples, "Let's go so that we may die with Him."

ESV John 11:16 So Thomas, called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

NIV John 11:16 Then Thomas (called Didymus) said to the rest of the disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

NLT John 11:16 Thomas, nicknamed the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let's go, too-- and die with Jesus."

NRS John 11:16 Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

NJB John 11:16 Then Thomas -- known as the Twin -- said to the other disciples, 'Let us also go to die with him.'

NAB John 11:16 So Thomas, called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go to die with him."

YLT John 11:16 therefore said Thomas, who is called Didymus, to the fellow-disciples, 'We may go -- we also, that we may die with him,'

MIT John 11:16 Thomas, the twin, then said to his colleague-disciples, "Let us also go so we might die with him!"

- **Thomas:** Jn 20:24-29 Jn 21:2 Mt 10:3 Mk 3:18 Lu 6:15
- **Let:** Jn 11:8 Jn 13:37 Mt 26:35 Lu 22:33
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

John 20:24-29 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. 25 So the other disciples were saying to him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." 26 After eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus \*came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you." 27 Then He \*said to Thomas, "Reach here with your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand and put it into My side; and do not be unbelieving, but believing." 28 Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" 29 Jesus \*said to him, "Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed."

## "DOUBTING" THOMAS IS ALSO "DARING" THOMAS

**Therefore** - Term of conclusion. Faulty conclusion based on humanistic logic. We never do that do we? (Rhetorical!)

**Thomas**, who is called **Didymus** (Twin), **said to his fellow disciples** (sunmathetes - [sun/syn](#) + [mathetes](#) - only NT use), "**Let us also go, so that** ([hina](#) -purpose clause) **we may die** ([apothnesko](#)) **with Him** - **Thomas** derives from a Hebrew "toam" meaning "twin" (or the Greek equivalent of the Aramaic name "twin") and corresponds to the Greek for **Didymus** which also means "twin." The disciples probably thought this a "suicide mission! (Jn 11:8)" **Thomas'** exhortation to the other 11 is quite striking/surprising in view of the fact that he was later the one who had doubts about Jesus' resurrection (Jn 20:24-29+).

Notice that some of the translations capitalize "Him" (NAS, CSB) and one (NLT) even paraphrases it as "die with Jesus." The implication (and I agree) of course is that Thomas thinks that Jesus' return to the hostile environment He had just departed from (John 10:39-40+) was certain to result in His death (Jn 11:8+). And so he encourages the other disciples to **go** and be willing to die with Jesus!

**A T Robertson** calls this "Pessimistic courage surely!" Pessimism perhaps, but accurate pessimism, because if Jesus had not protected them in the Garden, they too may have been arrested and executed (cf Jn 18:1-11, 8,9)

**THOUGHT** - We do not know whose twin he was, but there are times when all of us seem to be his twin when we consider our unbelief and depressed feelings! (Wiersbe)

**Bob Utley** is probably correct when he says "This verse clearly shows Thomas' faith. He was willing to die with Jesus. The disciples needed to be shown Jesus' power over death, the great fear of mankind. The name Thomas reflects the Aramaic word for "twin" (another editorial comment), as Didymus does in Greek. The Synoptics list him as an Apostle (cf. Matt. 10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:15); the Gospel of John speaks of him often (cf. John 11:16; 14:5; 20:24-29; 21:2)."

**William Barclay** on **Thomas, who is called Didymus** - All Jews in those days had two names – one a Hebrew name by which a

man was known in his own circle, the other a Greek name by which he was known in a wider circle. **Thomas** is the Hebrew and **Didymus** the Greek for a twin.

**THOUGHT**- We do not know whose twin he (THOMAS) was, but there are times when all of us seem to be his twin when we consider our unbelief and depressed feelings! (Warren Wiersbe)

*God bless you, Thomas!*

*There are worse men than you, and not many better.*

-- C H Spurgeon

**Spurgeon** has an interesting comment that this is "A singular mixture of faith and unbelief. He so believes his Master that he is willing to die with him. He so doubts him that, although the Saviour had plainly told him that he was immortal till his work was done, yet he is afraid that his Master and all of them will be put to death. Oh, the Lord knows us better than we know ourselves, and the Lord accepts us notwithstanding our infirmities.....**Thomas** always took a dark view of things, so he thought his Master was going to be killed; but he was a brave disciple, for he said to the other disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him." There are still many very timid despondent disciples, but they cling to Christ, and, if necessary, they would die for him, as Thomas was willing to die with him. God bless you, Thomas! There are worse men than you, and not many better.

**Westcott** echoes Spurgeon writing "He will die for the love which he has, but he will not affect the faith which he has not."

**NET Note** - One gets the impression from Thomas' statement '**Let us go too, so that we may die with him**' that he was something of a pessimist resigned to his fate. And yet his dedicated loyalty to Jesus and his determination to accompany him at all costs was truly commendable. Nor is the contrast between this statement and the confession of Thomas in John 20:28, which forms the climax of the entire Fourth Gospel, to be overlooked; certainly Thomas' concept of who Jesus is has changed drastically between John 11:16 and John 20:28.

**Rodney Whitacre** on Thomas' loyalty and willingness to die - Here is an incredible picture of faith. He is not following because he sees how it all fits; he is following out of loyalty to Jesus himself. He is a model disciple at this point. As Thomas follows Jesus into what he thinks is death he is answering the call, expressed in the Synoptics, that "if anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it" (Mk 8:34-35+). ([Jesus Raises Lazarus 11:1-54](#))

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## **The Death of Doubt**

Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side,  
I will not believe. John 20:25

Today's Scripture: John 11:1–16

We know him as Doubting Thomas (see John 20:24–29), but the label isn't entirely fair. After all, how many of us would have believed that our executed leader had been resurrected? We might just as well call him "Courageous Thomas." After all, Thomas displayed impressive courage as Jesus moved purposefully into the events leading to His death.

At the death of Lazarus, Jesus had said, "Let us go back to Judea" (John 11:7), prompting a protest from the disciples. "Rabbi," they said, "a short while ago the Jews there tried to stone you, and yet you are going back?" (John 11:8). It was Thomas who said, "Let us also go, that we may die with him" (John 11:16).

Thomas's intentions proved nobler than his actions. Upon Jesus's arrest, Thomas fled with the rest (Mt. 26:56), leaving Peter and John to accompany Christ to the courtyard of the high priest. Only John followed Jesus all the way to the cross.

Despite having witnessed the resurrection of Lazarus (John 11:38–44), Thomas still could not bring himself to believe that the crucified Lord had conquered death. Not until Thomas the doubter—the human—saw the risen Lord, could he exclaim, "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28). Jesus's response gave assurance to the doubter and immeasurable comfort to us: "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed" (John 20:29). By: Tim Gustafson (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Father, teach us to act on what we do know about You and Your goodness, and trust You in faith for what we don't know.

*Real doubt searches for the light;  
unbelief is content with the darkness.*

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**QUESTION - [Who was Thomas in the Bible?](#)**



**ANSWER** - Thomas was one of the twelve apostles of Jesus Christ. In the Bible, Thomas was also called Didymus (John 11:16; 20:24), which is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew name Thomas, both meaning “twin.” Scripture does not give us the name of Thomas’s twin.

In the [Synoptic Gospels](#)—Matthew, Mark, and Luke—Thomas is mentioned only in the listings of the apostles (Matthew 10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:15). In the Gospel of John, Thomas plays a leading role in two significant accounts.

Near the end of Jesus’ earthly ministry, some people in Judea were plotting the Lord’s demise. It was during this time that Jesus and the disciples received the news that their friend Lazarus was at the point of death (John 11:1–3). Fearing for their lives, the disciples tried to talk Jesus out of returning to Lazarus’ hometown of Bethany, which was near Jerusalem where death threats certainly awaited them. Jesus was set on going, however, and Thomas spoke to his fellow disciples: “Let us also go, that we may die with him” (John 11:16). Thomas’s readiness to stay with Jesus despite the consequences is noteworthy. Although his outlook may have been pessimistic and his words rather gloomy, Thomas demonstrated extreme loyalty to Jesus.

We learn from the life of Thomas that he was deeply committed to His master, and yet he struggled with doubts and questions. On the day of His resurrection, Jesus appeared to a group of His disciples in a closed room. For some reason, Thomas was not with them for this supremely significant event (John 20:19–24). When the disciples later told Thomas they had seen the resurrected Lord, he replied, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe” (John 20:25).

With those famous words, Thomas earned a nickname that he would be remembered by throughout history—[Doubting Thomas](#). For Thomas, and for many of us, seeing is believing. But Thomas’s skepticism was not the same as worldly opposition to the truth. His doubt represents a genuine, truth-loving quest. Earlier, Jesus had warned the disciples of His imminent departure and that He was going to His Father’s house to prepare a place for them. The disciples were confused by Jesus’ mysterious language. Thomas’ honest skepticism and inquisitive nature prompted him to be the first to ask, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?” (John 14:5). Jesus answered Thomas with these notable words: “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6). Jesus wasn’t talking about knowing a route or a location but about knowing a person.

When Thomas told the other disciples that he needed proof to believe that Jesus had risen, he was speaking honestly. Sincere faith does not prohibit sincere investigation. Eight days after Jesus’ resurrection, the disciples met together again. This time Thomas was present. Jesus appeared to them once more and invited Thomas to touch the wounds and see for himself: “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe” (John 20:27). Jesus knew what Thomas needed to believe, and He provided the evidence.

Jesus lovingly met Thomas at the exact point of his need and then guided him back to faith. We can be honest with God about our doubts and questions; He understands our struggles and is quite capable of strengthening our faith. Like Thomas, we will be able to confess, “My Lord and my God!” in full confidence of who Jesus is (John 20:28).

After Jesus confirmed Thomas’s faith, He addressed all future readers of John’s Gospel with these words: “Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed” (John 20:29, NKJV). These words reach down through the ages to help and encourage all of us who have not seen the resurrected Christ and yet have believed in Him.

Some days later, Thomas was fishing with Peter and the other disciples when Jesus appeared to them at the Sea of Galilee (John 21:2). The final mention of Thomas is in Act 1:13, where he is listed among the disciples. Extrabiblical writings and Christian tradition hold that Thomas took the gospel to either Parthia or India and that he was martyred for his faith.

In the end, the nickname “Doubting Thomas” is a rather unfortunate one. It’s true that Thomas demanded evidence of the miracle of Christ’s resurrection before he accepted the truth. Doubt factored into his response to his friends, but it was not the defining quality of his life. Thomas should be better known for his loyalty, his obedience to the gospel, and his faith. [GotQuestions.org](#)

**John 11:17 So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days.**

BGT John 11:17 λθ ν ο ν ησο σε ρεν α τ ν τ σαρας δη μ ρας χοντα ν τ μνημε .

KJV John 11:17 Then when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already.

NET John 11:17 When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had been in the tomb four days already.

CSB John 11:17 When Jesus arrived, He found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days.

ESV John 11:17 Now when Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days.

NIV John 11:17 On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days.

NLT John 11:17 When Jesus arrived at Bethany, he was told that Lazarus had already been in his grave for four days.

NRS John 11:17 When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days.

NJB John 11:17 On arriving, Jesus found that Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days already.

NAB John 11:17 When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days.

YLT John 11:17 Jesus, therefore, having come, found him having been four days already in the tomb.

MIT John 11:17 When Jesus came on the scene, he found that already Lazarus had been entombed four days.

- **four:** Jn 11:39 2:19 Ho 6:2 Ac 2:27-31
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## LAZARUS LAID IN TOMB FOUR DAYS

**So (oun) when Jesus (lesous) came** - Now the scene shifts to Bethany.

**NET Note** on **Jesus (lesous) came** - There is no description of the journey itself. The author simply states that when Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had been in the tomb four days already. He had died some time before this but probably not very long (cf. Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5:6, 10 who were buried immediately after they died, as was the common practice of the time). There is some later evidence (early 3rd century) of a rabbinic belief that the soul hovered near the body of the deceased for three days, hoping to be able to return to the body. But on the fourth day it saw the beginning of decomposition and finally departed ([Leviticus Rabbah 18.1](#)). If this belief is as old as the 1st century, it might suggest the significance of the four days: After this time, resurrection would be a first-order miracle, an unequivocal demonstration of the power of God. It is not certain if the tradition is this early, but it is suggestive. Certainly the author does not appear to attach any symbolic significance to the four days in the narrative.

**He found (heurisko) that he had already been in the tomb(mnemeion) four days** - Jesus **found** what He knew He would find, a corpse. Jesus' delay had achieved His intended purpose, which was to arrive after Lazarus had been dead in the **tomb**. One point is that there is no question Lazarus was truly dead (the "nose test" would surely have proven that fact!) It is interesting to note that Lazarus must have died shortly after the messengers came from Martha and Mary. Why? It would have taken them about a day to reach Jesus. When Jesus hears, He stays two more days. And then he leaves for Bethany and would have arrived on the fourth day, the length of time Lazarus had been in the tomb.

As described in Jn 11:31 this **tomb** was like many in first century Israel and was actually a cave (sometimes an enclosure would be hewn out of the limestone rock Mt 27:60), large enough to walk in and often with shelves for additional family members. The tomb (cave) was closed with a large stone rolled in front to keep out wild enemies and grave robbers (cf Jesus' burial in Mt 27:60).

**NIV Study Bible** has an interesting note on a non-Biblical idea that "Many Jews believed that the soul remained near the body for three days after death in the hope of returning to it. If this idea was in the minds of these people, they obviously thought all hope was gone—Lazarus was irrevocably dead." (BORROW [NIV Study Bible](#))

**Rodney Whitacre** - A later Jewish text that cites an authority from the early third century A.D. says the mourners should continue to come to the tomb for three days because the dead person continues to be present. Mourning is at its height on the third day, presumably because it is the last time the dead person will be present there. "*Bar Kappara taught: Until three days [after death] the soul keeps on returning to the grave, thinking that it will go back [into the body]; but when it sees that the facial features have become disfigured, it departs and abandons it [the body]*" (Genesis Rabbah 100:7; cf. Leviticus Rabbah 18:1; Ecclesiastes Rabbah 12:6). Thus, the reference to the fourth day may be quite significant for setting the scene for another dramatic miracle. The healings in this Gospel have taken place in response to desperate needs (cf. Talbert 1992:172) from the son of the royal official who was close to death (John 4:49), to the man who was paralyzed for thirty-eight years (John 5:5), to the man born blind (John 9:1). Now we come to the climax of this sequence. ([Jesus Raises Lazarus 11:1-54](#))

**Spurgeon** - So that he was probably dead as soon as the messengers arrived to tell the Saviour that he was ill...You know that, in the East, they have to bury the dead almost immediately because of the heat of the climate; so that Lazarus was, not long after he

was dead, put away in the family vault.

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**Tomb** (3419) **mnemeion** from **mneme** = memory, remembrance) literally means a memorial and then a monument to commemorate the dead (Mt 23:29), but most often referred to a tomb, grave or sepulcher. Most uses refer to the tomb in which Jesus' dead body was laid - Mt 27:60; Mt 28:8; Mk 15:46; 16:2, 3, 5, 8; Lk 23:55; 24:1, 2, 9, 12, 22, 24; John 19:42; 20:1-4, 6, 8, 11 Acts 13:29.

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**Vayikra Rabbah 18.1** - Rabbi Abba son of Rav Pappi and Rabbi Yehoshua of Sakhnin in the name of Rabbi Levi: For the first three days, the soul hovers over the body, thinking that it will return to it. When it sees that the aura of the countenance has changed, it goes on its way, as it is written: "But his flesh [on him is painful, and his soul mourns over him]" (Job 14:22). Bar Kappara said: The full intensity of mourning remains for three days. Why? Because the form of the face is recognizable, as we learned: One may testify only regarding the countenance of the face with the nose...and one may testify only up to three days. "The wheel will be smashed into the cistern" (Ecclesiastes 12:6). Two *amora'im*, one said: Like those wheels of Tzipori. One said: Like the clods in Tiberias, as it is stated: "The clods of the stream are sweet to him" (Job 21:33). ([Source](#))

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**John 11:18 Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off;**

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BGT John 11:18 ν ὁ Βηθαν ἀ γ γ ς τ ν ἐροσολ μων ς π σταδ ὶων δεκαπ ντε.

KJV John 11:18 Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off:

NET John 11:18 (Now Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem,

CSB John 11:18 Bethany was near Jerusalem (about two miles away).

ESV John 11:18 Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off,

NIV John 11:18 Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem,

NLT John 11:18 Bethany was only a few miles down the road from Jerusalem,

NRS John 11:18 Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away,

NJB John 11:18 Bethany is only about two miles from Jerusalem,

NAB John 11:18 Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, only about two miles away.

YLT John 11:18 And Bethany was nigh to Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off,

MIT John 11:18 Bethany was near Jerusalem—about 2,775 meters away.

- **about two miles**, Jn 6:19 Lu 24:13 Rev 14:20 21:16
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## BETHANY NEAR JERUSALEM

**Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off** - Here we encounter another parenthetical statement by John which indicates that the news of the soon to be miracle would surely be heard in Jerusalem, and especially by the religious leaders. It is interesting that the modern name of **Bethany** is memorialized in Arabic **Al-Eizariya** or **al-Aizariya** meaning "The Place of Lazarus." It is surprising that the Arabs would name a place in a way that memorialized Jesus resurrection of Lazarus. One would think this might cause Arabs to wonder if [Isa \(Arab name for Jesus\)](#) is really more than just a prophet who Himself died and was not resurrection (according to Muslim belief) and yet here in "The Place of Lazarus" He resurrects Lazarus.

**NET Note** on **about two miles off** - Or "three kilometers"; Grk "fifteen stades" (a stade as a unit of linear measure is about 607 feet or 187 meters).

**Spurgeon** - An easy walk of somewhere about two miles. Just a nice little walk which our Saviour had often taken in the evening after the toils of the day in Jerusalem. He had loved to make Bethany his quiet resting-place. "Fifteen furlongs off."

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**John 11:19 and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary, to console them concerning their brother.**

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BGT John 11:19 πολλοὶ δὲ τῶν οὐδαίων ἦλθουσιν πρὸς τὴν Μάρθαν καὶ Μαρμίνα παραμυθίσονται αὐτὸς περὶ τὸ δέλεο.

KJV John 11:19 And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.

NET John 11:19 so many of the Jewish people of the region had come to Martha and Mary to console them over the loss of their brother.)

CSB John 11:19 Many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother.

ESV John 11:19 and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother.

NIV John 11:19 and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother.

NLT John 11:19 and many of the people had come to console Martha and Mary in their loss.

NRS John 11:19 and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother.

NJB John 11:19 and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother.

NAB John 11:19 And many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother.

YLT John 11:19 and many of the Jews had come unto Martha and Mary, that they might comfort them concerning their brother;

MIT John 11:19 Many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother.

- **to console:** Ge 37:35 2Sa 10:2 1Ch 7:21,22 Job 2:11 42:11 Ec 7:2 Isa 51:19 Jer 16:5-7 La 1:2,9,16,21 2:13 Ro 12:15 2Co 1:4 1Th 4:18 5:11
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **MANY JEWS COME TO COMFORT THE SISTERS**

**and many of the Jews** (used in a neutral sense here) **had come to Martha and Mary, to console** ([paramutheomai](#) - comfort, offer sympathy to) **them concerning their brother** - **Many of the Jews** indicates that apparently this family was known and respected enough to draw **many Jews** to Bethany to **console** the sisters and mourn. It is very likely that some among the mourners were there to inform the authorities of Jesus' presence, which does happen after the raising of Lazarus (John 11:46). God in His providence would ensure that there would be **many** Jewish witnesses to this great miracle.

**NET Note** on **many of the Jews** - Or "many of the Judeans" (cf. BDAG 479 s.v. οὐδαῖος 2.e); Greek "many of the Jews." Here the phrase refers to the residents of Jerusalem and the surrounding area in general (those who had been friends or relatives of Lazarus or his sisters would mainly be in view) since the Jewish religious authorities ("the chief priests and the Pharisees") are specifically mentioned as a separate group in John 11:46–47. See also the note on the phrase "the Jewish leaders" in Jn 11:8.

**Merrill Tenney** - "A procession composed of relatives, friends, and sometimes hired mourners accompanied a body to the grave; and mourning usually lasted for several days afterward." (BORROW [John the Gospel of Belief: An Analytic Study of the Text](#))

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**Console** (3888) [paramutheomai](#) from **para** = towards, beside, pictures one coming to another's side of one to stimulate or comfort + **muthéomai** = to speak from **múthos** = a tale, myth, speech) literally means to speak to someone coming close to his or her side and speak to them in a friendly way. The meaning can develop along two main lines -- with reference to rousing up someone's will about what ought to be done (admonish to something) or with reference to what has happened rousing up hope for a good outcome (to console about something, cheer up - as in a secular use - "consolation for Alexander when he was depressed") It was used in secular Greek especially in connection with death or other tragic events. In the NT it means to relate near, encourage, console (to serve as a source of comfort in disappointment, loss, sadness, trouble). The idea is to speak kindly or soothingly so as to comfort or pacify.

As someone has said **paramutheomai** denotes the soothing and encouraging side of exhortation, inspiring the converts to continue the desired course of action. It means to encourage in the sense of comfort and consolation which is critical in assisting spiritual growth because of the many obstacles and failures Christians can experience.

**Paramutheomai** was a word reserved for the tender, restorative, compassionate uplifting needed by a struggling, burdened, heartbroken spiritual child.

**John 11:20 Martha therefore, when she heard that Jesus was coming, went to meet Him, but Mary stayed at the house.**

BGT John 11:20 ο υ Μ ρθα ς κουσεν τι ησο ς ρχεται π ντησεν α τ · Μαρι μ δ ν τ ο κ καθ ζετο.

KJV John 11:20 Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat still in the house.

NET John 11:20 So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary was sitting in the house.

CSB John 11:20 As soon as Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet Him. But Mary remained seated in the house.

ESV John 11:20 So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, but Mary remained seated in the house.

NIV John 11:20 When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home.

NLT John 11:20 When Martha got word that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him. But Mary stayed in the house.

NRS John 11:20 When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home.

NJB John 11:20 When Martha heard that Jesus was coming she went to meet him. Mary remained sitting in the house.

NAB John 11:20 When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him; but Mary sat at home.

YLT John 11:20 Martha, therefore, when she heard that Jesus doth come, met him, and Mary kept sitting in the house.

MIT John 11:20 When Martha heard that Jesus was on the way, she met him. Mary was sitting at home.

- **when she heard that Jesus was coming:** Jn 11:30 Mt 25:1,6 Ac 10:25 28:15 1Th 4:17
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## MARTHA GOES TO MEET JESUS

**Martha** therefore, when she heard that Jesus ([lesous](#)) was coming, went to meet Him, but **Mary** stayed at the house - **Martha** was a woman of action and goes out to meet Jesus. We shall see she was a woman of faith (not to say Mary was not) **Mary** apparently had heard Jesus was coming but chose to remain home. Why did Martha go out? It is likely she understood the danger Jesus would be in if He came into the village.

*One finds Martha occupied with the responsibilities of hospitality.*

**NET Note** on **went to meet Him** - Notice the difference in the response of the two sisters: Martha **went out to** meet Jesus, while Mary remains **sitting** in the house. It is similar to the incident in Luke 10:38–42. Here again one finds Martha occupied with the responsibilities of hospitality; she is the one who greets Jesus.

**Bob Utley** - "**Mary stayed at the house**" The usual position for Jewish mourning was sitting on the floor. [SPECIAL TOPIC: GRIEVING RITES](#)

**Spurgeon** - Because she had not heard that Jesus was come, or else, no doubt, she would have been there as soon as Martha....You will often hear people praising Mary at the expense of Martha, but although Mary is commended for sitting at Christ's feet, Martha here was the first to meet her Lord. The varying characters of different persons come out best at different times. Mary is best at sermon-time, she forgets the cups and the platters, but Martha is the more practical in the time of grief. She is active, and does not give way as Mary does. She is not so contemplative, and not so crushed as Mary is, so she is the first to go to meet her Lord.

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**Brian Bell** - MARTHA & MARY! Christ's arrival sparks some reactions in Mary & Martha. We note some similarities & some contrasts. In verse 20 we see the contrasts: Martha ran to meet; Mary sat in the house. Every family seems to have an activist & a contemplative! a) The Activist has to do something. He's coming, I'll run to him. "I'll do all the house work, you just sit there Mary", says Martha Stewart. b) The Contemplative says, I'll just sit here & pray, ponder, think, cry, study, journal, I'll just feel this for awhile, says Mary. c) Important --> They grieve & mourn differently...& that's perfectly ok by Jesus! He meets them right where their personality takes them. In verse 21 & 32 we see the similarity of their initial greetings. a) Although their words are the same, their posture is not. b) Martha runs to him, active & erect; Mary falls at His feet, passive & prostrate. c) Martha said them to His face; Mary cried them at His feet. Here's the noted difference...Martha needed Intellectual propping up; Mary needed emotional support! a) Martha needed to know that Jesus was in control. b) Mary needed to know that Jesus cared. 5. How did Jesus handle both of these friends? Without rebukes or reservations. a) He met each sister where she was, whether standing or prostrate; whether needing intellectual or emotional support. b) One evoked theological truths & promises; the other evoked tears!

Many Christians often feel that bringing glory to God means putting on a happy face no matter what is happening in our lives. 1. If we're sad, angry, confused, or hurting, we somehow feel that if we don't have these difficult feelings wrapped up neatly in a moments time, we've betrayed the faith & put a blot on our testimony to Jesus. 2. But, not once did he tell anyone, "Stop crying!" Or "How dare you question Me!" 3. When you grieve, when you're confused, even when you're angry, don't try to hide your feelings from God & pretend every thing's alright. a) He knows you better than that. b) And since He is the Truth...He can handle the truth!!!

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**Steven Cole** - In her famous 1969 book, *On Death and Dying*, Elisabeth Kubler-Ross identified five common stages of grief. While not everyone goes through all five stages in order or in equal intensity, often grieving people encounter one or more of the stages when they face a significant loss: (1) denial; (2) anger; (3) bargaining; (4) depression; and, (5) acceptance. Although these stages have been challenged and misapplied, most of us can identify with some of them if we have lost a loved one. But what's missing, as we should expect from a secular source, is an eternal, God-centered perspective: How should believers in Christ deal with grief?

**John 11:21 Martha then said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died."**

BGT John 11:21 ε πεν ο ν Μ ρθα πρ ς τ ν η σο ν κ ριε, ε ς δε ο κ ν π θανε ν δε λφ ς μου·

KJV John 11:21 Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

NET John 11:21 Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.

CSB John 11:21 Then Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother wouldn't have died.

ESV John 11:21 Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.

NIV John 11:21 "Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died.

NLT John 11:21 Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died.

NRS John 11:21 Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.

NJB John 11:21 Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died,

NAB John 11:21 Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.

YLT John 11:21 Martha, therefore, said unto Jesus, 'Sir, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died;

MIT John 11:21 Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, had you been here, my brother would not have died.

- if: Jn 11:32,37 4:47-49 1Ki 17:18 Ps 78:19,41 Mt 9:18 Lu 7:6-10,13-15 Lu 8:49-55
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

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

John 11:37 But some of them said, "Could not this man, who opened the eyes of the blind man, have kept this man also from dying?"

**Martha then said to Jesus ([lesous](#)), "Lord ([kurios](#)), if You had been here, my brother would not have died ([apothnesko](#))** - She

is correct, but does not understand why it had to happen this way. **Martha** expresses a degree of faith in Jesus' power over sickness, not knowing that Jesus' delay had a higher and holier purpose she would soon witness. Mary makes almost the exact statement in Jn 11:32. What Martha does not understand and will soon hear and see, is that Jesus is Himself LIFE (Jn 11:25)! It is unlikely that she believes Jesus could resurrect her brother, based on her reaction to His command in John 11:39 to remove the stone from in front of the tomb.

**THOUGHT** - (Lowell Johnson) Are you haunted by the ghost of the "if only's" in your past? "If only I had not said that; if only I had not done that; if only I had taken him seriously; if only I had prayed about it."

**Tex Hudson** - "If" looks back - "If" emphasizes the selfishness of our lives - "If" seeks for explanation and excuses; shaking our fist at God; God does not owe us an explanation. "**Lord**" – acknowledges control, etc.

**John MacArthur on Martha said...** - Although obviously heartbroken, she was not rebuking the Lord for failing to prevent Lazarus's death. As noted in the previous chapter of this volume, the sisters' message had arrived too late, humanly speaking, for Jesus to have returned to Bethany in time to heal him. Martha's words were simply a poignant expression of grief mingled with the faith she expressed in her next statement: "**Even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You.**" That confidence, however, evidently did not extend to Jesus' ability to resurrect her brother, as her later hesitation when the tomb was opened makes clear (Jn 11:39). She seems to have had faith in the Lord's power to heal, but not in His power to raise the dead (perhaps the possibility had not even crossed her mind). ([John 1-11 Commentary](#))

**Edwin Blum** agrees with MacArthur writing "**Martha**, the activist, **went... to meet** Jesus while **Mary**, the contemplative sister, waited. (Cf. Luke 10:39-42 for a similar portrayal of their personalities.) Martha's greeting is a confession of faith. She really believed that **Jesus** could have healed her brother **if He had been** there. No criticism of Jesus seems to be implied since she knew her **brother** was dead before the messengers got to Jesus. ([The Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**D A Carson** - Her first words to Jesus are not a rebuke, as if she were saying that Jesus ought to have been there. Rather, they are words of grief and of faith: she is confident that if Jesus had been present while her brother lay ill, Jesus would have healed him. (See [Gospel of John - scroll down and click on page 412 to see this comment in context](#))

**Bob Utley** - "**Martha said. . .if You had been here, my brother would not have died**" This is a SECOND CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCE which is called "contrary to fact." It would therefore be understood as , "*If you had been here with us, which you were not, my brother would not have died, which he did.*" Martha and Mary's statements (cf. John 11:32) to Jesus are exactly alike. They must have discussed this subject often during these four days of mourning. These two women felt comfortable enough with Jesus to express to Him their veiled disappointment that He had not come earlier. How often humans, even believing humans, do not understand the work of God! Lazarus' sufferings had a larger purpose

**William Hendriksen on Martha said...** - This remark must not be viewed as an expression of reproach or resentment, as if Martha were saying, "Why did you have to dawdle for two whole days, remaining when you knew very well that we needed you so badly?" It is not the utterance of disappointment with Jesus. Martha knew very well that it would have been very difficult (if not actually impossible, except by means of a miracle) for Jesus to have reached the home at Bethany in time to heal Lazarus. Humanly speaking the message had arrived too late. Accordingly, we must look upon Martha's words as the expression of poignant grief. (BORROW [Exposition of Gospel According to John](#) page 146)

**Brian Bell** on **if You had been here** - We also learn to take our "if's" to Jesus. How broad the blame we place on "if's" little shoulders! "If only we hadn't moved here!" "If only I hadn't married him/her!" "If only I hadn't listen to her/him!" "If only we had more money!" What are your "if only's"? - Take them to Jesus, like Mary & Martha did. God is in control & He cares!!!

**THOUGHT** - If we look back over our lives, we can all identify times when God could have intervened for us, but did not. He could have changed things. Yet for some reason we can't understand, He did not. At such times it's likely that we too mix a measure of faith with a measure of reproach. Let's remember the rest of this story. Then let faith grow and reproach go. (Lawrence Richards)

The little word "if" is in truth such a big word in John 11 (and the Bible - over 1600 uses!) - 9x/9v - Jn. 11:9; Jn. 11:10; Jn. 11:12; Jn. 11:21; Jn. 11:25; Jn. 11:32; Jn. 11:40; Jn. 11:48; Jn. 11:57. In the present context we see the futility of Martha's "if."

**Johann Bengel** has a fascinating comment - "It accords beautifully with divine propriety that we read of no one having died while the Prince of life was present.

**Wiersbe** - Each experience of suffering and trial ought to increase our faith, but this kind of spiritual growth is not automatic. We must respond positively to the ministry of the Word and the Spirit of God. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Rodney Whitacre** offers an interesting analysis of Martha's faith at this juncture writing that "She continues to believe in him even

though Lazarus' death seems to call into question the messengers' report that Jesus had said, *This sickness will not end in death* (Jn 11:4). Moreover, even though Jesus has delayed coming to help, she continues to believe that Jesus is the agent of the gracious God—despite the fact that this graciousness was not present to heal her brother. Her trust in God's love for one that Christ clearly loved (Jn 11:3) is not shaken by what seems like indifference or disregard (cf. Job 13:15; Hab 3:16-19). In this way Martha is an example of stellar faith, which should encourage all believers who face situations in which God seems to be absent or uncaring. The hard parts of life are occasions for learning about God and drawing closer to him. ([Jesus Raises Lazarus 11:1-54](#))

[Steven Cole](#) points out that "mixed with that faith is some unbelief. Surely Martha and Mary (Jn 11:32) had heard how Jesus had healed the royal official's son from a distance (Jn 4:46-54). Jesus didn't have to be physically present to heal Lazarus before he died. So the sisters' comments reflect a failure to recognize that God was in control of where Jesus was when Lazarus got sick and how quickly or slowly Jesus responded when He got the news. But most of us have thought just as Martha and Mary thought in this trial: If only things had been different! We replay in our minds: "If only I had not done what I did, the accident would not have happened!" "If only the timing had been different, the tragedy would not have happened!" But it's really a contradiction to say, "Lord, if only things had been different." If He's the Lord, then He is in control of all our circumstances. Surely, He wasn't asleep or distracted when our tragedy happened! The Bible repeatedly affirms that God is in control of all things, including tragedies (Job 42:2; Ps. 103:19; 115:3; Isa. 46:10; Eph. 1:11)...I trust that most of you believe that, but there are some who claim to be evangelicals, but they deny that God is sovereign over evil or tragedies that happen. Their view is called "open theism." (At least one Flagstaff church holds this view.) John Sanders, an open theist, has written (*The God who Risks: A Theology of Providence* [IVP], p. 262; cited by John Piper, *The Hidden Smile of God* [Crossway Books], p. 24): God does not have a specific divine purpose for each and every occurrence of evil.... *When a two-month-old child contracts a painful, incurable bone cancer that means suffering and death, it is pointless evil. The Holocaust is pointless evil. The rape and dismemberment of a young girl is pointless evil. The accident that caused the death of my brother was a tragedy. God does not have a specific purpose in mind for these occurrences.* In my estimation, that view not only denies what the Bible repeatedly affirms, namely, the absolute sovereignty of God. Also, it robs believers of the comfort of knowing that God is in control of all our circumstances, even when we can't make sense out of them....even though we often don't understand the reason for our trials, we can know that the Lord wants us to trust Him and to gain a bigger view of His glory.

**Spurgeon** - They had often said to one another, "Oh, we wish the Lord were come." They had sent for him. They felt sure that he would come. But, alas, their brother had died before the Master had arrived; and now this thought which was uppermost in their hearts is uppermost in their speech, "*Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died*".....**There seems to have been just a tinge of reproach in Martha's words, and Mary said exactly the same words to their dear Master and Friend a little later;** and I have often heard Martha and Mary talk in this fashion: "Oh, if we had only had another doctor!" or, "If our dear friend had not gone to the seaside;" or, possibly, "If he had gone to the seaside, he might not have died." Well now, beloved friends, you have grief enough in having lost your relative or friend without adding to it by these unwise suppositions about what might have happened if you had done something else. Do not fall into that mistake and wound yourselves and grieve your best friend by unnecessary and useless regrets. (Full sermon [Faith Seeing God's Glory](#))

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Andrew Murray - Beware, in your prayer, above everything, of limiting God, not only by unbelief, but by fancying that you know what He can do. Expect unexpected things, above all that we ask or think. Each time you intercede, be quiet first and worship God in His glory. Think of what He can do, of how He delights to hear Christ, of your place in Christ; and expect great things.

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**Warren Wiersbe** - Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died." Jn 11:21 (New Testament Words)

Disappointment, sickness, death, and sorrow are woven into the fabric of our lives, and when they come, we must not be surprised. We must face them honestly and deal with them courageously by faith. Understanding three little words in John 11 can help us.

If is the word that hurts. Jesus and his disciples were staying at Bethabara (John 10:40; see 1:28), about twenty miles from Bethany; and it took the sisters' messenger at least a day to get there. But before that day ended, Lazarus died (11:39) and Jesus knew it; yet he remained where he was! John assures us that "Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus" (v. 5). But if he loved them, why didn't he hurry to Bethany and heal Lazarus, or just speak the word and heal from a distance? But God's delays are not God's denials, and Jesus had something better planned for the two sisters: Lazarus would glorify God (v. 40). Jesus waited two days and then went to Bethany. Both Martha and Mary (v. 32) used this painful word if when they met Jesus, and you and I have used it too. "If we had taken a different route." "If I had remembered the appointment." "If she had never left home." The word if hurts because it's a word of unbelief, and unbelief only makes matters worse. When we say if to the Lord, we are saying that he doesn't know what he is doing and that we have a better plan. We are looking back instead of looking up. We should say "Lord" but forget about the if. Jesus is here with us (Matt. 28:20).



Lord is the word that heals. It is used eight times in John 11, six times by the sisters. To call Jesus Lord is to affirm that he is the Son of God and the Master of everything in our lives, but to call him Lord and question his will is not evidence of strong faith. Jesus had sent his message to the sisters, saying, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it" (John 11:4). Whenever we are disappointed with the will of God, it's time to affirm our faith in his wisdom and his love. In spite of what happens and no matter how much we hurt, God loves us, and you can put your own name in verses 3, 5, and 36. Never forget that the will of God comes from the loving heart of God (Ps. 33:11), and though the Lord may hurt us, he will never harm us. He is the Lord of life and death (John 11:25–26) and he will work out everything for our good and his glory. It's easy to say the word Lord with our lips and yet have reservations in our heart, and this grieves the Lord. Another word must come before Lord.

Yes is the word that heartens. Martha's "Yes, Lord, I believe" (Jn 11:27) was the turning point in the whole occasion. When we say yes to the Lord, and not, "Not so, Lord," as Peter did (Acts 10:14), we win the smile of his approval and the grace we need to trust him, obey him, and allow him to work. Our yes of faith transforms misery into miracle. When at the grave, Martha began to resist (Jn 11:39–40) until Jesus reassured her, and she agreed to open the grave. Jesus spoke the word and God's power gave Lazarus life and carried him to the door of the tomb (his feet were bound). God was glorified, not only in the resurrection of Lazarus but also in the faith of the spectators who trusted Jesus (v. 45; see 12:17–19).

The next time the situation is difficult, let's say yes to the Lord and ask that he be glorified. He will take care of the rest and our hearts will be at peace.

For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.

2 Corinthians 1:20

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### [Moving at the Speed of Jesus](#)

"Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died." John 11:21

Today's Scripture & Insight: John 11:14–27

Recently, my car needed work. The mechanic's shop was close, a mile from my home. So I decided to just walk home. But as I shuffled along next to a bustling thoroughfare, I noticed something: Everyone else was moving so fast.

This isn't rocket science. Cars go faster than pedestrians. Zip, zip, zip! As I ambled home, I had a realization: We're so used to moving fast. All the time. Then, another realization: I often expect God to move just as quickly. I want His plans to fit my speedy timetable.

When Jesus lived on earth, His seemingly slow pace sometimes disappointed His friends. In John 11, Mary and Martha sent word that their brother, Lazarus, was sick. They knew Jesus could help (vv. 1–3). But He arrived some four days later (v. 17), after Lazarus had died. " 'Lord,' Martha said to Jesus, 'if you had been here, my brother would not have died' " (v. 21). Translation: Jesus didn't move fast enough. But He had bigger plans: raising Lazarus from the dead (vv. 38–44).

Can you relate to Martha's desperation? I can. Sometimes, I long for Jesus to move more quickly to answer a prayer. Sometimes, it seems like He's late. But Jesus' sovereign schedule is different from ours. He accomplishes His saving work on His timetable, not ours. And the ultimate outcome displays His glory and goodness in ways that are so much greater than our plans. By: Adam R. Holz (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

When have you been disappointed that Jesus seemingly didn't answer a prayer, only to realize He was accomplishing something bigger? How did that realization affect your perception of God and His sovereignty?

Father, sometimes I get so impatient. Help me to trust in Your perfect timing and to cling to Your goodness in faith.

To learn more about the life of Christ, visit [ChristianUniversity.org/NT111](http://ChristianUniversity.org/NT111).

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**IF**— If thou canst do anything.... If thou canst believe.... Mark 9:22, 23.

Martha and Mary said, "If thou hadst been here, my brother had not died" (John 11:21). Jesus said, "If thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God" (John 11:40). The father of the demonized boy had the wrong "if." There are no ifs about what God can do. The ifs are on our side. That harassed father finally got around to the solution: "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief" (Mark 9:24). He confessed unbelief but took sides with his faith. We are so inclined to say, "I doubt, help Thou my faith." We need to stop being iffy and be not faithless but believing. (Vance Havner - BORROW [All the Days](#))

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BGT John 11:22 [ λλ ] κα ν ν ο δα τι σα ν α τ σ τ ν θε ν δ σει σοι θε ς.

KJV John 11:22 But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.

NET John 11:22 But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will grant you."

CSB John 11:22 Yet even now I know that whatever You ask from God, God will give You."

ESV John 11:22 But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you."

NIV John 11:22 But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask."

NLT John 11:22 But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask."

NRS John 11:22 But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him."

NJB John 11:22 but even now I know that God will grant whatever you ask of him.'

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

YLT John 11:22 but even now, I have known that whatever thou mayest ask of God, God will give to thee;'

MIT John 11:22 And now I know that as much as you request from God, he will give you."

- **that:** Jn 11:41,42 9:31 Mk 9:23 Heb 11:17-19
- **God will give** Jn 3:35 5:22-27 17:2 Ps 2:8 Mt 28:18
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## MARTHA'S FAITH IN JESUS

**Even now I know (eido) that whatever You ask (aiteo) of God (theos), God will give You** - The verb for **know (eido)** means she knew beyond a shadow of a doubt. Again we see the faith of [Martha](#) who understands something of the relationship between Jesus and God, but though genuine, it is still a "defective" faith. It is interesting though that she does not refer to **God** as Jesus' Father (see Spurgeon's interpretation below). And as Vincent explains based on the verb she uses for "ask" Martha has a defective view of exactly Who Jesus actually is. That view will soon be changed by the magnificent manifestation of His power over death.

[Vincent](#) has a somewhat technical note which gives insight into Martha's statement - The verb [aiteo](#) is used of the asking of an inferior from a superior. [Erotao](#) is to ask on equal terms, and hence is always used by Christ of His own asking from the Father, in the consciousness of His equal dignity. Hence Martha, as Trench observes, "plainly reveals her poor, unworthy conception of His person, that she recognizes in Him no more than a prophet, when she ascribes that asking (aiteisthai) to Him which He never ascribes to Himself" ("Synonyms"). Bengel says: "Martha did not speak in Greek, yet John expresses her inaccurate remark, which the Lord kindly tolerated."

**Spurgeon** has a fascinating comment noting that "There is faith there, and there is unbelief too. She believes that Christ can have what He wills of God, but she does not recognize His own personal Godhead — His own power to work resurrection." (See Vincent's comment above).

**NET Note** on **whatever You ask of God** - The statement "whatever you ask from God, God will grant you" by Martha presents something of a dilemma, because she seems to be suggesting here (implicitly at least) the possibility of a resurrection for her brother. However, Martha's statement in Jn 11:39 makes it clear that she had no idea that a resurrection was still possible. How then are her words in 11:22 to be understood? It seems best to take them as a confession of Martha's continuing faith in Jesus even though He was not there in time to help her brother. She means, in effect, "*Even though You weren't here in time to help, I still believe that God grants Your requests.*"

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**Ask (154) aiteo** means to ask for something or make petition. It can mean to ask with a sense of urgency and even to the point of demanding. For example, **Thayer** notes that the use of **aiteo** in 1Cor 1:22 conveys a stronger sense of *demand*. One gets that same sense of **aiteo** in Mt 27:20 (in fact NJB translates it "demand.") Of children of God asking their Father (Mt 6:8). In Mt 7:8-11 three of the uses (Mt 7:8-9, 11) of **aiteo** are in the present tense picturing continued asking. Of the sons of Zebedee making request (present tense) of Jesus (Mt 20:20)

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## John Henry Jowett - "EVEN NOW!" John 11:17-31.

LET me consider this marvellous confession of Martha's faith. "I know that even now, whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, God will give it Thee!" Mark the "even now"! Lazarus was dead, and it was midnight in the desolate home. But "even now"! Beautiful it is when a soul's most awful crises are the seasons of its most radiant faith! Beautiful it is when our lamp shines steadily in the tempest, and when our spiritual confidence remains unshaken like a gloriously rooted tree. Beautiful it is when in our midnight men can hear the strains of the "even now"!

And let me consider the wonder of the Divine response. "I am the resurrection and the life." A faith like Martha's will always win the Saviour's best. And here is an overwhelming best before which we can only bow in silent homage and awe. He is the Fountain in whom the stagnant brook shall find currency again. He is the Life in whom the fallen dead shall rise to their feet again.

And what is this? "Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die!" We shall go to sleep, but we shall never taste the bitterness of death. In the very act of closing our material eyes we shall open our spiritual eyes, and find ourselves at home!

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### Bob Gass - How's Your Faith? (from A Fresh Word for Today)

But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. (John 11:22)

Take a moment and visit the funeral of Lazarus. Heartbroken and distraught, Martha says to Jesus, "If You had been here, my brother would not have died." That's called "if only" faith. It says, "If only we'd lived in the days of Jesus." "If only we could be prayed for by a certain person." "If only" faith plans for an epitaph, not a resurrection.

When Jesus told Martha that Lazarus would live again, she replied, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection" (John 11:24). That's called "some day" faith. People who have it sing, "In the sweet by and by." With them, everything belongs to the future. But you need to know your rights, your privileges, and your authority—right now. When you do, your life will change radically.

Finally, Martha said, "But I know that even now God will give You whatever You ask" (John 11:21, NIV). That's it—"even now" faith! In spite of all you've been through, God has the power to raise you up again. You may have been married and divorced; be struggling with habits; be living in a prison or a penthouse; be black or white, gay or straight; it doesn't matter.

BY GOD'S GRACE AND POWER, "EVEN NOW" YOU CAN COME OUT OF YOUR GRAVE AND LIVE AGAIN. ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS OPEN YOUR HEART TO JESUS TODAY.

### John 11:23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

BGT John 11:23 λ γει α τ η σο ς· ν α σ τ σ ε τ α ι δ ε λ φ ς σ ο υ .

KJV John 11:23 Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.

NET John 11:23 Jesus replied, "Your brother will come back to life again."

CSB John 11:23 "Your brother will rise again," Jesus told her.

ESV John 11:23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

NIV John 11:23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

NLT John 11:23 Jesus told her, "Your brother will rise again."

NRS John 11:23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

NJB John 11:23 Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.'

NAB John 11:23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise."

YLT John 11:23 Jesus saith to her, 'Thy brother shall rise again.'

MIT John 11:23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

- **Your:** Jn 11:43,44
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## A RESURRECTION

**Jesus (Iesous) said to her, "Your brother will rise again (anistemi)** - This is a prophetic promise although Martha did not understand it is a prophecy that would be filled in the immediate future and not on the last day (Jn 11:24). Notice Jesus does not say He will ask God (although He would in fact ask Him), for He knew He had authority over death. The One Who has the power over life and death, declares victory over death which will be manifest by Lazarus rising from the dead.

**NET Note on Your brother will rise again** - Jesus' remark to Martha that Lazarus would come back to life again is another example of the misunderstood statement. Martha apparently took it as a customary statement of consolation and joined Jesus in professing belief in the **general resurrection** of the body at the end of the age. (ED: She had this future hope, and saw it not as a hope so but a hope sure. Her hope was sure, but her timing was off.) As Jesus went on to point out in Jn 11:25–26, Martha's general understanding of the resurrection at the last day was inadequate for the present situation, for the gift of life that conquers death was a present reality to Jesus. This is consistent with the author's perspective on eternal life in the Fourth Gospel: It is not only a future reality, but something to be experienced in the present as well. It is also consistent with the so-called "realized eschatology" of the Fourth Gospel.

[Gotquestions.org](http://Gotquestions.org) - The Bible is clear that resurrection is a reality and this life is not all that there is. While death is the end of physical life, it is not the end of human existence. **Many (ED: see [Catholic encyclopedia](#)) erroneously believe that there is one general resurrection at the end of the age** but the Bible teaches that there will be not one resurrection, but a series of resurrections, some to eternal life in heaven and some to eternal damnation (Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29).

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**Rise again** (450) **anistemi** from **ana** = up, again + **histemi** = stand, to cause to stand) means literally to get up, to stand up, to stand again, to cause to rise (thus "to raise"), to stand or be erect (Acts 9:41). To rise from a lying or reclined position. To stand straight up from a prostrate position (Acts 14:10). Most uses of **anistemi** denote the act of getting up from a seated or reclined position. **Anistemi** is especially common of the preparation of a journey Lk 1:39, Lk 15:18, 20; 17:19. **Anistemi** can also be used in the sense of "to appear" or "to come" (Mt 12:41) Figuratively **anistemi** can refer to a change of position, of "rising" to a position of preeminence or power; e.g., of Christ as a prophet, Acts 3:22; 7:37; as God's servant in the midst of the nation of Israel, Acts 3:26; as the Son of God in the midst of the nation, Acts 13:33; as a priest, Heb 7:11, 15; as king over the nations, Ro. 15:12;

**Anistemi in John's Gospel** - Jn. 6:39; Jn. 6:40; Jn. 6:44; Jn. 6:54; Jn. 11:23; Jn. 11:24; Jn. 11:31; Jn. 20:9; Acts 1:15;

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### **Never Late**

Your brother will rise again. John 11:23

Today's Scripture & Insight: John 11:17–27

As a visitor to a small West African town, my American pastor made sure to arrive on time for a 10 a.m. Sunday service. Inside the humble sanctuary, however, he found the room empty. So he waited. One hour. Two hours. Finally, about 12:30 p.m., when the local pastor arrived after his long walk there—followed by some choir members and a gathering of friendly town people—the service began "in the fullness of time," as my pastor later said. "The Spirit welcomed us, and God wasn't late." My pastor understood the culture was different here for its own good reasons.

Time seems relative, but God's perfect, on-time nature is affirmed throughout the Scriptures. Thus, after Lazarus got sick and died, Jesus arrived four days later, with Lazarus' sisters asking why. "Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died" (John 11:21). We may think the same, wondering why God doesn't hurry to fix our problems. Better instead to wait by faith for His answers and power.

As theologian Howard Thurman wrote, "We wait, our Father, until at last something of thy strength becomes our strength, something of thy heart becomes our heart, something of thy forgiveness becomes our forgiveness. We wait, O God, we wait." Then, as with Lazarus, when God responds, we're miraculously blessed by what wasn't, after all, a delay. By: Patricia Raybon (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

What are you waiting for God to do or provide on your behalf? How can you wait by faith?

For You, Father, I wait. Grant me Your strength and faithful hope in my waiting.

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**Lawrence Richards - DEVOTIONAL At the Last Day (John 11:17–44)** (BORROW [The 365 day devotional commentary](#))

The words Martha blurted out put her in a category shared by many modern Christians.

Jesus had just said, "Your brother will rise again" (Jn 11:23). And Martha said, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day" (Jn 11:24).

But Jesus kept on probing. "I am the resurrection and the life," He said. "Do you believe this?" (Jn 11:25–26)

You can almost see Martha nod in puzzlement. " 'Yes, Lord,' she told Him, 'I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God.' "

It was after this that Jesus went on down to the tomb where Lazarus had laid for four days, and gave the dead man back his life. And it is only in this event that we can understand the implications of Jesus' conversation with Martha.

You see, Martha did believe. She was convinced that Jesus was the Son of God. She was convinced that He could raise her brother in the resurrection of the last day. But Martha never stopped to think that Jesus could also raise her brother then!

Like Martha, many modern Christians have a deep and abiding faith in Jesus. They are sure He has won eternal life for them, and believe in a resurrection which they will share. But, like Martha, many modern Christians limit the power of Jesus to the future. They fail to realize that Jesus brings life to the dead now.

He can take our dead hopes, and revive them.

He can take our dormant relationships, and revitalize them.

He can transform the spiritually indifferent, redirect the life of the sinner, and bring a vibrant newness to every dead area within our lives.

Martha limited Jesus by expecting Him to act only in the future. Jesus in raising Lazarus demonstrated that He is ready, willing, and able to act in our now.

**Personal Application** - Never limit Jesus. Expect Him to act, today!

**Quotable** - "The steps of faith fall on the seeming void and find rock beneath."—John Greenleaf Whittier

**John 11:24 Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day."**

BGT John 11:24 λ γει α τ Μ ρθα· ο δα τι ναστ σετ αι ν τ ναστ σει ν τ σ χ τ μ ρ .

KJV John 11:24 Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

NET John 11:24 Martha said, "I know that he will come back to life again in the resurrection at the last day."

CSB John 11:24 Martha said, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

ESV John 11:24 Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day."

NIV John 11:24 Martha answered, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

NLT John 11:24 "Yes," Martha said, "he will rise when everyone else rises, at the last day."

NRS John 11:24 Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day."

NJB John 11:24 Martha said, 'I know he will rise again at the resurrection on the last day.'

NAB John 11:24 Martha said to him, "I know he will rise, in the resurrection on the last day."

YLT John 11:24 Martha saith to him, 'I have known that he will rise again, in the rising again in the last day;'

MIT John 11:24 Martha said to him, "I know he will rise in the resurrection on the last day."

- I know: Jn 5:28,29 Ps 17:15 49:14,15 Isa 25:8 26:19 Eze 37:1-10 Da 12:2,3 Ho 6:2 13:14 Mt 22:23-32 Lu 14:14 Ac 17:31,32 23:6-9 24:15 Heb 11:35
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**MARTHA THE**

## THEOLOGIAN

**Martha said to Him, "I know ([eido](#)) that he will rise again ([anistemi](#)) in the resurrection ([anastasis](#)) on the last ([eschatos](#)) day -**

This is a very impressive statement by Martha. **I know ([eido](#))** means she knew with confidence, beyond a shadow of a doubt. Martha had heard he "will rise again," and her response is not inaccurate, but only her timing of the event, so sadly she missed the sense of Jesus' words to raise Lazarus that same day, not on the last day. On the other hand we should not be too hard on her for her statement is clearly one of faith in the future resurrection. To their credit, the Pharisees did believe in and apparently teach the resurrection (unlike the Sadducees who do not believe). The last day reflects the Jewish belief in the resurrections as alluded to in Daniel 12:2 and Isaiah 26:19 (cf Jn 5:28, 29).

**Brian Bell** - The problem the Jews had with Jesus resurrection, wasn't because they didn't believe in a resurrection(they did), just not an "individual" one.

**Spurgeon** - She could not believe the joyful meaning that Christ meant to convey to her when he said, "Thy brother shall rise again."

**Steven Cole** makes the point that "General faith for the future is easier than specific faith for the present trial. It's easier to believe that someday God will work all our trials together for good than it is to believe that He is presently working this trial for good. **C. H. Spurgeon** tells about a poor older French couple who had framed on their wall a note worth 1,000 francs. A traveler saw it and asked about it. They said that they had taken in a dying French soldier and he had given them that little picture when he was dying as a memorial of him. But they didn't realize that it was worth a small fortune if they would take it to the bank. Spurgeon applies it by exclaiming, "Oh that we had grace to turn God's bullion of gospel into current coin, and use them as our present spending money."

**Bob Utley** - Martha had the same theological view of an afterlife as the Pharisees, who believed in a bodily resurrection on the last day. There is some limited OT Scriptural evidence for this view (cf. Dan. 12:2; possibly Job 14:14; 19:25-27). Jesus turns this pharisaic hope into a physical manifestation of His power and authority (cf. John 11:25; 14:6).

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### C H Spurgeon - [Though he were dead'](#) John 11:24–26

There is an essential difference between the decease of the godly and the death of the ungodly. Death comes to the ungodly as a penal infliction, but to the righteous as a summons to his Father's palace: to the sinner it is an execution, to the saint an undressing. Death to the wicked is the King of terrors: death to the saint is the end of terrors, the commencement of glory. To die in the Lord is a covenant blessing. Death is ours; it is set down in the list of our possessions among the 'all things', and it follows 'life' in the list as if it were an equal favour. No longer is it death to die. The name remains, but the thing itself is changed. Why, then, are we in bondage through fear of death? Why do we dread the process which gives us liberty? I am told that people who in the cruel ages had lain in prison for years suffered much more in the moment of the knocking off of their fetters than they had endured for months in wearing the hard iron; and yet I suppose that no man languishing in a dungeon would have been unwilling to stretch out his arm or leg, that the heavy chains might be beaten off by the smith. We should all be content to endure that little inconvenience to obtain lasting liberty. Now, such is death, the knocking off of the fetters; yet the iron may never seem to be so truly iron as when that last liberating blow of grace is about to fall. Let us not mind the harsh grating of the key as it turns in the lock; if we understand it aright it will be as music to our ears. Imagine that your last hour is come! The key turns with pain for a moment, but, lo, the bolt is shot! The iron gate is open! The spirit is free! Glory be unto the Lord for ever and ever!

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### JEWISH BELIEF ON THE HEREAFTER

**Josephus Jos., Bel. ii. 163- 14.** (162) But then as to the two other orders at first mentioned: the Pharisees are those who are esteemed most skillful in the exact explication of their laws, and introduce the first sect. These ascribe all to fate [or providence], and to God, (163) and yet allow, that to act what is right, or the contrary, is principally in the power of men, although fate does cooperate in every action. They say that all souls are incorruptible; but that the souls of good (see [note below](#)) men are only removed into other bodies,—but that the souls of bad men are subject to eternal punishment. (164) But the Sadducees are those that compose the second order, and take away fate entirely, and suppose that God is not concerned in our doing or not doing what is evil; (165) and they say, that to act what is good, or what is evil, is at men's own choice, and that the one or the other belongs so to every one, that they may act as they please. They also take away the belief of the immortal duration of the soul, and the punishments and rewards in Hades.

There is so much more here about the Essenes than is cited from Josephus in Porphyry and Eusebius, and yet so much less about the Pharisees and Sadducees, the two other Jewish sects, than would naturally be expected in proportion to the Essenes or third sect, nay, than seems to be referred to by himself elsewhere, that one is tempted to suppose Josephus had at first written less of the one, and more of the two others, than his present copies afford us; as also, that, by some unknown accident, our present copies are here made up of

the larger edition in the first case, and of the smaller in the second. See the note in Havercamp's edition. However, what Josephus says in the name of the Pharisees, that only the souls of good men go out of one body into another, although all soul be immortal, and still the souls of the bad are liable to eternal punishment; as also what he says afterwards, Antiq. 18.1.3, that the soul's vigor is immortal, and that under the earth they receive rewards or punishments according as their lives have been virtuous or vicious in the present world; that to the bad is allotted an eternal prison, but that the good are permitted to live again in this world, are nearly agreeable to the doctrines of Christianity. Only Josephus's rejection of the return of the wicked into other bodies, or into this world, which he grants to the good, looks somewhat like a contradiction to St. Paul's account of the doctrine of the Jews, that "themselves allowed that there should be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust," Acts 24:15; yet, because Josephus's account is that of the Pharisees, and St. Paul's that of the Jews in general, and of himself, the contradiction is not very certain.

#### **Mishnah Sanhedrin 10:1**

10:1 A All Israelites have a share in the world to come,

B as it is said, Your people also shall be all righteous, they shall inherit the land forever; the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified (Is. 60:21).

C And these are the ones who have no portion in the world to come:

D (1) He who says, the resurrection of the dead is a teaching which does not derive from the Torah, (2) and the Torah does not come from Heaven; and (3) an Epicurean.

E R. Aqiba says, "Also: He who reads in heretical books,

F "and he who whispers over a wound and says, I will put none of the diseases upon you which I have put on the Egyptians, for I am the Lord who heals you (Ex. 15:26)."

G Abba Saul says, "Also: he who pronounces the divine Name as it is spelled out."

#### **John 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies,**

BGT John 11:25 ε π ε ν α τ η σ ο ς γ ε μι ν σ τ α σ ι ς κ α ζ ω · π ι σ τ ε ω ν ε ς μ κ ν πο θ ν ζ ι σ ε τ α ι,

KJV John 11:25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

NET John 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live even if he dies,

CSB John 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in Me, even if he dies, will live.

ESV John 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live,

NIV John 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies;

NLT John 11:25 Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying.

NRS John 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live,

NJB John 11:25 Jesus said: I am the resurrection. Anyone who believes in me, even though that person dies, will live,

NAB John 11:25 Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live,

YLT John 11:25 Jesus said to her, 'I am the rising again, and the life; he who is believing in me, even if he may die, shall live;

MIT John 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and life. One who believes in me—even if he dies—will live.

- **I am:** Jn 5:21 Jn 6:39,40,44 Ro 5:17-19 Ro 8:11 1Co 15:20-26,43-57 2Co 4:14 Php 3:10,20,21 1Th 4:14 Rev 20:5,10-15 21:4
- **the life:** Jn 1:4 5:26 6:35 14:6,19 Ps 36:9 Isa 38:16 Ac 3:15 Ro 8:2 Col 3:3,4 1Jn 1:1-2 1Jn 5:11-12 Rev 22:1,17
- **he who:** Jn 3:36 Job 19:25-27 Isa 26:19 Lu 23:43 Ro 4:17 Ro 8:10,11,38,39 1Co 15:18,29 2Co 5:1-8 Php 1:23 1Th 4:14 Heb 11:13-16
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

John 5:21+ "For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so **the Son also gives life** to whom He wishes.

John 6:39; 40; 44+ "This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. 40 "For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and **believes in Him will have eternal life**, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day." ....44 "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.

Romans 8:2+ For the law of the Spirit of **life in Christ Jesus** has set you free from the law of sin and of death.

Romans 8:11+ But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give **life** to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

1 John 1:1-2+ What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the **Word of Life**— 2 and **the life** was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the **eternal life**, which was with the Father and was manifested to us—

1 John 5:11-12+ And the testimony is this, that God has given us **eternal life**, and this **life** is in His Son. 12 **He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.**

1 Corinthians 15:51; 52+ Behold, I tell you a mystery; **we will not all sleep**, but we will 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 imperishable**, and we will be changed.

John 3:36+ "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

Job 19:25-27 "As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, And at the last He will take His stand on the earth. 26 "Even after my skin is destroyed, Yet from my flesh I shall see God; 27 Whom I myself shall behold, And whom my eyes will see and not another. My heart faints within me!

Isaiah 26:19 Your dead will live; Their corpses will rise. You who lie in the dust, awake and shout for joy, For your dew is as the dew of the dawn, And the earth will give birth to the departed spirits.

## I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE

**Jesus (Iesous) said to her, "I am (ego eimi; see I AM) the resurrection (anastasis) and the life (zoe)** - First, notice that Jesus did not deny what Martha had just stated about the resurrection but gave her a new revelation concerning the resurrection. Recall that "**I am**" is present tense signifying Jesus is the eternal **I Am** with whom there is no past or future. This is His fifth "**I Am**" statement in John ([see note](#)). It is notable that Jesus did not say I am He that will resurrect your brother, but stated that He Himself is the essence of **the resurrection and the life** a claim He would soon validate by raising Lazarus. Stated another way, **resurrection and life** are part and parcel of His being! Conversely, there is no resurrection to eternal life apart from union with Christ. If you know Jesus by grace through faith, you are in covenant with Him (See the oneness of covenant) and you possess **resurrection life!** (And I would add "Resurrection Power.") While Jesus did not say it, the fact is that apart from Him there is no **resurrection** from the dead and no eternal **life**. Jesus gives us life only by giving His life! As John had said earlier **"In Him was** (imperfect - continual or repeated action) **life."** (Jn 1:4+) Jesus was telling Martha that resurrection and life were not abstract events, but were in truth a person, Himself!

**Warren Wiersbe** - To the Christian believer, life is not merely a physical condition or a social experience so much as a person, and that person is Jesus Christ. Paul says that "Christ is our **life**" (see Col. 3:4), and he wrote to the believers at Philippi, "For to me, to **live** is Christ and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21). Life is what we are alive to! People "come alive" to that which excites, delights, and satisfies them, that which is at the heart of their very being; and Christians should come alive to anything that relates to Jesus Christ.



Resurrection leads to life, and Jesus is both the resurrection and the life. (BORROW [He walks with me : enjoying the abiding presence of God PAGE 96](#))

*He is also the Cause, Source, or Fountain  
of the believers' glorious resurrection and of their everlasting life*

**William Hendriksen** - Note the order: first resurrection, then life; because resurrection opens the gate to immortal life. Jesus is the resurrection and the life in person (see on John 1:3, 4+ "In Him was **life**, and the **life** was the Light of men."), the full, blessed life of God, all his glorious attributes: omniscience, wisdom, omnipotence, love, holiness, etc. As such He is also the Cause, Source, or Fountain of the believers' glorious resurrection and of their everlasting life. Because He lives we too shall live. With Him removed, nothing but death is left. With Him present, resurrection and life is assured. The Prince of life is ever the conqueror of death. Not only is He this by and by in the resurrection on the last day; He is this always. That is exactly the truth which Martha failed to grasp. (BORROW [Exposition of the Gospel according to John PAGE 150](#))

**Jamieson** - **I am the resurrection, and the life**—Martha thought of an event; Jesus revealed that he, a person, is the resurrection and the life. Life (Gk., *zōe*) that is really life (1 Tim. 6:19) is by its very nature resurrection life because it can stand the trial of death. Only one kind of life—the life of God (Eph. 4:18), the indissoluble life (Heb. 7:16), designated *zōe* in the NT—is truly life. All else that is called "life" eventually dies. Jesus was (and is) this life; therefore, he was (and is) resurrection (cf. Rev. 1:18).

**Herschel Hobbs** observes that "Jesus did not point to a future event but to Himself. The definite article with both resurrection and life — the resurrection and the life — strengthens the statement." For the believer, death is not the end. Death is not a blind alley; it is a thoroughfare. Death is not a box."

The plaque on George Washington's tomb at his Mount Vernon estate has John 11:24. ([see picture](#))

**Vincent** The words **I am** are very significant. Martha had stated the resurrection rather as a doctrine, a current tenet: Jesus states it as a fact, identified with His own person. He does not say, I raise the dead; I perform the resurrection, but **I am the resurrection**. In His own person, representing humanity, He exhibits man as immortal, but immortal only through union with Him....**The life**. The life is the larger and inclusive idea. Resurrection is involved in life as an incident developed by the temporary and apparent triumph of death. All true life is in Christ. In Him is lodged everything that is essential to life, in its origin, its maintenance, and its consummation, and all this is conveyed to the believer in his union with Him (cf Col 3:4+). This life is not affected by death.

**Frederic Godet** - "Every believer is in reality and forever sheltered from death. To die with full light, in the clear certainty of the life which is in Jesus, to die only to continue to live to Him, is no longer that fact which human language designates by the name of death. It is as though Jesus had said: In me death is certain to live, and the living is certain never to die"

**Warren Wiersbe** - Christ is able to raise the dead and meet every need of the new life that follows that miracle, because He is both "the resurrection and the life." The Lord can move into "dead" and seemingly hopeless human situations, and by His resurrection power, transform people and circumstances and infuse life that makes everything new. Over the centuries this has happened to many local churches and other ministries as well as individual lives, and it can still happen today! If you find yourself in a "dead" situation or if you are feeling a need for personal reviving (Latin, "to live again"), our Lord's statement in John 11:25–26 is the answer. Paul says that "just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life" (Ro 6:4). Unbelief and sin are connected with the old life of sin, but faith and life are connected with the new life in Christ. This is why Jesus commanded them to remove the grave clothes from Lazarus and give him the freshness and fragrance of new life (John 11:43–44). God's people need to get out of the grave and the grave clothes and start to manifest the new life in Christ..... I hope you will be able to give an enthusiastic "Yes!" answer to our Lord's question, "Do you believe this?" (John 11:26). (BORROW [He walks with me : enjoying the abiding presence of God PAGE 98](#))

Jesus addressing a multitude of Jews seeking to kill Him stated that "an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a **resurrection** of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment." (Jn 5:28, 29+) (See [The Two Resurrections - "First" and "Second" - on a timeline](#))

**Rodney Whitacre** has an interesting observation on the "I Am" statements - All of the "I am" sayings have to do with Christ as the life-giver, as is clearly the case here where we see that he does not just give life, but is life itself. As is made evident in some of the other "I am" sayings, he gives life by becoming our life (for example, John 6:51; John 15:1). ([Jesus Raises Lazarus 11:1-54](#))

**He who believes** ([pisteuo](#)) **in Me will live** ([zao](#) - spiritually) **even if he dies** ([apothnesko](#) - physically) - Note the paradox that a person who dies can still live, referring to eternal life in and with Christ. This great promise of everlasting life that can be obtained simply by believing in Jesus. **Believes** is in the present tense and all genuine believers will continue to believe in Him. **Dies** ([apothnesko](#)) is in the aorist tense describing the one time event of physical death.

As **William Hendriksen** says "Even physical death fails to quench the believer's real life; on the contrary, such death is gain (cf Php 1:21+), for it introduces him into the full enjoyment of life (ED: AKA "GLORY!")." (BORROW [Exposition of the Gospel according to John PAGE 150](#))

**Spurgeon** - She looked upon **the resurrection and the life** as things that were to be in some dim and misty future. "No," says Christ, "**I am the resurrection and the life**. Not only do I get these things by prayer from God, but I am these things." And then he goes on to explain it. He says, "I am the resurrection. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. I am the life. Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" He has taken her out of the thought of this poor common animal-life into the thought of the spiritual and higher life, which is, indeed, to the soul what the resurrection is to the body. It was well for the Saviour thus to teach her higher truth than as yet she knew. (Full sermon [Faith Seeing God's Glory](#))

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**Resurrection** ([386](#)) **anastasis** from **ana** = up, again + **histemi** = to cause to stand) literally means "to stand again" or "to cause to stand again" and most NT uses refer to a physical body rising from the dead or coming back to life after having once died. The **resurrection** is distinguished from belief in reincarnation, which usually involves a series of rebirths from which the soul may seek release. Resurrection has primary reference to the body. The resurrection is the central, defining doctrine and claim of the gospel for as Paul wrote "if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain." (1Cor 15:14)

Anastasis - Matt. 22:23; Matt. 22:28; Matt. 22:30; Matt. 22:31; Mk. 12:18; Mk. 12:23; Lk. 2:34; Lk. 14:14; Lk. 20:27; Lk. 20:33; Lk. 20:35; Lk. 20:36; Jn. 5:29; Jn. 11:24; Jn. 11:25; Acts 1:22; Acts 2:31; Acts 4:2; Acts 4:33; Acts 17:18; Acts 17:32; Acts 23:6; Acts 23:8; Acts 24:15; Acts 24:21; Acts 26:23; Rom. 1:4; Rom. 6:5; 1 Co. 15:12; 1 Co. 15:13; 1 Co. 15:21; 1 Co. 15:42; Phil. 3:10; 2 Tim. 2:18; Heb. 6:2; Heb. 11:35; 1 Pet. 1:3; 1 Pet. 3:21; Rev. 20:5; Rev. 20:6

**Life** ([2222](#)) **zoe** in Scripture is used (1) to refer to **physical life** (Ro 8:38+, 1Co 3:22, Php 1:20+, Jas 4:14, etc) but more often to (2) to **supernatural life** in contrast to a life subject to eternal death (Jn 3:36, see all 43 uses of "eternal life" below). This quality of life speaks of fullness of life which alone belongs to God the Giver of life and is available to His children now (Ro 6:4+, Ep 4:18+) as well as in eternity future (Mk 10:30, Titus 1:2+ on Eternal Life). **Richards** writes that "Zoe in classical Greek refers to natural life--the principle that enables living things to move and to grow. In the NT, zoe focuses on the theological meaning rather than on the biological. From the perspective of the NT, in every respect life is the counterpart of death. Each book of the NT speaks of zoe. In each, the principle of life lifts our vision beyond our earthly existence to reveal a unique quality of life that spans time and eternity and that has its roots in God. It is the biblical use and meaning of zoe that most concerns us as we examine what the NT says about life. (BORROW [Expository Dictionary of Bible Words](#)) **Wuest** writes that **zoe**..."speaks of life in the sense of one who is possessed of vitality and animation. It is used of the absolute fulness of life, both essential and ethical, which belongs to God. It is used to designate the life which God gives to the believing sinner, a vital, animating, spiritual, ethical dynamic which transforms his inner being and as a result, his behavior."

**Zoe in John** - Jn. 1:4; Jn. 3:15; Jn. 3:16; Jn. 3:36; Jn. 4:14; Jn. 4:36; Jn. 5:24; Jn. 5:26; Jn. 5:29; Jn. 5:39; Jn. 5:40; Jn. 6:27; Jn. 6:33; Jn. 6:35; Jn. 6:40; Jn. 6:47; Jn. 6:48; Jn. 6:51; Jn. 6:53; Jn. 6:54; Jn. 6:63; Jn. 6:68; Jn. 8:12; Jn. 10:10; Jn. 10:28; Jn. 11:25; Jn. 12:25; Jn. 12:50; Jn. 14:6; Jn. 17:2; Jn. 17:3; Jn. 20:31;

**Live** ([2198](#)) **zao** refers literally to natural physical life (opposite of death, [Acts 22:22](#), [25:24](#), [28:4](#), Ro 7:1-3, 1Cor 7:39, of Adam = 1Cor 15:45; 2Cor 4:11 = refers to natural lives of believers; Php 1:22 - "to live on in the [physical] flesh"; 1Th 4:15,17 = believers physically alive at time of Rapture; Heb 2:15; Heb 9:17; James 4:15 = "we shall live" physically if God so wills it!), to come to life after death (Mt 9:18), to recover life after sickness (Jn 4:50). **Zao** refers to supernatural, spiritual life (cf Jn 11:25, 26), Paul explaining that Christ "**lives** because of the power of God." (2Cor 13:4) In Rev 16:3 "living thing" refers to the biological life of all the sea animals. In Rev 19:20 the Antichrist and his False Prophet will be "thrown alive into the lake of fire," indicating they will have conscious awareness of their torment (forever and ever). **Zao** refers to the new birth wrought by one's faith in the Gospel (Ro 1:17) In Php 1:21 Paul said "to **live (zao)** is Christ" indicating his (as should every believer's) life found it summa bonum, it's highest good, it's truest meaning, it's greatest satisfaction, it's most complete fulfillment, IN CHRIST, in His life lived out through us!

Zao in John Jn. 4:10; Jn. 4:11; Jn. 4:50; Jn. 4:51; Jn. 4:53; Jn. 5:25; Jn. 6:51; Jn. 6:57; Jn. 6:58; Jn. 7:38; Jn. 11:25; Jn. 11:26; Jn. 14:19;

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST

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**THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST (CLICK FOR FULL PAGE)** – Every saint's great "hope is in the resurrection of the dead!" (Acts 23:6+). When Socrates lay dying, he was asked "Shall we live again," to which he replied "I hope so!" Ours is not a dead hope but "A LIVING HOPE" (1Pe 1:3+), not a "hope so," but a "hope sure!" The Egyptian belief in a resurrection from the dead led them to call the mummy case the "chest of the living" and to place a scarab beetle in the corpse's heart. Why? Because they

knew the scarab's larva buried itself in the earth and later emerged as a mature insect which to them symbolized "resurrection." Socrates and the Egyptians held a false hope, but Sir Walter Raleigh held fast to a sure hope which served as an anchor for his soul (Heb 6:19+) and prompted him to write the following words in his Bible the night before he was beheaded: "From this earth, this grave, this dust, my God shall raise me up!" Hallelujah! Martha also believed in the hope of the resurrection, but Jesus moved her from the doctrinal to the personal when He declared "I AM the RESURRECTION and the LIFE. He who believes in Me will live even if he dies." (Jn 11:25+) The resurrection is not an "IT" but an "I", but too often we stop at "IT." Jesus said "Because I live, you shall live also." (Jn 14:19+) The resurrection of believers is guaranteed by Christ's own resurrection. We can rest assured that one day soon, He will "transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory" (Php 3:21+). When we take our last breath and leave our loved ones, we can be comforted by the certainty that our grave is but a gateway to His glory (1Th 4:18, 13-17+). For believers death is not a period, but only a comma! David believed this truth writing "I will be satisfied with Thy likeness when I awake." (Ps 17:15+, cf Ps 49:15+) Job believed this truth declaring "Even after my skin is destroyed, yet from my flesh I shall see God." (Job 19:26+) Indeed, we shall SEE GOD! "Christ shall be the object of our eternal vision and we shall we never want any joy beyond that of seeing Him. Think not that this will be a narrow sphere for the mind to dwell in. It is but one Source of delight, but that Source is infinite. All His attributes shall be subjects for contemplation, and as He is infinite under each aspect, there is no fear of exhaustion. His works, His gifts, His love to us, and His glory in all His purposes, and in all His actions, these shall make an eternal theme which will be ever new." (Spurgeon) Therefore let us even now "since we have been RAISED UP WITH CHRIST (speaking of our present spiritual resurrection, Ro 6:4+, Eph 2:6+, Col 2:12+), keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Let us set our mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth, for we have died and our life is hidden with Christ in God and when Christ our life, is revealed, then we also will be revealed with Him in glory." (Col 3:1-4+) "Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is." (1Jn 3:2+) SELAH! (Pause and ponder and sing...) **Up from the grave He arose**, With a mighty triumph o'er His foes, He arose a Victor from the dark domain, And He lives forever with His saints to reign. He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!"

As Spurgeon says "The RESURRECTION of Christ is a fact better attested than any event recorded in history!" (cf >500 eye witnesses 1Cor 15:6+) "Christianity is in its very essence a RESURRECTION religion. The concept of the RESURRECTION lies at its heart. If you remove it, Christianity is destroyed." (John Stott) "The RESURRECTION of Jesus is the Gibraltar of the Christian faith and the Waterloo of infidelity and rationalism." (R A Torrey) Contrary to the opinion of the skeptics, the New Testament proclaims a Christ Who once was dead and is now alive, not a Christ Who was once alive and now is dead! J C Ryle rightly said that "in an age of abounding unbelief and skepticism, we shall find that the RESURRECTION of Christ will bear any weight that we can lay upon it." In the OT on the annual Day of Atonement, if the High Priest's offering was acceptable to God he emerged alive, but if it was unacceptable, he died behind the veil (read Heb 9:7NLT+, Ex 28:35). The coming forth of our Great High Priest (Heb 4:14+, Heb 9:11+) after making His Atonement demonstrates clearly that His offering was acceptable to the Father. The Empty Tomb is the Father's "Amen" (2Cor 1:20KJV+) to Son's cry of "It is finished (Paid in Full = Tetelestai)!" (Jn 19:30+) "Everything antecedent in the incarnate life of our Lord moves towards the RESURRECTION and everything subsequent rests upon it and is conditioned by it." (John Murray) Indeed, the "surpassing greatness of His POWER toward us who believe" is the same "RESURRECTION POWER" that brought Christ up from the grave (Eph 1:19-20) and is now operative within all those who belong to Christ (Ro 6:5, 8-12+, cf Php 3:10-11+). The same POWER that opened Christ's Tomb, now opens the door to abundant life (Jn 10:10b+)! Are you experiencing abundant life? If not consider prayerfully singing this simple song to Him: **Jesus Be Jesus in Me**. No longer me, but Thee. Resurrection Power, fill me this hour, Jesus be Jesus in Me."

Spurgeon rightly says that "The whole system of Christianity rests upon the fact that "Christ is risen from the dead" (Mt 28:7, 2Ti 2:8+) for, "If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, and your faith is also vain: you are still in your sins." (1Cor 15:14, 17+) The Divinity of Christ finds its surest proof in His resurrection, since He was "Declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the RESURRECTION from the dead." (Ro 1:4+) It would not be unreasonable to doubt his Deity if he had not risen. Again, our justification, that choice blessing of the covenant, is linked with Christ's triumphant victory over death and the grave; for He "was delivered up (handed over to sinful men to be crucified) for our transgressions, and was raised for (to secure, guarantee) our justification (act of free grace by which God pardons our sin and accepts us as righteous on account of the atonement of Christ)." (Ro 4:25+) Indeed our very regeneration is connected with His RESURRECTION, for we are "born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." (1Peter 1:3+) And most certainly our ultimate RESURRECTION rests here, for, "if (as is the case) the Spirit of Him Who (the Father) raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He (Father) Who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit Who indwells you." (Ro 8:11+, cf Ezek 36:27+) C S Lewis said "Jesus has forced open a door that had been locked since the death of the first man (Ro 5:21+). He has met, fought and beaten the King of Death (1Cor 15:55, 57+). Everything is different because He has done so." In the Revelation Jesus announced His victory declaring "I am the first and the last, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades." (Rev 1:17-18+) George Sweeting recalls that "In the early 1920's, Nikolai Bukharin was sent from Moscow to Kiev to address a vast anti-God rally. For an hour he ridiculed the Christian faith until it

seemed as if the whole structure of belief was in ruins. Questions were invited. A priest of the Orthodox church rose and asked to speak. He faced the crowd and spoke the ancient cry of victory "CHRIST IS RISEN." Instantly the vast assembly rose to its feet, and the reply came back like a crash of breakers against a cliff, "HE IS RISEN INDEED!" And because He is risen we can sing -- "[Know That My Redeemer Lives!](#) What joy the blest assurance gives! He lives, He lives, Who once was dead; He lives, my everlasting Head!" (Samuel Medley)

**THE RESURRECTION IN THE OT** – Jesus Christ's resurrection was foreshadowed in the Old Testament. Abraham believed in the doctrine of the resurrection. As he traveled to Mt Moriah to sacrifice his only begotten son, Isaac, he told the men with him to "Stay here with the donkey, and I and the lad will go yonder; and we will worship and return to you." (Ge 22:5<sup>+</sup>). How could he sacrifice Isaac and yet know they would both return? The writer of Hebrews explains that Abraham "considered that God is able to raise men even from the dead; from which he also received (Isaac) back as a type." (Heb 11:19+, cf Ge 22:13-14+) Jonah illustrated the doctrine of the resurrection. After Jonah's disobedience, "Jehovah appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the stomach of the fish three days and three nights." (Jonah 1:17) Jesus used this OT story to illustrate His resurrection, explaining that "just as JONAH WAS THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS IN THE BELLY OF THE SEA MONSTER, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. (Mt 12:40) Isaiah foretold that the Resurrection of Christ would "swallow up death for all time." (Isa 25:8<sup>+</sup>, 1Cor 15:54<sup>+</sup>) Isaiah again alluded to the resurrection declaring "Your dead will live. Their corpses will rise. You who lie in the dust, awake and shout for joy." (Isa 26:19<sup>+</sup>). The prophet Daniel affirmed the resurrection of individual believers writing that "those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake to everlasting life." (Da 12:2+) And so "we possess the prophetic word which is altogether reliable, to which we will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the Morning Star (the Second Coming of Christ) rises in our hearts." (2Pe 1:19+, Nu 24:17<sup>+</sup> cf "The Bright Morning Star"-Rev 22:16<sup>+</sup> – even some Jewish Rabbis called [Messiah Bar-Kochva, Son of a Star.](#)) And so let us sing - "Our Lord is risen from the dead, Our Jesus is gone up on high, The powers of hell are captive led, Dragged to the portals of the sky." Amen (Charles Wesley).

**THE RESURRECTION IN THE NT** - Jesus Himself taught that "it is written (in the OT), that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day." (Lk 24:46<sup>+</sup>, cf Lk 20:37-38<sup>+</sup>) Our Lord was referring to David's affirmation that "You (God) will not abandon my soul to Sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One (Messiah) to undergo decay." (Ps 16:10<sup>+</sup>) Peter quotes David explaining that "he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay. "This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses." (Acts 2:31-32<sup>+</sup>, also quoted by Paul in Acts 13:35<sup>+</sup>) Spurgeon wrote "Into the outer prison of the grave His body might go, but into the inner prison of corruption He could not enter. He Who in soul and body was pre-eminently God's "Holy One," was loosed from the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it. This is noble encouragement to all the saints; die we must, but rise we shall, and though in our case we shall see corruption, yet we shall rise to everlasting life. CHRIST'S RESURRECTION is the cause, the earnest, the guarantee, and the emblem of the rising of all His people. Let us, therefore, go to our graves as to our beds, resting our flesh among the clods as they now do upon their couches." Christ's EMPTY tomb guarantees our FULL salvation. "We are more sure to arise out of our graves than out of our beds" (Thomas Watson) "Since Jesus is mine, I'll not fear undressing, But gladly put off these garments of clay; To die in the Lord is a covenant blessing, Since Jesus to glory through death led the way."

**Christ has risen from the dead and defeated death...**

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord. 1 Corinthians 15:58+

**Related Resources:**

- [Resurrection - Devotional](#)
- [Resurrection - Sermon](#)
- [Resurrection - Illustrations and Devotionals](#)
- [Order of Resurrections](#)
- [Quotations - Resurrection](#)
- [Who Moved the Stone? Frank Morison](#)

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**ILLUSTRATION OF THE RESURRECTION** - Winston Churchill chose to believe. Churchill arranged his own funeral. There were stately hymns in St. Paul's Cathedral and an impressive liturgy, but at the end of the service, Churchill had an unusual event planned. When they said the benediction, a bugler high in the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral on one side played [Taps](#) (PLAY [SOUND](#)), the universal signal that the day is over. There was a long pause. Then a bugler on the other side played [Reveille](#) (PLAY [SOUND](#)), the military wake-up call.

It was Churchill's way of communicating that, while we say "Good night" here, it's "Good morning" up in Heaven. Now why could he

do that? The answer is he believed in Jesus Christ, who said "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me though he were dead, yet shall he live."

Thank God death is not the end for the Christian. The Christian will rise again.

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**Chris Tiegreen - Exchanged Lives** (from One Year At His Feet Devotional)

"I am the resurrection and the life." John 11:25

"Because of the Resurrection, everything changes."—Max Lucado

IN WORD The death of Jesus is for the believer everything we need for the forgiveness of our sins. In a sense, we and all of our sin died with Jesus on the cross. His death is the penalty of our rebellion and the price of our pardon. The wrath of God is satisfied in the Cross, and we are free from that awful, awful burden. But the story of the Christian life does not end with forgiveness. If we and all of our sin died with Jesus on the cross, who then lives? We cannot say on the one hand that we died with Him and on the other hand that we are still alive in our natural selves. We must choose—our old life or its death. And if we choose its death, then how do we live on? Paul gives us the glorious answer: "I no longer live, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20+). The life that we live by faith is an exchanged life—everything that we were went with Jesus on the cross; everything that He is was raised from the tomb and is given to us. We gave up everything in our old nature, in all of our lostness, to have that substitute on the cross. In return, we gained the life of the everlasting Son of the living God, with all of His privileges and power. What an exchange!

*Having accepted the Cross as our payment for sin,  
we forget to live in the Resurrection that follows.*

IN DEED The sad truth about this exchange—and it is the only sad thing about it—is that we are forgetful creatures. Having accepted the Cross as our payment for sin, we forget to live in the Resurrection that follows. Our old natures want to ignore their death certificate. Their demise is a legal fact, not a biological reality (yet). They remind us of what we were before the Cross. And we listen. Yet Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life. He offers to fill us with His glorified self. The substitution of the Cross is not just in death, but in resurrection. We may now live in the power that raised Him. But only if we live by faith. Are you living that life? Or better yet, is He living that life in you? Believe it. Believe in the Resurrection and the Life. And be reminded daily: "I no longer live, but Christ lives in me."

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**D L Moody** - WHEN a young man, I was called upon suddenly, in Chicago, to preach a funeral sermon. A good many Chicago business men were to be there, and I said to myself, "Now, it will be a good chance for me to preach the gospel to those men, and I will get one of Christ's funeral sermons." I hunted all through the four Gospels trying to find one of Christ's funeral sermons, but I couldn't find any. I found He broke up every funeral He ever attended! He never preached a funeral sermon in the world. Death couldn't exist where He was. When the dead heard His voice they sprang to life.

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**D L Moody** - AT the battle of Inkerman a soldier was just able to crawl to his tent after he was struck down. When found, he was lying upon his face, his open Bible before him, his hand glued fast to the page by his life-blood which covered it. When his hand was lifted, the letters of the printed page were clearly traced upon it, and with the ever-living promise in and on his hand, they laid him in a soldier's grave. The words were:

"I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

I want a religion that can comfort even in death, that can unite me with my loved ones. Oh, what gloom and darkness would settle upon this world if it was not for the glorious doctrine of the resurrection! Thank God, the glorious morning will soon break. For a little while God asks us to be on the watch-tower, faithful to Him and waiting for the summons. Soon our Lord will come to receive His own, whether they be living or dead.

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**Dr. E. Stanley Jones**, the famous missionary, wrote a charming and delightful autobiography called A Song of Ascents. He tells about a layman, a newspaperman, a mutual friend, who was called upon to conduct a funeral service. Being an exact man, he wanted to do it properly and in the best Christian tradition. So he turned to the New Testament as the original source and example of how Jesus conducted a funeral. And he found that Jesus didn't conduct funerals at all. All He dealt with were resurrections.

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In Glendale, California, at Forest Lawn Cemetery hundreds of people each year stand before two huge paintings. One pictures the crucifixion of Christ. The other depicts His resurrection. In the second painting the artist has pictured an empty tomb with an angel near the entrance. In the foreground stands the figure of the risen Christ. But the striking feature of that huge canvas is a vast throng of people, back in the misty background, stretching into the distance and out of sight, suggesting the multitude who will be

raised from the dead because Jesus first died and rose for them.

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**David Jeremiah - JESUS IS THE LIFE JOHN 11:25–26** (BORROW [Sanctuary : finding moments of refuge in the presence of God](#))

The King of kings came into the world humbly. He was born in a stable, His cradle a feed trough. In His thirty-three years of earthly life, He owned no possessions. He had to depend on others to provide for His needs, and He had to borrow everything He used. The stable where He was born was borrowed. He borrowed money to pay His taxes, a boat to stand in and preach, a cross on which to die. Even His tomb was not His own.

But He had a mission that He alone could accomplish: He, the Son of Man, came “to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). He bore our sins “in His own body on the tree” that in the age to come we might have eternal life (1 Peter 2:24, Mark 10:29–30, and John 3:13–17). Of Himself He says, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die” (John 11:25–26). He “put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself ... so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many.... We have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Hebrews 9:26–10:10).

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**Mornings with Tozer - “YET SHALL HE LIVE”** (BORROW [Mornings with Tozer : daily devotional readings](#))

He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. John 11:25

This may sound strange—but it is a fact that death is not the worst thing that can happen to a believing Christian!

I can recall the first time I heard that statement, in a quiet conversation with Harry M. Shuman, for many years the president of the international Christian and Missionary Alliance.

He was a soft-spoken yet forceful man of God, rich in the wisdom of God’s Word. We were talking of the serious issues of life and death. When he had something especially important to say, Dr. Shuman had an unusual way of lowering his voice and tilting his head just a bit. I can see him yet as he looked out from under his shaggy brows straight into my eyes.

“Remember, Tozer,” he said, “death is not the worst thing that can happen to a person!”

For the Christian, death is a journey to the eternal world. It is a victory, a rest, a delight. I am sure my small amount of physical suffering has been mild compared to Paul’s, but I feel as Paul did: “Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better” (Philippians 1:23).

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**In Transition**

We will be with the Lord forever. 1 Thessalonians 4:17

Today’s Scripture & Insight: John 11:17-27

People post obituary notices on billboards and concrete block walls in Ghana regularly. Headlines such as Gone Too Soon, Celebration of Life, and What a Shock! announce the passing away of loved ones and the approaching funerals. One I read—In Transition—points to life beyond the grave.

When a close relative or friend dies, we sorrow as Mary and Martha did for their brother Lazarus (John 11:17-27). We miss the departed so much that our hearts break and we weep, as Jesus wept at the passing of His friend (Jn 11:35).

Yet, it was at this sorrowful moment Jesus made a delightful statement on life after death: “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die” (Jn 11:25).

On the basis of this we give departed believers only a temporary farewell. For they “will be with the Lord forever,” Paul emphasizes (1 Thess. 4:17). Of course, farewells are painful, but we can rest assured that they are in the Lord’s safe hands.

In Transition suggests that we are only changing from one situation to another. Though life on earth ends for us, we will continue to live forever and better in the next life where Jesus is. “Therefore encourage one another with these words” (1Th 4:18). By: Lawrence Darmani (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

It is because of You, Jesus, that we have hope and are sure of a forever life. We’re grateful.

For help in dealing with loss, read [Life After Loss at discoveryseries.org/cb131](http://Life After Loss at discoveryseries.org/cb131)

Because of Jesus, we can live forever.

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### **Comfort For Today**

Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. —Matthew 28:20

Today's Scripture: John 11:17-27

Over the last 50 years I have often reminded bereaved people of the wonderful truth that a glorious resurrection awaits all who believe on Jesus Christ. But sometimes grieving people are so overwhelmed with their loss that they cannot rejoice in the prospect of a far-off-in-the-future reunion.

In John 11, we read about Martha's struggle between her feelings and what she knew to be true. She was grieving because her brother Lazarus had died. When Jesus spoke with her, she told Him that she believed in a future day of resurrection. But then Jesus took her a step further and helped her to find comfort by focusing on Him rather than just on a future event. He declared, "I am the resurrection and the life" (v.25). This led her to confess her faith in Him (v.27). Her new focus on Him must have helped her because she then went to her sister Mary and told her to come to Jesus (v.28).

It's wonderful to know that because Jesus died for our sins and rose from the grave we can look forward to a day of resurrection. But it's even more comforting to know and trust the One who is the resurrection and the life. He is present with us today to comfort, reassure, and strengthen us through all our circumstances (Mt. 28:20). By: Herbert Vander Lugt (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

I've been through the valley of weeping,  
The valley of sorrow and pain;  
But the God of all comfort was with me,  
At hand to uphold and sustain.  
—Anon.

The coming King is our present companion.

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### **A Chuckle in the Darkness**

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16

Today's Scripture & Insight: John 11:17–27

In a Washington Post article titled "Tech Titans' Latest Project: Defy Death," Ariana Cha wrote about the efforts of Peter Thiele and other tech moguls to extend human life indefinitely. They're prepared to spend billions on the project.

They are a little late. Death has already been defeated! Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die" (John 11:25–26). Jesus assures us that those who put their trust in Him will never, ever, under any circumstances whatever, die.

To be clear, our bodies will die—and there is nothing anyone can do to change that. But the thinking, reasoning, remembering, loving, adventuring part of us that we call "me, myself, and I" will never, ever die.

And here's the best part: It's a gift! All you have to do is receive the salvation Jesus offers. C. S. Lewis, musing on this notion, describes it as something like "a chuckle in the darkness"—the sense that something that simple is the answer.

Some say, "It's too simple." Well, I say, if God loved you even before you were born and wants you to live with Him forever, why would He make it hard? By: David H. Roper (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Dear Jesus, I believe You died for my sins and rose from the dead. I want to accept You as my Lord and Savior and follow You. Please forgive my sins and help me, from this moment on, to live a life that is pleasing to You.

Christ has replaced the dark door of death with the shining gate of life.

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Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies."  
John 11:25

If you've ever had someone you love die, you know how real death is. It's one thing to read about traffic fatalities, war casualties, or murder victims in the newspaper. It's another to attend the funeral of someone who died—someone you knew personally and loved dearly. Death can seem unreal unless it strikes close to home. However, one thing is sure. Death is real, and it will come.

In Jesus' day, funerals were heart-wrenching events. As a show of respect for the deceased, people would weep and wail as loudly as they could so they could be heard a great distance away. Some families would even hire mourners to come to the funeral just to make sure there was a respectably loud level of mourning. Funerals were deeply somber because death was a symbol of hopelessness. Death is the one human struggle that no one escapes. Significantly, it was at a funeral that Jesus made this profound statement: "I am the resurrection and the life." He didn't say he knew how to be resurrected. He said he is the resurrection!

This is incredibly good news! Jesus takes the power away from death. Christians will still experience physical death, but we have nothing to fear in death because Jesus promises us life everlasting. Have you been worrying about death? Do you realize the enormity of today's verse? Read it again. Think about it. Thank God for defeating death and for giving you life everlasting!  
(BORROW - [The experience : a devotional and journal : day by day with God](#))

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### [Two Roses At Easter](#)

I am the resurrection and the life. — John 11:25

Today's Scripture: John 11:17-27

Two roses were on the Communion table in our church on Easter Sunday morning. As I looked at them, my heart was filled with joy.

The red rose signified the birth of little Brian, who had come into the world on Good Friday. And on this particular Sunday we were celebrating the gift of this new life.

The yellow rose represented a new spiritual life. On the previous Wednesday evening, Sandra, a sixth-grader, had trusted Christ as her Savior at the youth group meeting. What made this significant was that she had received a gift distributed by our church at Christmastime to needy families. As a result, Sandra had begun coming regularly to our church. When she heard the gospel that Wednesday, she put her trust in Christ as her Savior and was born again.

As we celebrated Easter that morning, I couldn't help but think of those two new lives. Not only is the risen Savior the Creator of physical life (Col. 1:16), He is also the Originator of new spiritual life because of His sacrificial death and His triumph over the grave. His resurrection gives meaning to life here and now, and it assures us that someday we will receive a new "spiritual body" (1 Cor. 15:44).

Let's rejoice today in Christ's resurrection! By: David C. Egnor (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

The wonder of a newborn child—  
It fills the heart with pride and joy;  
But Christ arose to give new life  
That even death cannot destroy.  
—DJD

Christ's resurrection is cause for our celebration.

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### [I'm Not Making This Up](#)

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live."  
—John 11:25

Today's Scripture: John 1:1-14

Let's say you were shopping for a religion. Wouldn't you want to serve a higher being who was powerful and could do great things? Wouldn't you want a religion that provided great after-death benefits? Wouldn't you want the key leader of this religion to be absolutely trustworthy and able to forgive your sins?

I would.



Yet I recently read about a religion that many people buy into with none of those qualities. It teaches that “God is the beauty and the soft side of things” and “the higher power of each person.” It says, “When you’re dead, life ceases to exist.” And the key figure? Jesus! But He is described only as “a great master of light.”

Think of the great religions of the world. How many offer an all-powerful, all-wise, loving God? How many give the assurance of heaven? How many provide a Savior from the guilt and power of sin? They make big promises, but they fail to give us what we need. Their claims are empty.

Now think about this: Those who put their trust in Christ serve an all-powerful, all-knowing, loving God. They have a Savior who provides the assurance of heaven and freedom from sin. Of all the faiths in the world, it’s the only one that’s not man-made. Why settle for less than the best? By: Dave Branon (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

God sent His Son to die for us,  
No other life would do;  
So why not trust in Christ today?  
Accept His gift to you.  
—JDB

Religion may inform and reform, but only Christ can transform.

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### **Triumph Over The Grave**

I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. —John 11:25

Today's Scripture: John 11:25-44

Death may steal from us the ones we love, but for followers of Christ the separation is only temporary. The resurrection of Jesus assures us that just as death could not hold Him, so too the tomb cannot cling to the children, parents, friends, and companions who have died before us. Christ’s resurrection is the foundation of our hope.

American evangelist D. L. Moody (1837-1899) told of a soldier at the battle of Inkerman (Crimean War, 1854) who was somehow able to crawl back to his tent after he was shot. When he was later found, he was lying face-down, his open Bible before him, his hand stuck to one of the pages by his blood which covered it. When his hand was lifted, some of the words from the printed page were clearly visible on it. The verse was this: “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live” (Jn. 11:25). Said Moody, “I want a religion like that, which can comfort even in death, and can unite me with my loved ones. What gloom and darkness would settle upon this world were it not for the glorious doctrine of the resurrection!”

If you are grieving, find your comfort in this: Because Jesus lives, we shall live also! By: Henry G. Bosch (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Crown Him the Lord of life:  
Who triumphed o'er the grave,  
Who rose victorious to the strife  
For those He came to save.  
—Bridges

The resurrection is God's answer of hope to man's cry of despair.

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### **Keep Talking About Jesus**

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live."  
—John 11:25

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:51-57

Pastor Eloy Pacheco said at a funeral for a believer that Jesus is the only lasting source of comfort. Afterward a woman came up to him and said, “You preachers are all alike. All you talk about is Jesus, Jesus, Jesus!”

“That’s true,” he replied kindly. “What comfort do you have to offer the grieving family?”

She was speechless for a few moments, and then she said, “You’re right. At least you have Jesus.”

Sooner or later someone dear to us will die, and we'll want to be comforted. A hug, a kind deed, shared tears, and the presence of a friend may ease sorrow's pain just a bit. But these gestures won't answer our most urgent questions: What's beyond the grave? Where is the person now? Will we be reunited in heaven? How can I have the assurance of eternal life?

For the answers to those questions, we must look to Jesus Christ. He is the One who defeated sin and death by dying on the cross for us and rising from the grave (1 Corinthians 15:1-28,57). Because He lives, all who put their faith in Him will live forever with Him (John 11:25).

When a believer in Christ dies, we who are left behind can find comfort and confidence in Him. So let's keep talking about Jesus. By: Dennis J. DeHaan (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

We have hope, for Christ has risen,  
Death was conquered by God's Son;  
May we gently share that message  
With some hurting, grieving one.  
—D. De Haan

In life and in death, our only hope is Jesus.

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### [Your Never-Dying Friend](#)

He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.  
—John 11:25-26

Today's Scripture: John 11:1-27

A man who wrote to me frequently always signed his letters: "Your never-dying friend." He believed that his strong faith in Christ would keep him alive until Jesus returned. He based this belief on his interpretation of Jesus' words, "Whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die" (Jn. 11:26). I haven't heard from him for a long time, so I assume he has died. If so, he is in heaven and now knows that his understanding of that verse was incorrect.

When Jesus spoke those words, He had in mind two kinds of death: physical (separation of the soul-spirit from the body) and spiritual (eternal separation from God). Before we receive Jesus as our personal Savior, all of us are "dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1). But when we trust Him, we become spiritually alive. Jesus said that everyone who believes in Him "has passed from death into life" (Jn. 5:24). When believers die, their conscious relationship with God continues uninterrupted because they are spiritually alive.

We who have trusted Christ as our Savior can rest assured that we will never experience eternal separation from God. In that sense, then, it would be appropriate to sign our letters with the words: "Your never-dying friend." By: Herbert Vander Lugt (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

No condemnation now I dread,  
I am my Lord's and He is mine;  
Alive in Him, my living Head,  
And clothed in righteousness divine.  
—C. Wesley

Born once, die twice. Born twice, die once

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**ARE YOU LIKE A DECAPITATED CHICKEN?** Adrian Rogers - When we were little boys, we had some chickens, and my brother and I had the duty of going out there and decapitating the chickens before mamma would cook them. Have you ever decapitated a chicken? Have you? It's quite an experience. You know, the strange thing about a chicken—when you take its head off, he just keeps on flopping. My brother and I used to talk and say, "That chicken's dead, but he doesn't know it." I mean, he would just keep on going. And, if you've never done that, one of these days, you ask for the privilege, and you'll see what I'm talking about. Takes a chicken that's dead for quite a while for him to figure out what's happened to him, and that's what God is saying to a lot of people who are active but they are dead.

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### [Live Like Jesus Is Coming](#)

Keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour. Matthew 25:13

Today's Scripture & Insight: Matthew 25:1–13

I'm inspired by country singer Tim McGraw's song "Live Like You Were Dying." In it he describes some of the exciting "bucket list" things a man did after receiving some bad news about his health. He also chose to love and forgive people more freely—speaking to them more tenderly. The song recommends that we live well, as if knowing our lives will end soon.

This song reminds us that our time is limited. It's important for us to not put off for tomorrow what we can do today, because one day we'll run out of tomorrows. This is particularly urgent for believers in Jesus, who believe that Jesus may return at any moment (perhaps in the very second you're reading this sentence!). Jesus urges us to be ready, not living like the five "foolish" virgins who were caught unprepared when the bridegroom returned (Matthew 25:6–10).

But McGraw's song doesn't tell the whole story. We who love Jesus will never run out of tomorrows. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die" (John 11:25–26). Our life in Him never ends.

So don't live like you're dying. Because you're not. Rather, live like Jesus is coming. Because He is! By: Mike Wittmer (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

How will you live today like Jesus is coming soon? How does knowing He could return any day affect your choices?

Jesus, I look forward to the day You'll return. May I use the time I've been given to honor You and to serve others well.

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## **Resurrection And Life**

I am the resurrection and the life. — John 11:25

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life"! It's one thing to make such a bold assertion; it's another to back it up—and back it up Jesus did by rising from the dead.

"If you believe that the Son of God died and rose again," writes George MacDonald, "your whole future is full of the dawn of eternal morning, coming up beyond the hills of life, and full of such hope as the highest imagination for the poet has not a glimmer yet."

The Son of God died and rose again, and His resurrection is the guarantee that God will bring us up and out of the ground: A thinking, feeling, remembering, recognizable person will live forever.

Living forever means living out the thought of eternity that God has placed in our hearts; meeting again one's believing loved ones lost through separating death; living in a world without sorrow; seeing our Lord who loves us and gave everything to unite us to Him forever.

But I see another meaning. Since we have this life and the next, we don't have to "have it all" now. We can live in broken and ruined bodies for a time; we can endure poverty and hardship for a while; we can face loneliness, heartache, and pain for a season. Why? There is a second birth—life in heaven forever. By: David H. Roper (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Yes, Christ the Lord is risen,  
Has come forth from the grave;  
He breaks the chains of death for you  
And now has power to save.  
—Woodruff

The resurrection is the foundation of our faith.

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## **THE LAST WORD**

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life." —John 11:25

When Walter Bouman, a retired professor, learned that the cancer in his body had spread and that he had perhaps 9 months to live, he pondered many things. One was comedian Johnny Carson's quip: "It is true that for several days after you die, your hair and fingernails keep on growing, but the phone calls taper off." He found that humour to be a wonderful tonic, but it was something far

deeper that sustained his soul.

In Bouman's newspaper column he wrote of his greatest source of encouragement: "The Christian good news is that Jesus of Nazareth has been raised from death, that death no longer has dominion over Him. I have bet my living, and now I am called to bet my dying, that Jesus will have the last word."

In John 11 we read what Jesus said to Martha, a close friend who was grieving the death of her brother. He said, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die" (vv.25-26).

For each 'today' we are given, and for the inevitable 'tomorrow' that will come, we don't have to be afraid. Jesus Christ is with all who trust Him, and He will have the last word.

BECAUSE JESUS HAS RISEN FROM THE DEAD,  
HE HAS THE LAST WORD IN LIFE AND IN DEATH.

David C. McCasland (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

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### [Death Cannot Divide Us](#)

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live."  
—John 11:25

Today's Scripture: John 11:14-27

Although writers and philosophers have done their best to marshal weighty arguments in favor of life after death, they have not succeeded in bringing comfort to aching, anxious, questioning hearts.

Jesus, however, does not fail to satisfy us. He brings forth no philosophical arguments. He does not try to prove the reasonableness of immortality; He simply declares it! He speaks of what He knows, and answers with the authority of heaven: "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live" (John 11:25). This resurrection has two aspects. The bodies of believers will be raised, and their spirits will also live on in heaven.

What does this mean for grieving Christians whose believing loved ones have died? Death does not sever our love for them, for love belongs to the spirit and not to the body. And when those we love go on a long journey, their thoughts can span the distance as though it were a step, and their love enfolds us as though they stood beside us. So it is today with our dear departed ones.

Are you sorrowing over one who has been called to heaven? Jesus promises that we will be reunited one day, when God gives us back our precious loved ones. By: M.R. DeHaan (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

When from the dead God raised His Son  
And called Him to the sky,  
He gave our souls a living hope  
That they should never die!  
—Watts

Christ has replaced the dark door of death with the shining gate of life.

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### [The Cross and the Crown](#)

I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die. John 11:25

Today's Scripture & Insight: John 19:21-30

Westminster Abbey in London has a rich historical background. In the 10th century, Benedictine monks began a tradition of daily worship there that still continues today. The Abbey is also the burial place of many famous people, and every English monarch since ad 1066 has been crowned at the Abbey. In fact, 17 of those monarchs are also buried there—their rule ending where it began.

No matter how grandiose their burial, world rulers rise and fall; they live and die. But another king, Jesus, though once dead, is no longer buried. In His first coming, Jesus was crowned with thorns and crucified as the "king of the Jews" (John 19:3,19). Because Jesus rose from the dead in victory, we who are believers in Christ have hope beyond the grave and the assurance that we will live

with Him forever. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die" (11:25-26).

We serve a risen King! May we gladly yield to His rule in our lives now as we look forward to the day when the "Lord God Almighty" will reign for all eternity (Rev. 19:6). By: Bill Crowder (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Thank You, Jesus, for rising from the dead and that You are alive forever.

To learn more about the crown and cross Christ bore, check out [The Mockery and Majesty of the Cross](#)

Jesus' resurrection spelled the death of death.

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### [When the Woods Wake Up](#)

I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die. John 11:25

Today's Scripture & Insight: John 11:14-27

Through cold, snowy winters, the hope of spring sustains those of us who live in Michigan. May is the month when that hope is rewarded. The transformation is remarkable. Limbs that look lifeless on May 1 turn into branches that wave green leafy greetings by month's end. Although the change each day is imperceptible, by the end of the month the woods in my yard have changed from gray to green.

God has built into creation a cycle of rest and renewal. What looks like death to us is rest to God. And just as rest is preparation for renewal, death is preparation for resurrection.

I love watching the woods awaken every spring, for it reminds me that death is a temporary condition and that its purpose is to prepare for new life, a new beginning, for something even better. "Unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds" (John 12:24).

While pollen is a springtime nuisance when it coats my furniture and makes people sneeze, it reminds me that God is in the business of keeping things alive. And after the pain of death, He promises a glorious resurrection for those who believe in His Son. By: Julie Ackerman Link (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Read these encouraging verses that remind us of the hope of resurrection: 1 Corinthians 15:35-58.

Every new leaf of springtime is a reminder of our promised resurrection.

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### **QUESTION - [What are the seven I AM statements in the Gospel of John?](#)**

**ANSWER** - In the Gospel of John, Jesus makes seven statements beginning with the words [I AM](#). Each of these "[I AM](#)" proclamations furthers our understanding of Jesus' ministry in the world. They also link Jesus to the Old Testament revelation of God.

In the Old Testament, God revealed His name to Moses: "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you'" (Exodus 3:14). Thus, in Judaism, "[I AM](#)" is unquestionably understood as a name for God. Whenever Jesus made an "I am" statement in which He claimed attributes of deity, He was identifying Himself as God.

Here are the seven metaphorical "I am" statements found in John's gospel:

1. "***I am the [bread of life](#)***" (John 6:35, 41, 48, 51). In this chapter, Jesus establishes a pattern that continues through John's gospel—Jesus makes a statement about who He is, and He backs it up with something He does. In this case, Jesus states that He is the bread of life just after He had fed the 5,000 in the wilderness. At the same time, He contrasts what He can do with what Moses had done for their ancestors: "Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, yet they died. But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which anyone may eat and not die" (verses 49–50).
2. "***I am the [light of the world](#)***" (John 8:12; 9:5). This second of Jesus' "I am" statements in John's gospel comes right before He heals a man born blind. Jesus not only says He is the light; He proves it. Jesus' words and actions echo Genesis 1:3, "And God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light."
3. "***I am the [door](#)***" (John 10:7,9). This "I am" statement stresses that no one can enter the kingdom of heaven by any other means than Christ Himself. Jesus' words in this passage are couched in the imagery of a sheepfold. He is the one and only

way to enter the fold. “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber” (Jn 10:1ESV).

4. **“I am the [good shepherd](#)”** (John 10:11, 14). With this “I am” statement, Jesus portrays His great love and care. He is the One who willingly protects His flock even to the point of death (Jn 10:11, 15). When Jesus called Himself the good shepherd, He unmistakably took for Himself one of God’s titles in the Old Testament: “The Lord is my shepherd” (Psalm 23:1).
5. **“I am the [resurrection and the life](#)”** (John 11:25). Jesus made this “I am” statement immediately before raising Lazarus from the dead. Again, we see that Jesus’ teaching was not just empty talk; when He made a claim, He substantiated it with action. He holds “the keys of death and the grave” (Revelation 1:18NLT). In raising Lazarus from the dead, Jesus showed how He can fulfill Yahweh’s promise to ancient Israel: “[God’s] dead shall live; their bodies shall rise” (Isaiah 26:19ESV). Apart from Jesus, there is neither resurrection nor eternal life.
6. **“I am the [way and the truth and the life](#)”** (John 14:6). This powerful “I am” statement of Christ’s is packed with meaning. Jesus is not merely one way among many ways to God; He is the only way. Scripture said that “The very essence of [God’s] words is truth” (Psalm 119:160NLT), and here is Jesus proclaiming that He is the truth—confirming His identity as the Word of God (see John 1:1, 14). And Jesus alone is the source of life; He is the Creator and Sustainer of all life and the Giver of eternal life.
7. **“I am the [true vine](#)”** (John 15:1, 5). The final metaphorical “I am” statement in the Gospel of John emphasizes the sustaining power of Christ. We are the branches, and He is the vine. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit unless it is joined in vital union with the vine, only those who are joined to Christ and receive their power from Him produce fruit in the Christian life.

There are two more “[I am](#)” statements of Jesus in the Gospel of John. These are not metaphors; rather, they are declarations of God’s name, as applied by Jesus to Himself. The first instance comes as Jesus responds to a complaint by the Pharisees. “I tell you the truth,” Jesus says, “before Abraham was born, I am!” (John 8:58). The verbs Jesus uses are in stark contrast with each other: Abraham *was*, but I *am*. There is no doubt that the Jews understood Jesus’ claim to be the eternal God incarnate, because they took up stones to kill Him (Jn 8:59).

The second instance of Jesus applying to Himself the name *I AM* comes in the Garden of Gethsemane. When the mob came to arrest Jesus, He asked them whom they sought. They said, “Jesus of Nazareth,” and Jesus replied, “I am he” (John 18:4–5). Then something strange happened: “When Jesus said, ‘I am he,’ they drew back and fell to the ground” (verse 6). Perhaps explaining the mob’s reaction is the fact that the word *he* has been provided by our English translators. Jesus simply said, “I am.” Applying God’s covenant name to Himself, Jesus demonstrated His power over His foes and showed that His surrender to them was entirely voluntary (see John 10:17–18; 19:11). [GotQuestions.org](#)

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## [A Chuckle in the Darkness](#)

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16

Today’s Scripture & Insight: John 11:17–27

In a Washington Post article titled “Tech Titans’ Latest Project: Defy Death,” Ariana Cha wrote about the efforts of Peter Thiele and other tech moguls to extend human life indefinitely. They’re prepared to spend billions on the project.

They are a little late. Death has already been defeated! Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die” (John 11:25–26). Jesus assures us that those who put their trust in Him will never, ever, under any circumstances whatever, die.

To be clear, our bodies will die—and there is nothing anyone can do to change that. But the thinking, reasoning, remembering, loving, adventuring part of us that we call “me, myself, and I” will never, ever die.

And here’s the best part: It’s a gift! All you have to do is receive the salvation Jesus offers. C. S. Lewis, musing on this notion, describes it as something like “a chuckle in the darkness”—the sense that something that simple is the answer.

Some say, “It’s too simple.” Well, I say, if God loved you even before you were born and wants you to live with Him forever, why would He make it hard? By: David H. Roper (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Dear Jesus, I believe You died for my sins and rose from the dead. I want to accept You as my Lord and Savior and follow You. Please forgive my sins and help me, from this moment on, to live a life that is pleasing to You.

Christ has replaced the dark door of death with the shining gate of life.

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## QUESTION - [What did Jesus mean when He said, "I am the Resurrection and the Life" \(John 11:25\)?](#)

**ANSWER** - "I am the Resurrection and the Life" (John 11:25) is the fifth of the seven ["I am"](#) statements of Jesus. Lazarus was dead. Earlier, Jesus had heard that His good friend was sick, but instead of going to visit Lazarus, Jesus "stayed where he was for two more days" (John 11:6). He explained to His puzzled disciples that the sickness was "for God's glory, that God's Son may be glorified through it" (v. 4). After Lazarus died, Jesus began a journey to Bethany, Lazarus's home. Significantly, when Jesus informed His disciples that Lazarus was dead, He simply said His friend was "asleep, but I am going there to wake him up" (John 11:11).

Outside Bethany, Lazarus's sister Martha went out to meet Jesus. "If you had been here," she said, "my brother would not have died." Such was her faith in Jesus' power to heal. Jesus replied by assuring Martha that her brother would rise again. Martha responded again in faith: "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." At this point, Jesus makes His fifth "I Am" statement in John's gospel, "I am the resurrection and the life," and He follows it with a call to faith: "He who believes in me will live, even though he dies, and whoever lives and believes in me will never die" (John 11:21-24).

When Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life," He was claiming to be the source of both. There is no resurrection apart from Christ, and there is no eternal life apart from Christ. Beyond that, Jesus was also making a statement concerning His divine nature. He does more than give life; He *is* life, and therefore death has no ultimate power over Him. Jesus confers this spiritual life on those who believe in Him, so that they share His triumph over death (1 John 5:11-12). Believers in Jesus Christ will experience resurrection because, having the life Jesus gives, it is impossible for death to defeat them (1 Corinthians 15:53-57).

The grieving Martha wished that Jesus had arrived earlier so He could have healed her brother. And when Jesus spoke of resurrection, Martha assumed He was speaking of "the resurrection at the last day." In both statements, Martha reveals that she considered Time an insurmountable obstacle. In effect, Martha was saying, "It's too late to help Lazarus (the time is past), so now we must wait (allow more time)."

Jesus shows that neither Death nor time is an obstacle to Him. Outside the tomb, "Jesus called in a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come forth!' The dead man came out" (John 11:43). It's one thing to *claim* to be the resurrection and the life, but Jesus proved it by raising Lazarus, who was four days dead. Truly, with Christ, death is but "sleep" (1 Thessalonians 4:13). Death has no dominion over Him who is Life itself, nor does death have dominion over those who are in Him (1 Corinthians 15:54-55). Because He lives, we live. Because He is Life, we have life eternally.

Jesus' statement that He is the resurrection and the life provides a godly perspective on several spiritual matters. Martha believed that the resurrection is an event; Jesus showed her (and us) that the resurrection is a Person. Martha's knowledge of eternal life was an abstract idea; Jesus proved that knowledge of eternal life is a personal relationship. Martha thought victory over death was a future expectation; Jesus corrects her, showing that victory is a present reality.

After presenting Himself as the resurrection and the life, Jesus asks Martha an all-important question: "Do you believe this?" (John 11:26). May Martha's answer be ours as well: "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God who was to come into the world" (verse 27). [GotQuestions.org](#)

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### John Bennett in Day by Day - John 11:25 THOUGH DEAD ... SHALL LIVE

**The Fact of Resurrection.** Martha believed in a final resurrection 'at the last day', Jn 11:24. It was a hope rooted in Old Testament revelation, Dan. 12:2; Isa. 26:19. What Martha did not grasp was that Jesus' revelation to her, (His fifth 'I am' declaration), that He was 'the resurrection', brought that event right into her there and then experience! This was, then, demonstrated by His calling her dead brother from the realm of death and restoring him alive to the Bethany family, Jn 11:43-44. That He was primarily speaking of a physical resurrection is clearly evident by the miracle itself. The raising of Lazarus is a foreshadowing of that glorious future 'day' when physical death will be conquered once and for ever by Him who said, 'I am the resurrection and the life'! It is a fact as incontestable as was the raising of Lazarus that day.

**The Faith of Resurrection.** 'He that believeth in me'. It is faith alone in Christ, 'the resurrection, and the life', that brings assurance to heavy hearts gathered around an open grave, that their departed loved one shall rise again! He raised Lazarus to temporary physical life to die a natural death in due course. He had power in Himself to both lay down and take again, in sovereign resurrection might, His own life, 10:18, which He did. Because He lives, His people live, 1 Cor. 15:20! Faith, therefore, lays hold of the promise that He will certainly raise all who have died believing in Him to the ultimate enjoyment of eternal life!

**The Fruit of Resurrection.** 'Yet shall he live'. The fruit of that future resurrection life experienced 'on that bright and cloudless morning when the dead in Christ shall rise', JAMES BLACK, will be a body raised in incorruption, in glory, in power, a spiritual body bearing the image of 'the second man', who is, 'the Lord from heaven', 1 Cor. 15:42-49. But that fruit of resurrection life is also ours today in the outworking of the principle of life received through faith in Christ. 'Yet shall he live', as one risen from the dead, walking

'in newness of life', walking 'in the Spirit', and daily acknowledging his eternal indebtedness to Him who is 'the resurrection, and the life'.

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**Richard Hawker on John 11:25-26** - PAUSE, my soul, over those divine, those glorious, those soul-quickenings, soul-reviving words of thy Almighty Redeemer! What man, what prophet, what servant of the Lord, what angel, but He that is the Angel of the Covenant, One with the Father over all, God blessed for ever, could assume such a language, and prove that assumption, as Jesus did, both by his own resurrection, and that of Lazarus? And mark, my soul, the many precious things contained in this sweet scripture. Observe the blessing itself, even resurrection and life. Observe the source, the author, the fountain of it, Jesus, thy Jesus. Observe for whom this stupendous mercy is designed, and to whom conveyed, namely, the dead in trespasses and sins, and for the dying, languishing frames of believers. And lastly, observe how absolute the thing itself is; they shall live. Oh, precious words of a most precious Saviour. And may I not say to thee, my soul, as Jesus did to Mary, after proclaiming himself under this glorious distinction of character, "Believest thou this?" Canst thou answer as she did, "Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world?" This is a blessed confession to witness before God. For if I believe that Jesus be indeed the Christ of God, every other difficulty is removed to the firm belief that, as the Father hath life in himself, even so hath the Son life in himself, and whom he will he quickeneth. Witness then for me, every looker on, angels and men, that my soul heartily, cordially, fully subscribes to the same precious truth, and in the same language as Mary. Yea, Lord, I would say to every word of thine concerning thy sovereignty, grace, and love: as thou hast said it, so I accept it: in the very words of thine I take it, and cry out, Yea, Lord, even so be it unto me according to thy word. And now, my soul, under all remaining seasons of deadness, coldness, backslidings, wanderings, and the like, never henceforth forget from whom all revivals can only come. Never look within for them; for there is no power of resurrection in thyself. Can these dry bones live? Yes, if Jesus quickens! And is Jesus less to quicken thee than thy connexion with Adam to have killed thee? Oh! how plain is it that the very wants of the soul correspond to the very fulness of Jesus to answer them. And therefore, when the Lord Jesus saith, I am the Resurrection and the Life, he comes to seek employment in this glorious character, to quicken the dead and revive the living. Oh, Lord! give me to hear thy blessed voice this day, and my soul shall live, and live to praise thee.

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**Robert Morgan - Nine Rabid Teeth (BORROW [On this day : 365 amazing and inspiring stories about saints, martyrs & heroes](#))**

Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." Jesus then said, "I am the one who raises the dead to life! Everyone who has faith in me will live, even if they die. And everyone who lives because of faith in me will never really die." John 11:21,25,26a

Susan Talbott Wengatz, Methodist missionary in Malange, Angola, began Wednesday, December 11, 1929, by strolling through her garden, soaking up the fragrances of the roses and the brilliance of the sunshine. She gathered as many blossoms as she could carry, then turned toward the house to prepare her morning Bible class. Suddenly, she saw a large dog tramping toward her. "Shoo!" Susan cried. "Shoo! Go back!"

But the dog snarled, bared its teeth, and lunged. Susan dropped her roses and threw her arms over her face. The dog tore into her, sinking nine rabid teeth into the flesh. Mr. Wengatz rushed his wife to a nearby hospital, but there was no rabies serum. They sped to another hospital. No serum. They rushed to the port to find a boat leaving the country, but the ships had left. They considered driving to the Belgian Congo, but heavy rains had washed out the roads.

Cables flashed to Lisbon, Capetown, Johannesburg, and the Congo where pharmacists quickly wrapped and sent packages of rabies serum. Days of unbearable suspense passed as local Christians in Angola wept, fasted, and prayed. For various reasons the serums were delayed in transit. Meanwhile Susan felt no pain or sickness. Her wounds healed, and she returned to business as usual. When one of the packages finally arrived, she began taking the shots.

One month after the attack, Susan found her husband in the workshop and told him, "It's aching today, my arm." The ache grew worse, and she was put to bed. She declined rapidly. "I hear the music of heaven," she whispered. "I see Jesus. My anchor holds. Does yours? I'll see you in the morning. Now I'm going to sleep in Jesus' name."

No one understands why God permitted a rabid dog to enter Susan Wengatz's garden that morning in 1929. He allows us unanswered questions—the stuff of faith. Southern preacher Vance Havner, mulling over similar imponderables, spoke of being "shipwrecked on God and stranded on Omnipotence." Charles Spurgeon put it like this: "When we can't trace God's hand we can trust his heart."

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**[At The Cemetery](#)**

He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. — John 11:25



Today's Scripture: John 11:25-44

When a loved one dies and we go to the cemetery, we may join a long processional. We may sit or stand around the gravesite and listen respectfully while the minister commits the body to the earth and reads Bible verses about the resurrection. Then the casket is lowered into the ground. We may return later to leave some flowers and stand with heads bowed in memory and respect. Our loved one is dead, and we know we can never bring him back.

When Jesus went to the cemetery, it was different. His friend Lazarus had died, and when Jesus got to the tomb, He exercised His power and authority. He commanded: "Take away the stone" (John 11:39). "Lazarus, come forth!" (v.43). "Loose him, and let him go" (v.44).

We might wish with all our hearts that we could bring a loved one back, but if we were to give those commands nothing would happen. But Jesus has that ability, for He is "the resurrection and the life" (v.25). His power was demonstrated when Lazarus came out of the tomb—alive!

One day, Jesus will again be "at the cemetery." And when He gives the command, all the dead who believed in Him will "come forth" (John 5:28-29; 1 Thessalonians 4:16). What a day that will be! By: David C. Egner (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

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### [You Go Around Twice](#)

I am the resurrection and the life. —John 11:25

Today's Scripture: John 11:17-26

There's a little trout stream in the state of Oregon called Riley Creek. It was named for "Judge" Riley, a prospector who grubbed for gold there in the 1800s. Though he labored night and day for 40 years, he never found the fortune he sought.

Early one morning, his partner discovered a rich vein of gold near their campsite. He raced back shouting, "Wake up, Riley! We're rich!" Riley, however, was unmoved. He had died in his sleep.

Most people live their lives similar to Riley. They work their entire lives searching for a fortune of wealth or pleasure or happiness, and then they die. "So why go on?" we may ask ourselves. Why face an endless sequence of frustrations in a world where everyone sooner or later ends up under the ground? It all seems so futile.

But there's good news: Jesus died and rose again! His resurrection guarantees that God will bring believers in Christ out of the ground to live forever (John 11:25-26). We don't go around just once, but twice! This life is not all there is.

That means we can endure hardship here and now. We can live in broken and ruined bodies for a while. We can face loneliness, heartache, and pain for a season. We don't need to "have it all" in this life. There is another life to come! By: David H. Roper (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

How glorious to think ahead  
Of blessings yet to be,  
Of help from God while life shall last—  
Then joys eternally!  
—Branon

You can endure this life's trials because of the next life's joys.

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### **Related Resources:**

- [What did Jesus mean when He said "I AM"? Gotquestions.org](#)
- [Why is the truth of the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ so important? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Why is the resurrection of Jesus Christ important? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [When will the Resurrection take place? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Why should I believe in Christ's resurrection? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Can the various resurrection accounts from the four Gospels be harmonized? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Is the resurrection of Jesus Christ true? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What is more important, the death of Christ or His resurrection? | GotQuestions.org](#)

## John 11:26 and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"

BGT John 11:26 καὶ πᾶς ζῶν καὶ πιστεύων ἐς μὲν οὐ μὴ ποθὲν ἐς τὸν αἰῶνα. Πιστεύεις τὸ τοῦτο;

KJV John 11:26 And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

NET John 11:26 and the one who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

CSB John 11:26 Everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die-- ever. Do you believe this?"

ESV John 11:26 and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

NIV John 11:26 and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

NLT John 11:26 Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this, Martha?"

NRS John 11:26 and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

NJB John 11:26 and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?

NAB John 11:26 and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

YLT John 11:26 and every one who is living and believing in me shall not die -- to the age;

MIT John 11:26 All who live and believe in me will never die for eternity. Do you believe this?"

- **who lives and believes:** Jn 3:15-18 4:14 5:24 6:50,54-58 8:52,53 10:28 Ro 8:13 1Jn 5:10-12
- **Believes...believe:** Jn 9:35 14:10 Mt 9:28 26:53 Mk 9:23
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

1 John 5:10-12 The one who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself; the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has given concerning His Son. 11 And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. 12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

1 Corinthians 15:55-56+ "O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?" 56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law;

## JESUS PROMISES IMMORTALITY TO BELIEVERS

**and everyone who lives** ([zao](#) - present tense) **and believes** ([pisteuo](#) - present tense) **in Me will never** (NEVER, NO NEVER) **die** ([apothnesko](#)) - Jesus continues from the previous verse which stated truth and now explains how one enters into that truth. Notice that He says not just believes but who lives in Me, indicating He is life and that life is immortal because it is in Him.

*It is possible to be physically alive and spiritually dead  
or to be spiritually alive and physically dead.*

-- [Adrian Rogers \(p 632\)](#)

**Will never die** ([apothnesko](#)) is a strong double negative (never ever die) and one of the most amazing statements Jesus ever made because He is declaring that for the one who lives and believes in Him, death ceases to be death as the world thinks of it (cf 1Co 15:55-56+). In fact death is simply the believer's continuation in the eternal life he entered the day he believed in Jesus! There is no lag, no gap, no purgatory. As Paul said "To live is Christ and to die is gain!" (Php 1:21+) Jesus' promise to the dying thief is the promise to you dear believer "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise." (Lk 23:43+). Eternal life cannot be extinguished by physical death.

*"There's a light in the valley of death now for me,  
since Jesus came into my heart."*

-- Gospel Song "[Since Jesus Came into My Heart](#)"

**Will never die** of course is not a promise that a believer will not experience physical death for everyone must die (unless raptured).

Instead Jesus is referring to the [second death](#), to **eternal punishment** in the [lake of fire](#), which results in eternal separation and "eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power." (2Th 1:9+) Note the assurance the believer can have in Jesus' promise is accentuated by His use of a strong double negative (ou me), indicating absolutely never...ever!

[Brian Bell](#) on **lives...will never die** - for the believer death is no longer death. It introduces him into a new state of life. Unbelievers view death, it's (LIFE IS) over! Believers see it, it's (LIFE HAS) only just begun!

**D A Carson** on **will never die** - Ordinary, mortal life ebbs away; the life that Jesus gives never ends. It is in that sense that whoever lives and believes in Jesus will never die. ....When Jesus asks Martha **Do you believe this?**, he is not asking if she believes that he is about to raise her brother from the dead, but if her faith can go beyond quiet confidence that her brother will be resurrected at the last day to personal trust in Jesus as the resurrection and the life, the only person who can grant eternal life and promise the transformation of resurrection.(See [Gospel of John - click on page 413 to see this comment in context](#))

**Do you believe (pisteuo) this?** - He presses the crucial question to Martha.

**THOUGHT** - Dear skeptical reader, do you believe this? Do you believe that if you believe in Jesus, that He becomes your life in this life and throughout eternity? Do you believe Jesus? If you do, you need never fear physical death and will never face eternal death in Hell!

[Steven Cole](#) on **Do you believe this?** - In other words, "Do you believe these specific truths about Me?" Faith that overcomes life's trials must have specific doctrinal content about the person and work of Jesus Christ. It's not enough to have a vague, general faith in Christ. You need to know Him as He is revealed in all of God's Word. That kind of faith will sustain you in a time of trial.

*The **measure of our believing**,  
while it is not the **measure of our possessing**...  
is yet the **measure of our enjoyment** of it all*

**R. C. H. Lenski** on **do you believe this** - To believe "**this**" is to believe what He says of Himself and thus to believe "in Him." It is one thing to hear it, to reason and to argue about it; and quite another thing to believe, embrace, trust it. To believe is to receive, hold, enjoy the reality and the power of it, with all that lies in it of joy, comfort, peace, and hope. The measure of our believing, while it is not the measure of our possessing, since the smallest faith has Jesus, the resurrection and the life, completely, is yet the measure of our enjoyment of it all. (BORROW [The Interpretation of St. John's Gospel](#) page 803)

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**Steven Cole** - Jesus knew that Martha already believed in Him, but He wanted her faith to grow so that she believed in Him as the resurrection and the life....**James Boice** points out (BORROW - [The Gospel of John 9:1-12:50](#)) that Jesus did not ask her, "Do you feel better now, Martha? Have you found these thoughts comforting? Do you feel your old optimism returning?" Then Boice observes, "According to Jesus it was not how she felt that was important, but what she believed." Jesus wanted this grieving woman to come to a higher level of faith in who He is. He knew that faith in Him is a major component for us in dealing with our grief and with other major trials. I'm calling this "overcoming faith," because it enables us to overcome grief and loss. After the apostle Paul mentioned tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, and sword (Rom. 8:35), he added (8:37), "But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us." Implicit in that overwhelming victory is overcoming faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. God wants us to face life's overwhelming trials with overcoming faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. There are seven qualities of overcoming faith here that will help us work through life's overwhelming trials and losses so that we grieve, but not as unbelievers who have no hope: ([CLICK HERE for explanation of each of the following points](#))

1. Overcoming faith takes overwhelming trials to the Lord.
2. Overcoming faith trusts that God is in control of all our circumstances.
3. Overcoming faith does not limit God.
4. Overcoming faith trusts in the promises of God regarding eternity.
5. Overcoming faith personally applies God's truth in the present.
6. Overcoming faith centers in the person of Jesus Christ.
7. Overcoming faith believes what it knows and grows from there.

**Cole** concludes his explanation of the 7 points with a quote...

**Alan Redpath** wrote (BORROW [Victorious Christian Living: Studies of the Life of Joshua - page 166](#)):

There is nothing – no circumstance, no trouble, no testing – that can ever touch me until, first of all it has

gone past God and past Christ, right through to me. If it has come that far, it has come with a great purpose which I may not understand at the moment. But as I refuse to become panicky – as I lift up my eyes to Him – and as I accept it as coming from the throne of God for some great purpose of blessing to my heart, no sorrow will ever disturb me, no trial will ever disarm me, no circumstance will cause me to fret – for I shall rest in the joy of what my Lord is. That is the rest of victory.

*That is overcoming faith!* The Lord wants each of us to look through our grief and tears to Him as the resurrection and the life and answer His question: “Do you believe this?”

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**Carl Sagan** died of cancer at the age of 62. Newsweek magazine reported that he remained a resolute unbeliever to the very end. Listen to what his wife said, "There was no deathbed conversion, no appeals to God, no hope for an afterlife, no pretending that he and I, who had been inseparable for 20 years, were not saying goodbye forever. Carl never wanted to believe. He wanted to KNOW. (Newsweek, March 31, 1997, p. 65) (COMMENT: Carl will get his greatest desire! He will know beyond a doubt that Jesus is real, and that hell is eternal, and then he will wish that he did not know!)

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### **John Bennett (from Day by Day: Bible Promises) - John 11:26 SHALL NEVER DIE**

**A Two-part Promise.** ‘And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die’. This is the second part of the great ‘resurrection’ promise of John 11:25–26. In the first part, v. 25, on condition of faith in Him who is, ‘the resurrection and the life’, the assurance is given that the dead in Christ shall live again on that resurrection morning when He returns, 1 Cor. 15:23. The position of those who are living ‘at his coming’ is dealt with in the second part of this grand promise.

**A Two-part Fulfilment.** To those who die in faith trusting in the great sacrifice of Calvary, He will come again as ‘the resurrection’, raising their bodies from the dust of death. To those who are living at His return, He will come as ‘the life’, changing their bodies that they may be ‘conformed to the body of his glory’, Phil. 3:21 RV!

### **A Two-fold Change.**

(1) The dead in Christ have the priority in resurrection when, ‘the Lord himself shall descend from heaven ... and the dead in Christ shall rise first’, 1 Thess. 4:16. At that time, the disembodied spirits of the redeemed, who have been ‘absent from the body’ and ‘at home with the Lord’, 2 Cor. 5:8 RV, some of them for two thousand years, will be reunited with their bodies, and in response to the commanding ‘shout’ of the returning Lord will rise in triumphant resurrection, translated into the Lord’s presence to meet Him in the air, 1 Thess. 4:17.

(2) Those who are the saved living saints on the earth, will experience the fulfilment of the Lord’s promise, ‘shall never die!’ Their mortality shall be ‘swallowed up of life’, 2 Cor. 5:4, meaning, the Lord will clothe their mortal bodies with a body of immortality, of vital, glorious life, not subject any more to death! What a change that will be, ‘In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump’, 1 Cor. 15:52!

What a moment of triumph it will be when the saying is fulfilled, ‘Death is swallowed up in victory’. Then, the newly transformed and raptured living saints will cry, ‘O death, where is thy sting?’; and the freshly resurrected dead will shout, ‘O grave, where is thy victory?’, 1 Cor. 15:54–55.

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### **Ken Hemphill - RESURRECTION & LIFE (from "God Is")**

John 11:25 I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in Me, even if he dies, will live.

As a pastor, I accompanied many families on that difficult trip to the graveyard as they buried a family member or loved one. In recent years, I have had to make that same trip myself—first with my dad, then my mom.

But I cannot imagine how intense the pain must be for the individual who has no hope or assurance of ever seeing their dear one again. While my grief was profound, it was tempered by the firm assurance that Jesus is “the resurrection and the life.”

The two sisters of Lazarus struggled with the death of their brother. Typical of grief, Martha was looking for someone to blame, and Jesus was the most likely candidate. She asserted that if he had been present, Lazarus would not have died. And though she properly understood and believed he would be resurrected at the last day, Jesus’ reply to her was startling: “I am the resurrection”—not just in the future but in the present tense.

Martha spoke of resurrection as if it were only a future gift of God to be dispensed by Christ at the end of time. But Christ’s assertion required that she focus not on resurrection but on him. He is not the dispenser of resurrection; he is resurrection!

Notice that “resurrection” is the first word Jesus mentioned. But it is taken up into the larger concept of “life,” which is already ours today in Christ.

We are reminded of Paul's shout of triumph: “Death has been swallowed up in victory” (1 Cor. 15:54). This victory is a present tense reality for those who are in Christ. It is why Jesus could promise, “Everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die—ever” (John 11:26). When we are hidden in Christ, death has no authority over us. When we lay down this earthly body, our life in Christ will become resurrection life!

There is only one permanent cure for the fear of death—life! Eternal life! And this life is only found in our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

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**WETHERELL JOHNSON** ([Wikipedia](#)) -

**COMMENT** - Miss Johnson was the founder of [Bible Study Fellowship](#), the entity where I first heard the Word of Life with power and conviction and God's Spirit saved me from eternal separation from Him and into a life of full time ministry for Him (See [My Personal Testimony of God's Grace](#)) This story is from the chapter in Joyce Brown's [Courageous Christians : devotional stories for family reading](#)

SHOULD YOU THEN SEEK GREAT THINGS FOR YOURSELF?

SEEK THEM NOT.

- Jeremiah 45:5

Wetherell Johnson grew up in a Christian home in England. She believed in God, but she didn't give her life to Him when she was young. Still, she found comfort in her beliefs—until her parents sent her to France to be educated. There she spent time with people who put down the Bible, and Wetherell lost what faith she did have.

**(ED COMMENT:** Note her belief was in God, but that is different from belief in Jesus. The point is that in truth is most likely that she had not yet been born again so she really did not lose "what faith she" had. As the story unfolds, clearly God gave her faith upon reading Jesus' words in John 11:26 and the Spirit caused her to be born again by grace through faith, now a faith that truly saved her as described below).

She knew her skeptical attitude toward Christianity would hurt her godly parents, so she kept her doubts to herself. Her life became empty, and she felt depressed. As she looked for something to give life meaning, a Bible verse she had once learned kept coming back to her: **“Whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?”** (John 11:26).

One day as Wetherell thought about that verse, God showed her that Jesus was truly His Son. With tears of joy she finally gave her life to Him. Because one verse made such a difference in her life, Bible study became very important to her. She took five Bible courses through the mail and began teaching a class of rough girls.

In time, she knew God wanted her to become a missionary. She trained as a nurse and in mission work and went to China in 1936. In those days most Chinese worshiped evil spirits and relatives who had died. The hot, humid climate took a toll on Wetherell's health. After an appendix operation, she was not expected to live.

Japan was at war with China and was bombing the country. At the same time, Communist rebels were fighting to control the government. Wetherell had to move frequently because of the dangers. Once, six Japanese soldiers came to her home and threatened her, putting their knifelike bayonets to her neck. Often she felt overwhelmed by problems and loneliness. But time after time she found the strength and comfort she needed in God's Word.

One day an order came that every missionary would be put in Japanese prison camps with other “enemy aliens.” Wetherell was taken to a camp with two thousand other foreigners and shut in an old horse stable. The building wasn't insulated. In the summer it was stifling hot. In the winter there was no heating, even when the temperature was fifteen degrees below zero. It was one hundred feet by fifty feet and housed eighty-nine people. Beds had only two to three feet between them. Because they were so crowded, people got on each other's nerves and often argued.

The prisoners were given a small amount of rice for breakfast and lunch. In the evening they got rice and a one-inch cube of meat. In the beginning, Wetherell carefully picked the worms out of her rice, but she soon realized she needed the protein and ate them too. At night she and the other prisoners strapped tight belts around their waists so that their hunger pains wouldn't be so bad. During three years in the camp, she lost thirty-nine pounds.

Then World War Two ended, and she returned to England to regain her health. After a couple of years, she was back in China—even though fighting between the Communists and the government was worse than ever. As the Communists took over more and more land, it became very dangerous for missionaries to stay. They bravely worked on, though, trying to train as many Chinese

Christian leaders as they could before the country fell to Communist rule.

Finally, afraid she would cause problems for the Chinese Christians if she stayed any longer, Wetherell left China. She went to the United States to visit friends and began speaking in churches and at conferences.

At one church, five ladies came up to her after she'd spoken and asked her to lead them in a Bible study. She hesitated at first. These women already knew quite a bit about the Bible, and there were many churches they could attend to hear God's Word. She longed to teach people who had never heard about Jesus—such as the millions of Chinese.

But as she prayed about the women's request, God reminded her of Jeremiah 45:5. She felt God was asking her, "Cannot you do this small thing for me?" (BORROW her excellent, exciting autobiography which demonstrates God's hand sovereignly supernaturally moving behind the scenes of a saint's life - [Created for commitment](#), page 200). So she agreed, but she insisted the ladies work at learning. She assigned Scripture passages for them to study before class and gave them questions to answer. During each class time, she talked about the verses, and the women discussed what they had learned. At the end of each meeting, she gave them notes to take home and review.

Their group, called [Bible Study Fellowship](#), grew quickly. Soon Wetherell divided the class into smaller groups and trained other leaders. When people heard about Bible Study Fellowship, she was asked to start groups in other cities.

Eventually there were BSF groups all over the United States, and Wetherell wrote a five-year study course. Within six years, 100,000 women were involved. Later, men's Bible studies were begun, and BSF spread to Australia, England, Canada, and New Zealand.

Thousands who have come to BSF classes to learn more about the Bible have ended up giving their lives to the Lord

(ED: AMEN TO THAT STATEMENT AS YOURS TRULY IS ONE OF THE ABUNDANT FRUIT OF MISS JOHNSON! AMAZING STORY! AMAZING GRACE TO BRING HER AND 1000'S OF OTHERS INTO THE KINGDOM! THANK YOU JESUS FOR SPEAKING John 11:26 AND FOR YOU SPIRIT OPENING HER HEART LIKE LYDIA'S IN Acts 16:14+ AND TO YOU HEAVENLY FATHER FOR SENDING JESUS AND THE SPIRIT! AMEN).

BORROW Joyce Brown's [Courageous Christians : devotional stories for family reading](#)

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Jesus Christ is truly the answer to death for all of us. As D. L. Moody lay dying, he exclaimed, "Earth is receding; heaven is approaching. This is my crowning day." Many have felt that way as they came to the end of life.

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**Norman Geisler - JOHN 11:26—How could Jesus say we will never die when the Bible declares all will eventually die?**  
([When Critics Ask](#) GO TO PAGE 355)

**PROBLEM:** God Himself said to Adam, "In the day that you eat of it you shall surely die" (Gen. 2:17). Paul reaffirmed this, declaring that "through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned" (Rom. 5:12). But Jesus seems to contradict this when He affirmed, "whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die" (John 11:26).

**SOLUTION:** First of all, even taken literally, Jesus was not denying that believers would die. In fact, He affirmed it in the previous verse, saying, "though he may die, he shall live." In other words, Jesus claimed that because He was "the resurrection and the life" (v. 25), He would resurrect those who believe in Him unto eternal life (cf. John 5:28–29).

Further, Jesus may have been speaking about spiritual life and spiritual death. In this sense, those who believe in Him will have spiritual life (John 3:16, 36), even though they will experience physical death. For those who are born only once will die twice, once physically and once again at the "second death" (Rev. 20:14) or final separation from God. But those who are born twice (John 3:3, 7) will only die once (physically), but will live with God forever.

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**Ray Pritchard - Do You Believe This? - [Who is that Man - Daily Lenten Devotionals](#)**

"Do you believe this?" (John 11:26)

Peter Marshall tells the story of a young boy about four years old who had a terminal disease. At first he didn't understand his condition, but finally he realized that he wasn't going to get better and would never again play with his friends. So one morning he asked his mother, "Am I going to die?" And she said, "Yes, dear." "Momma, what is death like? Will it hurt?"

The mother ran out of the room to the kitchen and leaned against the refrigerator, her knuckles gripped white to keep from crying. She prayed and asked the Lord to give her an answer for her son. Suddenly, an idea came and she went back in his room and sat down on the bed "Timmy, do you remember how you used to play outside all day and when you came inside at night you were so

tired you just fell down on the couch and slept? In the morning you woke up in your own bed and you wondered how you got there. During the night your father would pick you up and carry you to your own bed.” “That’s what death is like. One night you lie down and go to sleep and in the middle of the night your Heavenly Father comes and picks you up and carries you to your own bed. In the morning when you wake up, you’re in your own room in heaven.” The little boy smiled and nodded. Several weeks later he died peacefully. That’s what death is like for the Christian. Satan’s hold is broken. The fear is taken away.

It’s a wonderful thing to be a Christian and to know your sins are forgiven and to know that death is not the end but the beginning. Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die” (John 11:25-26a). Then he added these words that we often overlook, “Do you believe this?” (John 11:26b). Since truth must always become personal, let me ask you six questions.

1. Do you believe with all your heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God who came from heaven to live on this earth 2000 years ago?
2. Do you believe that when he died on the Cross, he died in your place, bearing your punishment, and paying for your sins?
3. Do you believe that on Easter Sunday morning, he literally, physically, bodily rose from the dead never to die again?
4. Do you believe that Jesus is now seated at the right hand of God the Father?
5. Do you believe that Jesus is truly the resurrection and the life and that he is able to remove the terror of death for those who trust him?
6. Are you willing to stake your life on your answers to the first five questions?

I encourage you to read each question and then answer out loud. Jesus is the resurrection and the life. He has a question for you today. Do you believe this?

Lord Jesus, what would we do without you? Where could we go but to the Lord? You alone have the words of eternal life. On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand. Thank you for a hope more solid than Gibraltar, a hope that goes beyond the grave. Amen.

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### **LIFE INSURANCE - James Smith**

Everybody is familiar with the Life Insurance Society. But, after all, no society can insure life for a single moment. It may insure money at death, but that is not insuring life. The only life insurance for man is in the Gospel of the grace of God—union with the ever living Son of God. "He that believeth in Me shall never die" (John 11:26). Is your life insured?

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**C H Spurgeon from [The Believer Catechized](#)** - Martha says she believes in Jesus as ‘the resurrection, and the life’; yet what is her action? Christ commands the bystanders to take away the stone from the sepulchre, and she intervenes with her cry, ‘Lord, by this time he stinketh’! She fears the obnoxious consequences of uncovering such a mass of corruption, though he who is ‘the resurrection, and the life’ stands at the grave’s mouth. Ah! Martha, where is your faith in him? Dear heart, she says that she believes in Jesus as ‘the resurrection, and the life’, and yet she is afraid that her brother will not rise though the Mighty One stands there to raise him. Is she not just like you and me? We believe that God hears prayer, and therefore we pray, but if the Lord desires to surprise us he has only to answer our requests. I have seen God’s children running with vast astonishment to tell their friends, ‘Here is a wonderful thing! Oh, such a marvellous event has happened to me! I offered a prayer and God has heard me.’ An amazing thing that God should do as he said he would! They put these things in books as marvels, and call the volume ‘Remarkable Answers to Prayer’. Dear me, is it remarkable that it is cold when it freezes? Do we speak of the remarkable warmth of the sun’s beams at midsummer? Is it remarkable that the fires in our houses should warm us when we put our hands to them? Is he a remarkable God because he says he will hear prayer and does it? An answer to prayer should be remembered with gratitude, and yet it should be regarded as the most natural thing in all the world that our heavenly Father should fulfil his promises to his children. It is a great wonder that God should promise, but not a wonder that he should perform.

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### **Never Separated from God - Faith's Checkbook - C H Spurgeon**

“And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die, Believeth thou this?”—John 11:26

YES, Lord, we believe it; we shall never die. Our soul may be separated from our body, and this is death of a kind; but our soul shall never be separated from God, which is the true death, the death which was threatened to sin, the death penalty which is the worst

that can happen. We believe this most assuredly, for who shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord? We are members of the Body of Christ; will Christ lose parts of His body? We are married to Jesus; will He be bereaved and widowed? It is not possible. There is a life within us which is not capable of being divided from God: yea, and the holy Spirit dwells within us, and how then can we die? Jesus, Himself, is our life, and therefore there is no dying for us for He cannot die again. In Him we died unto sin once, and the capital sentence cannot a second time be executed. Now we live, and live forever. The reward of righteousness is life everlasting, and we have nothing less than the righteousness of God, and therefore can claim the very highest reward.

Living and believing, we believe that we shall live and enjoy. Wherefore we press forward with full assurance that our life is secure in our living Head

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### **Oswald Chamber - Programme of belief**

Believest thou this? John 11:26.

Martha believed in the power at the disposal of Jesus Christ; she believed that if He had been present He could have healed her brother. She also believed that Jesus had a peculiar intimacy with God and that whatever He asked of God, God would do; but she needed a closer personal intimacy with Jesus. Martha's programme of belief had its fulfilment in the future; Jesus led her on until her belief became a personal possession, and then slowly emerged into a particular inheritance—"Yea, Lord, I believe that Thou art the Christ ..."

Is there something like that in the Lord's dealings with you? Is Jesus educating you into a personal intimacy with Himself? Let Him press home His question to you—"Believest thou this?" What is your ordeal of doubt? Have you come, like Martha, to some overwhelming passage in your circumstances where your programme of belief is about to emerge into a personal belief? This can never be until a personal need arises out of a personal problem.

To believe is to commit. In the programme of mental belief I commit myself, and abandon all that is not related to that commitment. In personal belief I commit myself morally to this way of confidence and refuse to compromise with any other; and in particular belief I commit myself spiritually to Jesus Christ, and determine in that thing to be dominated by the Lord alone.

When I stand face to face with Jesus Christ and He says to me—"Believest thou this?" I find that faith is as natural as breathing, and I am staggered that I was so stupid as not to trust Him before.

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### **In the Arms of God    September 24**

Everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. JOHN 11:26

We don't like to say good-bye to those whom we love. Whether it be at a school or a cemetery, separation is tough. It is right for us to weep, but there is no need for us to despair. They had pain here. They have no pain there. They struggled here. They have no struggles there. You and I might wonder why God took them home. But they don't. They understand. They are, at this very moment, at peace in the presence of God....

When it is cold on earth, we can take comfort in knowing that our loved ones are in the warm arms of God. And when Christ comes, we will hold them, too. (Max Lucado - Grace for the Moment)

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### **[The Oldest Living Things](#)**

He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. — 1 John 5:12

Today's Scripture: John 11:14-27

Hikers in California's Sierra Mountains are surprised to encounter 10-foot-high fences with barbed wire stretched around the top. What do they see inside the fence-surrounded enclosures? Some vital communication equipment like a radio tower? No, they see only a few gnarled trees, maybe just a twisted stump with a few needles.

A sign reads: DO NOT ENTER. BRISTLECONE PINE PROTECTION ZONE. PLEASE PROTECT THESE TREES. They are the oldest living things on earth.

Pamphlets explain that these bristlecone pines were flourishing when Jesus walked on earth, and that the oldest were seedlings at the time of the Exodus from Egypt.

Eventually, though, regardless of how carefully they are protected, those trees will die. They are not destined to live forever. But Christians have the certainty of everlasting life. To be sure, our bodies will die. Yet by God's grace and power, our souls will never



perish. Our bodies will be raised up and, as Paul said, be changed from mortal to immortal (1 Cor. 15:53).

We are awed by the longevity of the bristlecone pines. How much more awesome is eternal life through Christ. We who believe in Him will live forever! By: Vernon Grounds (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

We cry, "O God, how can it be?  
How long is vast eternity?"  
The answer rings from shore to shore,  
"No end, eternal, evermore."  
—Anon.

Want to live forever? Let Jesus live in you now.

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### **Candles Or Stars?**

Whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this? — John 11:26

Today's Scripture: Daniel 12:1-13

Some say that life is like the flickering flame of a candle. When the flame is snuffed out, the light is gone forever. They believe that when we breathe our last breath, we are totally extinguished—as if we had never been!

British writer Arthur Porritt gives this sad description of how atheist Charles Bradlaugh was buried: "No prayer was said at the grave. Indeed, not a single word was uttered. The remains, placed in a light coffin, were lowered into the earth in a quite unceremonious fashion as if carrion were being hustled out of sight." Porritt said that he came away "heart-frozen," realizing how the "loss of faith in the continuity of human personality after death gives death an appalling victory."

Life is not a brief candle-flame that death will forever extinguish. Christians in particular can rejoice that Christ "abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Timothy 1:10), that He is "the resurrection and the life," and that all who believe in Him "shall never die" (John 11:25-26).

Because of God's power and grace exhibited at Calvary, we will receive bodies like Jesus' resurrection body, and we "shall shine . . . like the stars forever" (Daniel 12:3). Praise God! We're not flickering candles, but shining stars! By: Vernon Grounds (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

In bodies that will ne'er grow old,  
We'll reign with Him, through years untold;  
O precious thought, we all shall be  
With Christ through all eternity.  
—Watson

Because Jesus lives, we too will live.

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### **Life Beyond The Grave**

Whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this? —John 11:26

Today's Scripture: John 11:1-44

My beloved husband Bill died of cancer at the age of 48. One tearful morning I read John 11, the story about Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. I was reassured by two truths I found in Jesus' words to His disciples on their way to Lazarus' grave.

The first truth was revealed when Jesus said that Lazarus was asleep and that He would wake him (vv.11-14). His disciples responded, "Lord, if he sleeps he will get well." Jesus replied, "Lazarus is dead." Saying that He would waken Lazarus, I believe, was His gentle way to teach them that they didn't need to dread death any more than sleep. Because of His power, resurrecting someone from the grave was like waking someone from sleep.

I saw a second truth in Jesus' statement to Martha: "He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die" (vv.25-26). Of course, believers aren't exempt from dying physically, but Jesus promised that they will live eternally. As the resurrection and the life, He will "waken" their bodies someday. His power to do this was demonstrated when He raised Lazarus (vv.43-44).

When someone we love goes to be with Jesus, these promises give us comfort and assurance. By: Joanie Yoder (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Grief will not last, joy will return,  
For through our tears we clearly see  
That while we part but for a time,  
With Christ we'll spend eternity.

—D. De Haan

Death separates us for a time; Christ will reunite us forever.

**John 11:27 She said to Him, "Yes, Lord; I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God, even He who comes into the world."**

BGT John 11:27 λ γει α τ · ν α κ ρ ι ε, γ π ε π σ τ ε υ κ α τ ι σ ε χ ρ ι σ τ ς υ ς τ ο θ ε ο ε ς τ ν κ σ μ ο ν ρ χ μ ε ν ο ς.

KJV John 11:27 She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.

NET John 11:27 She replied, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God who comes into the world."

CSB John 11:27 "Yes, Lord," she told Him, "I believe You are the Messiah, the Son of God, who comes into the world."

ESV John 11:27 She said to him, "Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world."

NIV John 11:27 "Yes, Lord," she told him, "I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world."

NLT John 11:27 "Yes, Lord," she told him. "I have always believed you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who has come into the world from God."

NRS John 11:27 She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world."

NJB John 11:27 'Yes, Lord,' she said, 'I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who was to come into this world.'

NAB John 11:27 She said to him, "Yes, Lord. I have come to believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who is coming into the world."

YLT John 11:27 believest thou this?' she saith to him, 'Yes, sir, I have believed that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming to the world.'

MIT John 11:27 She said, "Yes, Lord. I have believed that you are the messiah, God's son, the one expected to come into the world."

- **Yes:** Jn 1:49 4:42 6:69 9:36-38 20:28-31 Mt 16:16 Ac 8:37 1Jn 5:1
- **even He who comes into the world:** Jn 6:14 Mal 3:1 Mt 11:3 Lu 7:19,20 1Ti 1:15-16 1Jn 5:20
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

Malachi 3:1+ "**Behold**, I am going to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the Messenger of the covenant, in Whom you delight, behold, **He is COMING**," says the LORD of hosts.

Matthew 11:3+ and said to Him, "Are You **the Expected One**, or shall we look for someone else?"

**NET Note** - Aspects of Jesus' ministry may have led John to question whether Jesus was the promised stronger and greater One **Who is to come** that he had preached about in Matt 3:1–12.

Matthew 16:16+ Simon Peter answered, "You are **the Christ, the Son of the living God**"

John 1:9+ There was the true Light which, **coming into the world**, enlightens every man.

John 20:31+ but these have been written so that you may believe that **Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God**; and that believing you may have life in His name.

1 Timothy 1:15+ It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that **Christ Jesus CAME into the world to save sinners**, among whom I am foremost of all.

1 John 5:20+ And **we know that the Son of God HAS COME**, and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

## **"YES LORD" - MARTHA'S GREAT CONFESSION OF MESSIAH**

**She said to Him, "Yes, Lord ([kurios](#)); I have believed ([pisteuo](#) - a settled conviction) that You are the Christ ([Christos](#) or the Messiah, the "One Who has been anointed"), [the Son of God](#), even He who comes into (is [incarnated into](#)) the world** - Her great confession reminds us of Peter's in Mt 16:16+. Martha states her belief in the past tense as **I have believed**. The verb **believed** is actually in the perfect tense signifying belief at a point in time in the past with a fixed, settled faith in the present. Martha had accepted Jesus as the promised Messiah Who had come [into the world](#) and she held fast to that belief.

**NET Note on believed** - The perfect tense in Greek is often used to emphasize the results or present state of a past action. Such is the case here. To emphasize this nuance the perfect tense verb πιστευκα (pepisteuka) has been translated as a present tense (**NET** = "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ,"). This is in keeping with the present context, where Jesus asks of her present state of belief in Jn 11:26, and the theology of the Gospel as a whole, which emphasizes the continuing effects and present reality of faith. For discussion on this use of the perfect tense, see ExSyn 574–76 and B. M. Fanning, Verbal Aspect, 291–97.

What is interesting is that she confesses belief, but in Jn 11:40 Jesus challenges her to believe declaring "Did I not say to you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?" The point is that one does not cease growing in their faith once they are born again. Belief or faith that results in regeneration, should grow and produce progressive sanctification, the aspect of the Christian life in which we continue to discover more and more about Who Jesus is as we study His Word (cf Ro 10:17+).

**Brian Bell** - We must move from "**Lord if**"(Jn 11:21,32) to "**Lord I believe**"(Jn 11:27).

**THOUGHT** - Dear reader, have you said "Yes Lord," to Jesus? (Song [Yes Lord](#))

**Spurgeon on I have believed** - By which she as good as said, "I believe that, and I believe everything else. I have an implicit faith in thee. Whatever thou sayest, whatever thou hast said or shalt say, I am prepared to believe it all. for I believe in thee. I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world." Will not many of you make Martha's grand confession of faith your own? Believe in Jesus, and then you will be able to believe anything and everything that he says. Our Lord's greatest miracles were ever the reward of faith.

**Son of God** Matt. 4:3; Matt. 4:6; Matt. 8:29; Matt. 26:63; Matt. 27:40; Matt. 27:43; Matt. 27:54; Mk. 1:1; Mk. 3:11; Mk. 15:39; Lk. 1:35; Lk. 3:38; Lk. 4:3; Lk. 4:9; Lk. 4:41; Lk. 22:70; Jn. 1:34; Jn. 1:49; Jn. 3:18; Jn. 5:25; Jn. 10:36; Jn. 11:4; Jn. 11:27; Jn. 19:7; Jn. 20:31; Acts 8:37; Acts 9:20; Rom. 1:4; 2 Co. 1:19; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 4:13; Heb. 4:14; Heb. 6:6; Heb. 7:3; Heb. 10:29; 1 Jn. 3:8; 1 Jn. 4:15; 1 Jn. 5:5; 1 Jn. 5:10; 1 Jn. 5:12; 1 Jn. 5:13; 1 Jn. 5:20; Rev. 2:18

**William Hendriksen** reminds us of "other notable confessions, recorded in preceding chapters of John's Gospel, see the one by John the Baptist ("Look, the Lamb of God, who is taking away the sin of the world," John 1:29), by Andrew ("We have found the Messiah," John 1:41), by Philip ("The One about whom Moses wrote in the law and about whom the prophets wrote, we have found," John 1:45), by Nathaniel ("Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art King of Israel," John 1:49), by the Samaritans ("We know that this is really the Savior of the world," John 4:42), and by Simon Peter ("Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of everlasting life. And we have believed and know that thou art the Holy One of God," John 6:68, 69; cf. also his confession recorded in Matt. 16:16). (BORROW [Exposition of the Gospel according to John PAGE 152](#))

**John 11:28** And when she had said this, she went away and called Mary her sister, saying secretly, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you."

BGT John 11:28 Κα το το ε πο σα π λθεν κα φ νησεν Μαρι μ τ ν δελφ ν α τ ς λ θ ρ ε πο σα· διδ σκαλος π ρεστιν κα φωνε σε.

KJV John 11:28 And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee.

NET John 11:28 And when she had said this, Martha went and called her sister Mary, saying privately, "The Teacher is here and is asking for you."

CSB John 11:28 Having said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, saying in private, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you."

ESV John 11:28 When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in private, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you."

NIV John 11:28 And after she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary aside. "The Teacher is here," she said, "and is asking for you."

NLT John 11:28 Then she returned to Mary. She called Mary aside from the mourners and told her, "The Teacher is here and wants to see you."

NRS John 11:28 When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you."

NJB John 11:28 When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in a low voice, 'The Master is here and wants to see you.'

NAB John 11:28 When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary secretly, saying, "The teacher is here and is asking for you."

YLT John 11:28 And these things having said, she went away, and called Mary her sister privately, saying, 'The Teacher is present, and doth call thee;'

MIT John 11:28 After she said this, she slipped away and secretly called her sister Mary, "The teacher is here and he is calling for you."

- **and called:** Jn 11:20 1:41,45 21:7 Zec 3:10 Lu 10:38-42 1Th 4:17,18 5:11 Heb 12:12
- **The Teacher:** Jn 13:13 Jn 20:16
- **is here:** Jn 10:3 Song 2:8-14 Mk 10:49
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

John 13:13 "You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am.

John 20:16 Jesus said to her, "Mary!" [MARY MAGDALENE](#) She turned and \*said to Him in Hebrew, "Rabboni!" (which means, Teacher).

John 1:38+ And Jesus turned and saw them following, and said to them, "What do you seek?" They said to Him, "Rabbi (which translated means Teacher), where are You staying?"

John 3:2 this man (NICODEMUS) came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a **teacher**; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."

### MARTHA SECRETLY CALLS MARY TO JESUS

**And when she had said this, she went away and called [Mary](#) her sister, saying secretly ([lathra](#) - in private) -** Martha did not want others to know Jesus was calling for Mary. Had she yelled it out or spoken publicly, the mourners (and other Jews) would have heard her acknowledging the presence to Jesus. It seems she was aware of the hatred of the Jewish leadership and thus the danger that Jesus would experience if they knew He was present so close to Jerusalem. By now they were like bloodhounds chasing their prey to destroy it.

*Faithful to my Lord's commands,  
I still would choose the better part:*

*Serve with careful Martha's hands  
And loving Mary's heart.*

**Spurgeon** is probably correct explaining "Because she knew that the Jews hated the Saviour, she could not tell what would come of it if they knew of his coming, so she whispers to her." ([Spurgeon's Exposition - Gospel of John](#))

**The Teacher** ([didaskalos](#)) **is here and is calling for you** - KJV = "Master." The disciples called Him Rabbi in Jn 11:8. **Teacher** is preceded by the definite article (*ho*) so that this is not just any teacher but **THE Teacher**! Martha could have addressed Him in a more familiar way because of their friendship but she chose to refer to Him as **the Teacher**. Whether she meant it or not, there is the implication that **the Teacher** has something to teach His students in the midst of this human tragedy with loss of their brother Lazarus. And indeed His "classroom lesson" would prove to be LIFE changing, in more ways than one!

Note also that for Martha to call Jesus **Teacher** was significant, because in her day, rabbis refused to teach women (cf. Jn 4:27+), but Jesus [broke the mold](#) for rabbis and frequently taught women. See [WOMEN IN THE BIBLE](#).

**THOUGHT** - We all need to remember the truth in the midst of our trial or tragedy that not only is Jesus near to comfort, He is also present to teach. But like Mary, we must arise and go to Him with ears open to hear what the the Teacher has to say to us (Play [I Will Arise and Go to Jesus](#)). Times of trial and tragedy can be some of the greatest times of teaching and growth in trust, for lessons we learn in the valleys will stay with us the rest of our lives and be good companions when we are on the mountaintops. When we are weak, He can show Himself strong. When the storms come (as they will) may God grant us His supernatural grace to proclaim like David (who learned through trial and tragedy) "Thou art my hiding place; Thou dost preserve me from trouble; Thou dost surround me with songs of deliverance. Selah." (Psalm 32:7+).

Until I learned to trust, I never learned to pray;  
And I did not learn to fully trust 'til sorrows came my way.

Until I felt my weakness, His strength I never knew;  
Nor dreamed 'til I was stricken that He could see me through.

Who deepest drinks of sorrow, drinks deepest, too, of grace;  
He sends the storm so He Himself can be our hiding place.

His heart that seeks our highest good, knows well when things annoy;  
We would not long for heaven if earth held only joy.

-- Source Unknown

*In a time of trials or grief, realize that you're enrolled in the school of Christ  
and He has just given you a great opportunity  
to learn more about His all-sufficiency.*

-- [Steven Cole](#)

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**Secretly** ([2977](#)) [lathra](#) from [lanthano](#) = to be hidden) is an adverb that means in a secretive way, doing so without others noticing. Four uses in NT - Matt. 1:19; Matt. 2:7; Jn. 11:28; Acts 16:37 - Of Herod who "secretly called the magi." (Mt 2:7). Of Martha when she "called Mary her sister, saying **secretly**, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you." (Jn 11:28) Of Paul after being falsely beaten and jailed asked "and "now are they sending us away **secretly**?"

**Teacher** ([1320](#)) [didaskalos](#) from [didasko](#) = teach to shape will of one being taught by content of what is taught <> cp [didaskalia](#)) is one who provides instruction or systematically imparts truth. The **teacher** teaches in such a way as to shape will of one being taught by content of what is taught. Someone has said that "The great teacher is the one who turns our ears into eyes so that we can see the truth." Henry Brooks added that "A (Bible) teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops." **Didaskalos** is the usual translation of the Hebrew word **Rabbi** (see Jn 1:38, cp the Aramaic word for teacher = Rabboni in Jn 20:16), a term which in Jesus' day described those who were acknowledged as authorities on the Old Testament and were teachers of divine truth.

**Didaskalos in John** - Jn. 1:38; Jn. 3:2; Jn. 3:10; Jn. 8:4; Jn. 11:28; Jn. 13:13; Jn. 13:14; Jn. 20:16

And although Jesus was frequently called **Teacher**, **C S Lewis** makes the point that He was far more than just a Teacher ""I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God." That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic—on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg—or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of

God (Mk 1:1<sup>+</sup>); or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon, or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to. (C. S. LEWIS, Mere Christianity)

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### C H Spurgeon - [The Master](#) John 11:28

I hear a great deal said of sundry 'Bodies of Divinity', but my own impression is that there has been and will be only one body of divinity, and that is Jesus Christ, 'For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.' To the true church her body of divinity is Christ. Some churches refer to other standards, but we know no standard of theology except our Master. 'I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.' We feel no drawings towards any other master. He is the standard—'unto him shall the gathering of the people be.' We are not of those who will go no further than Martin Luther. Blessed be God for Martin Luther! God forbid that we should say a word in depreciation of him. But were we baptized unto Martin Luther? I think not. Some can never budge an inch beyond John Calvin, whom I reverence first of all merely mortal men; but still John Calvin is not our master, but only a more advanced pupil in the school of Christ. He teaches and, as far as he teaches what Christ taught, he is authoritative, but where Calvin goes apart from Jesus, he is no more to be followed than Voltaire himself. There are brethren whose one reference for everything is to the utterances of John Wesley. 'What would Mr Wesley have said?' is a weighty question with them. We think it a small matter what he would have said, or what he did say for the guidance of Christians, now so many years after his departure; far better is it to enquire what Jesus says in his word. One of the grandest of men that ever lived was Wesley, but he is no master of ours. We were not baptized in the name of John Wesley, or John Calvin, or Martin Luther; 'one is your Master, even Christ.'

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### John 11:29 And when she heard it, she got up quickly and was coming to Him.

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BGT John 11:29 κενη δ̄ ς̄ κουσεν γρηταχ κα ρχετο πρς ατν.

KJV John 11:29 As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto him.

NET John 11:29 So when Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to him.

CSB John 11:29 As soon as she heard this, she got up quickly and went to Him.

ESV John 11:29 And when she heard it, she rose quickly and went to him.

NIV John 11:29 When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to him.

NLT John 11:29 So Mary immediately went to him.

NRS John 11:29 And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him.

NJB John 11:29 Hearing this, Mary got up quickly and went to him.

NAB John 11:29 As soon as she heard this, she rose quickly and went to him.

YLT John 11:29 she, when she heard, riseth up quickly, and doth come to him;

MIT John 11:29 When she heard that, she got up quickly and came to him.

- Ps 27:8 Ps 119:59-60 Pr 15:23 Pr 27:17 Song 3:1-4
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## MARY'S RAPID RESPONSE

**And when she heard ([akouo](#)) it, she got up quickly ([tachu](#)) and was coming ([erchomai](#)) to Him** - Like Martha, Mary went to meet Jesus outside of the village.

Mary was like David in "When You said, "Seek My face," my heart said to You, "Your face, O LORD, I shall seek." (Ps 27:8) And like the writer of Psalm 119:59-60 "I considered my ways and turned my feet to Your testimonies. I hastened and did not delay To keep Your commandments." Don't miss it - Mary heard, arose quickly and came! His sheep hear His voice and come (Jn 10:3-4, 16, 27+).

**THOUGHT** - When Jesus calls you to come to Him, do not delay. Come to Jesus quickly! The sooner you go to Him, the sooner you will experience His comfort and compassion.

[Just as I am, without one plea,](#)

But that Thy blood was shed for me,  
And that Thou bid'st me come to Thee,  
O Lamb of God, I come! I come!  
-- Charlotte Elliott

**Spurgeon** - The coming of Christ had such an effect upon her that she arose from amid the ashes of her sorrow, and went out to meet her dear Lord and Master. ([Spurgeon's Exposition - Gospel of John](#))

**John 11:30 Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha met Him.**

BGT John 11:30 ο πω δ ληλθει ησο σε ες τ ν κ μ η ν , λ λ ν τ ι ν τ τ π που π ν η σ ε ν α τ Μ ρ θ α .

KJV John 11:30 Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him.

NET John 11:30 (Now Jesus had not yet entered the village, but was still in the place where Martha had come out to meet him.)

CSB John 11:30 Jesus had not yet come into the village but was still in the place where Martha had met Him.

ESV John 11:30 Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha had met him.

NIV John 11:30 Now Jesus had not yet entered the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him.

NLT John 11:30 Jesus had stayed outside the village, at the place where Martha met him.

NRS John 11:30 Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him.

NJB John 11:30 Jesus had not yet come into the village; he was still at the place where Martha had met him.

NAB John 11:30 For Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still where Martha had met him.

YLT John 11:30 and Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was in the place where Martha met him;

MIT John 11:30 He had not yet come into the village but was still at the place where Martha met him.

- Jn 11:20
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **JESUS STILL OUTSIDE THE VILLAGE OF BETHANY**

**Now Jesus ([Jesus](#)) had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where [Martha](#) met Him** - This refers back to Jn 11:20 and emphasizes that the two sisters were being somewhat secretive at this point. It is possible that since tombs were outside towns, and Jesus may have been near the very grave where Lazarus rested.

**John 11:31 Then the Jews who were with her in the house, and consoling her, when they saw that Mary got up quickly and went out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there.**

BGT John 11:31 ο ο ν ου δ α ο ι ο ν τ ε ς με τ α τ ς ν τ ο κ κα παραμυθο μενοι α τ ν , δ ν τ ε ς τ ν Μ α ρ ι μ τ ι ταχ ως ν στη κα ξ λθεν, κολοθησαν α τ δ ξαντε ς τι π γει ε ς τ μνημε ο ν να κλα σ κε .

KJV John 11:31 The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there.

NET John 11:31 Then the people who were with Mary in the house consoling her saw her get up quickly and go out. They followed her, because they thought she was going to the tomb to weep there.

CSB John 11:31 The Jews who were with her in the house consoling her saw that Mary got up quickly and went out. So they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to cry there.

ESV John 11:31 When the Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary rise quickly and go out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there.

NIV John 11:31 When the Jews who had been with Mary in the house, comforting her, noticed how quickly she got up and went out, they followed her, supposing she was going to the tomb to mourn there.

NLT John 11:31 When the people who were at the house consoling Mary saw her leave so hastily, they assumed she was going to Lazarus's grave to weep. So they followed her there.

NRS John 11:31 The Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there.

NJB John 11:31 When the Jews who were in the house comforting Mary saw her get up so quickly and go out, they followed her, thinking that she was going to the tomb to weep there.

NAB John 11:31 So when the Jews who were with her in the house comforting her saw Mary get up quickly and go out, they followed her, presuming that she was going to the tomb to weep there.

YLT John 11:31 the Jews, therefore, who were with her in the house, and were comforting her, having seen Mary that she rose up quickly and went forth, followed her, saying -- 'She doth go away to the tomb, that she may weep there.'

MIT John 11:31 Those Jews who were with Mary ather home comforting her, when they saw that she got up quickly and went out, followed her, supposing she returned to the tomb to weep there.

- **Jews:** Jn 11:19
- **she was going:** Ge 37:35 2Sa 12:16-18 1Co 2:15
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Then the Jews ([loudaios](#)) who were with her in the house, and consoling ([paramutheomai](#)) her, when they saw that Mary got up quickly and went out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep ([klaio](#)) there** - The **Jews** were mourners (some may have been hired). This confirms that the tomb was outside of the village as noted above. One might ask why did the Jews not follow Martha when she went out to meet Jesus?

**NET Note on the Jews ([loudaios](#))** - Or "the Judeans"; Grk "the Jews." Here the phrase refers to the friends, acquaintances, and relatives of Lazarus or his sisters who had come to mourn, since the Jewish religious authorities are specifically mentioned as a separate group in John 11:46–47. See also the notes on the phrase "the Jewish leaders" in Jn 11:8 and "the Jewish people of the region" in Jn 11:19. **TO WEEP THERE** - Or "to mourn" referring to the loud wailing or crying typical of public mourning in that culture (LISTEN TO [WAILING AND MOURNING](#)).

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### Jon Courson - John 11:31–32 (from A Day's Journey)

How special Mary is. In Luke 10, we see her at the feet of the Lord in a happy time. Here, we see her at His feet during a hard time. Mary is one who, both in days of delight and days of difficulty, positioned herself at the feet of Jesus Christ.

I have found that some are inclined to spend time with the Lord in easy times. 'Oh, Lord, You're so good to me. I'll sing Your praises; I'll be at church on Sunday.' But when the hard times come, they pull away. In anger and frustration and confusion, they say, 'Why expend the energy? Why pay the gas money? I'll just stay home and watch TV.'

Others run to church in hard times. We saw that all across this nation during Desert Storm. In hard times, many seek the Lord and sit at His feet. But when things are back to normal, they disappear.

Like many of you, however, there are some like Mary who, regardless of the circumstances, find themselves always at Jesus' feet.

People often wonder how they can experience intimacy with the Lord to the degree Mary did. The answer is simple: spend time at His feet.

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



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BGT John 11:32 ο ν Μαρι μ ς λθεν που ν ησο ς δο σα α τ ν πεσεν α το πρ ς το ς π δας λ γουσα α τ · κ ριε, ε ς δε ο κ ν μου π θανεν δελφ ς.

KJV John 11:32 Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

NET John 11:32 Now when Mary came to the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."

CSB John 11:32 When Mary came to where Jesus was and saw Him, she fell at His feet and told Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died!"

ESV John 11:32 Now when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet, saying to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."

NIV John 11:32 When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."

NLT John 11:32 When Mary arrived and saw Jesus, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died."

NRS John 11:32 When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."

NJB John 11:32 Mary went to Jesus, and as soon as she saw him she threw herself at his feet, saying, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.'

NAB John 11:32 When Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."

YLT John 11:32 Mary, therefore, when she came where Jesus was, having seen him, fell at his feet, saying to him, 'Sir, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died;'

MIT John 11:32 As Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet exclaiming, "Lord, had you been here my brother would not have died."

- **she fell:** Lu 5:8 Lk 8:41 17:16 Rev 5:8,14 22:8
- **if:** Jn 11:21,37 Jn 4:49
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Luke 10:39 She had a sister called **Mary, who was seated at the Lord's feet**, listening to His word.

John 12:3 Mary then took a pound of very costly perfume of pure nard, and **anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair**; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

### LORD IF YOU HAD BEEN HERE

Therefore, when **Mary** came where Jesus ([lesous](#)) was, she saw Him, and fell at His feet - Mary's approach to Jesus is to hit her knees (see [other times above](#)), something Martha did not do. Wherever you find Mary of Bethany in the Scriptures, she is at the feet of Jesus. In Lk 10:39-42, she sat at his feet to listen and learn. In John 11:32, she brought her sorrows to his feet, and in John 12:3, she poured out her expensive gift at his feet.

**Spurgeon** observes that "Martha had a dialogue with the Saviour, but Mary bowed at his feet."

**Saying to Him, "Lord ([kurios](#)), if You had been here, my brother would not have died ([apothnesko](#))-** Mary greets Jesus with almost the exact words of her sister (Jn 11:21).

**Johann Bengel** has a fascinating comment - "It accords beautifully with divine propriety that we read of no one having died while the Prince of life was present. (Mattoon - Some say, "What about the thief on the cross?" The answer is, "Jesus died before the thief." Our Lord had a way of breaking up funerals.)

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**Vance Havner - IF THOU HADST BEEN HERE** If thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. John 11:32.

Martha and Mary had sent a hurry call to Jesus, "He whom thou lovest is sick" (John 11:3). Instead of rushing to Bethany, our Lord abode two days where He was. Have you felt like complaining when God did not come speedily to your help in time of need? "If Thou hadst been here, this wouldn't have happened." But if Jesus had hurried to Bethany, He would only have healed Lazarus. By waiting, He raised him from the dead! God's delay may bring a greater miracle than if He had answered our first prayer. Accept God's slow response. He is always on time—His time. (BORROW [All the Days](#))

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**James Smith - AT JESUS' FEET.**

1. For Redemption, Luke 7:38
  2. For Adoration on account of mercies received, Luke 8:35
  3. For Instruction, Luke 10:39
  4. For Consolation, John 11:32
  5. For Intercession on behalf of others, Mark 7:25
  6. For Worship, Matt 28:9
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**If Only . . .**

Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. John 11:32

Today's Scripture & Insight: John 11:21–35

As we exited the parking lot, my husband slowed the car to wait for a young woman riding her bike. When Tom nodded to indicate she could go first, she smiled, waved, and rode on. Moments later, the driver from a parked SUV threw his door open, knocking the young bicyclist to the pavement. Her legs bleeding, she cried as she examined her bent-up bike.

Later, we reflected on the accident: If only we had made her wait . . . If only the driver had looked before opening his door. If only . . . Difficulties catch us up in a cycle of second-guessing ourselves. If only I had known my child was with teens who were drinking . . . If only we had found the cancer earlier . . .

When unexpected trouble comes, we sometimes question the goodness of God. We may even feel the despair that Martha and Mary experienced when their brother died. Oh, if Jesus had only come when He first found out that Lazarus was sick! (John 11:21, 32).

Like Martha and Mary, we don't always understand why hard things happen to us. But we can rest in the knowledge that God is working out His purposes for a greater good. In every circumstance, we can trust the wisdom of our faithful and loving God. By: Cindy Hess Kasper (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Father, You have carried me through hard circumstances before. Thank You for teaching me to trust Your heart of love even when I don't understand what You are doing in my life.

For encouragement read, [Why? Seeing God in Our Pain](#) at [discoveryseries.org/cb151](#).

To trust God in the light is nothing, but to trust Him in the dark—that is faith.

-- Charles Haddon Spurgeon

**John 11:33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, He was deeply moved in spirit and was troubled,**

BGT John 11:33 ησος ον ς εδεν ατην κλαουσαν κα το ς συνελθ ντας ατ ουδα ου ς κλαοντας, νεβριμ σατο τ πνε ματι κα τ ραξεν αυτ ν

KJV John 11:33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled,

NET John 11:33 When Jesus saw her weeping, and the people who had come with her weeping, he was intensely moved in spirit and greatly distressed.

CSB John 11:33 When Jesus saw her crying, and the Jews who had come with her crying, He was angry in His spirit and deeply moved.

ESV John 11:33 When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled.

NIV John 11:33 When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled.

NLT John 11:33 When Jesus saw her weeping and saw the other people wailing with her, a deep anger welled up within him, and he was deeply troubled.

NRS John 11:33 When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved.

NJB John 11:33 At the sight of her tears, and those of the Jews who had come with her, Jesus was greatly distressed, and with a profound sigh he said,

NAB John 11:33 When Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews who had come with her weeping, he became perturbed and deeply troubled,

YLT John 11:33 Jesus, therefore, when he saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, did groan in the spirit, and troubled himself, and he said,

MIT John 11:33 When he saw her weeping and the Jews who came along with her weeping, Jesus sighed ever so deeply in his spirit and was emotionally stirred.

- **the Jews:** Ro 12:15
- **he was deeply moved:** Jn 11:38 12:27 Mk 3:5 9:19 14:33-35 Heb 4:15 Heb 5:7,8
- **was troubled:** Ge 43:30,31 45:1-5
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Hebrews 4:15+ (JESUS SEES, JESUS CARES) For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One Who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.

Hebrews 2:18+ For since He Himself was tempted (TESTED) in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are (present tense = continually being) tempted (TESTED).

### WE HAVE A GOD WHO SEES & WHO CARES

Jesus saw Mary's sorrow, and since He is the same "the same yesterday and today and forever." (Heb 13:8+), it follows that He sees our distresses and He cares! Recall His great Name **EI ROI** which means the God Who sees.

**THOUGHT** - Whatever your grief, sorrow or affliction today dear child of God, know that EI ROI sees and cares and is able to comfort you in the midst of your grief or sorrow.

**When Jesus ([lesous](#)) therefore saw her weeping ([klaio](#)), and the Jews ([loudaios](#)) who came with her also weeping ([klaio](#) the wailing of mourners), He was deeply moved ([embrimaomai](#) - NLT - " deep anger welled up", CSB - "He was angry in His spirit and deeply moved") in spirit and was troubled ([tarasso](#)) - Jesus fully God-fully Man demonstrates His deep emotional response to Mary's weeping and the effect of sin which produces death. Martha had apparently been more stoic in her demeanor.**

Notice the genuine sympathy of our Lord....

The poet puts it this way:

Does Jesus care when I've said "goodbye"  
To the dearest on earth to me,  
And my sad heart aches till it nearly breaks-  
Is it aught to Him? Does He see me?

O yes, He cares – I know He cares!  
His heart is touched with my grief;

When the days are weary, the long nights dreary,  
I know my Savior cares.

**NET Note on the Jews (*loudaios*)** - Or "the Judeans"; Greek "the Jews." Here the phrase refers to the friends, acquaintances, and relatives of Lazarus or his sisters who had come to mourn, since the Jewish religious authorities are specifically mentioned as a separate group in John 11:46–47. See also the notes on the phrase "the Jewish leaders" in [Jn 11:8](#), "the Jewish people of the region" in [Jn 11:19](#), and the word "people" in [Jn 11:31](#).

**Deeply moved** has been rendered "He was enraged in spirit and troubled Himself!" [Brian Bell](#) offers the following analysis - "*I hate death. I hate what sin has done to My creation. I hate the distress to mankind. I hate to watch my children grieve so intensely.* His anger was roused against the evil powers of death, which caused such distress to mankind, and which He was about to conquer here by a mighty display of divine power, and finally on the cross by His own death and resurrection." In view of the verb [embrimaomai](#) describing horses snorting as in the excitement of battle or pulling a heavy load it is not so much that Jesus is expressing empathy or grief, but more that He is bristling at His encounter with death as the consequences of sin entering the world. He would soon completely defeat the last enemy death of the old rugged Cross.

**William Hendriksen** on why was Jesus **deeply moved** - The answer that is generally given is this: Jesus was concentrating his attention upon sin, as the underlying cause of all suffering, grief, and sorrow. He was filled with indignation against sin. It would seem to us that this explanation contains a considerable element of truth. The very fact that the verb employed generally (i.e., in other passages) refers to a feeling of indignation would seem to point in this direction. (BORROW [Exposition of the Gospel according to John - SEE HIS FULL EXPLANATION ON PAGE 154](#))

**Bob Utley** on **deeply moved** - This is literally "snorted in the spirit." This idiom was usually used of anger (cf. Da 11:30 [LXX]; Mark 1:43; 14:5). But in this context a translation showing deep emotion is to be preferred (cf. John 11:38). Although some commentators see this strong emotion, possibly anger, directed at death, Jesus had truly human emotions (cf. John 11:33,35,36,38) and shows them here for his friends.

**NET Note on deeply moved** - Or (perhaps) "he was deeply indignant." The verb *enebrimesato* ([embrimaomai](#)), which is repeated in John 11:38, indicates a strong display of emotion, somewhat difficult to translate - "shuddered, moved with the deepest emotions." In the LXX, the verb and its cognates are used to describe a display of indignation (Da 11:30, for example - see also Mark 14:5). Jesus displayed this reaction to the afflicted in Mark 1:43, Matt 9:30. Was he angry at the afflicted? No, but he was angry because he found himself face-to-face with the manifestations of Satan's kingdom of evil. Here, the realm of Satan was represented by death. **TROUBLED** - Or "greatly troubled." The verb [tarasso](#) also occurs in similar contexts to those of *enebrimesato* ([embrimaomai](#)). John uses it in Jn 14:1 and Jn 14:27 to describe the reaction of the disciples to the imminent death of Jesus, and in Jn 13:21 the verb describes how Jesus reacted to the thought of being betrayed by Judas, into whose heart Satan had entered.

**Wiersbe** asks At what was He indignant? At the ravages of sin in the world that He had created. Death is an enemy, and Satan uses the fear of death as a terrible weapon (Heb. 2:14–18). No wonder Jesus was indignant!

*It is not without the stirring of His very life that He gives life to the dead.*  
-- C H Spurgeon

**Rod Mattoon** on the **Lord was troubled** "which means "stirred, agitated, or disturbed like a pool of water. The Lord is not thrilled with what is going on here. Why? He may be angry at the pain and misery that sin and death have caused. He may also be angry with Satan."

The verb for **deeply moved** was used in extra-biblical Greek to refer to the snorting of a horse preparing for battle so Calvin views it as Jesus gearing up for the conflict as our champion in the battle against sin and death.

**Spurgeon** - His heart was full of sympathy; he felt the grief of these mourners, and sorrowed with them. Many have asked why Christ groaned. Why, brethren, it is the way in which he gives life — by his own death. We say sometimes of one who does a great action, "It took so much out of him." So it did out of the Saviour. He must groan that Mary, and Martha, and Lazarus may rejoice. It is not without the stirring of his very life that he gives life to the dead.

**Life Application note** on Jesus emotional reaction - This portrait contrasts with the Greek concept of God that was popular in that day—a God with no emotions and no messy involvement with humans. (BORROW [Life Application Study Bible](#))

**THOUGHT** - In light of fact that Jesus dealt with Martha with a more doctrinal approach (Jn 11:24-25) and with Mary with a more compassionate approach [Steven Cole](#) suggests two applications:

**First, recognize that the Lord always deals with you according to your personality to teach you what you need to grow in every trial.** All parents who have more than one child know that each child is different.

You can't deal with them in exactly the same way because they are wired differently and they learn differently. The Teacher does that with His children. He tutors you individually, in a way that you can best learn the lessons. But you need to try to understand, through prayer and the Word, "What does the Teacher want me to learn through this trial?"

**Second, we should be sensitive to the unique personalities of others when we try to comfort or help them in difficult situations.** Some may need a word of encouragement, whereas others don't need any words, but just for you to be with them and cry with them. There is no "one size fits all" when it comes to helping others in their time of need. So pray for sensitivity and wisdom as you try to help.

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**Holman Apologetics Commentary** - When Jesus saw Mary and her Jewish friends weeping, he was visibly agitated. "Deeply moved" (NIV) hardly does justice to the underlying Greek word (*embrimaomai*), which has the connotation of snorting (in animals). Thus, Jesus is shown here not so much to express empathy or grief as to bristle at his imminent encounter with and assault on death (see further below). "Stirred" has connotations of inner agitation and turmoil (cf. Esth 4:4), as in the case of the waters of Bethesda (John 5:7) or the waves and breakers of a waterfall (Ps 42:5-7).

A survey of the major commentators on this verse reveals a vast array of interpretations. Some say that Jesus was deeply moved but deny that he was angry (Morris 1995, 494). Most insist that Jesus' emotions went beyond sorrow to actual indignation (for a survey of interpretations see Köstenberger 2004a, 339n91). The object of Jesus' anger is variously identified as death itself (Michaels 1989, 203; Whitacre 1999, 289); the realm of Satan represented by death (Brown 1966, 435); the mourners' unbelief (Keener 2003, 846); or a combination of all three (Brodie 1993, 395). However, there may be no dichotomy (note particularly the lack of an expressed object), as the primary reference may be neither to grief nor to anger (contra the HCSB translation). The term *embrimaomai* may simply indicate Jesus' excited anticipation of what he is going to do as he bristles and braces himself for his impending assault on death.

Again in John 11:38, Jesus is described by way of the verb *embrimaomai*. The HCSB translates this as Jesus being "angry in Himself." Again, while this is possible, it is more likely that this verb is used to indicate Jesus' excitement at the prospect of confronting death. This comports well with Ridderbos' (1997, 403) comment, "He strides to the tomb, not in sovereign apathy of the great Outsider, but as the One sent into the world by the Father, as the Advocate who has entered human flesh and blood."

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**Charles Stanley** - Author and speaker Elisabeth Elliot says nothing is a waste with God. He takes everything, even the slightest detail, and works it all together for our good. No matter what you are facing, the Lord has a plan in mind for the future. Tell Him of your doubts, fears, and inadequacies, and He will strengthen and encourage you.

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**Weeping** (2799) *klaiō* means to mourn, to weep, to lament or to wail with emphasis upon noise accompanying weeping. It expresses one's immediate and outward reaction to suffering. The picture is of one lamenting with sobs or wailing aloud and was used to describe the wailing that took place when someone died. Weeping thus was a sign of the pain and grief for the entity or person being wept over (See all verses below and note who wept and over what/who?) *Klaiō* implies not only the shedding of tears, but also external expression of grief. It was a term frequently used to describe the actions of professional mourners. Josephus reports people in his time hired flute-players to lead lamentations for public mourning. The haunting sound of the flute then became synonymous with death, tragedy and mourning. The custom of employing professional mourners (generally women) is still prevalent in the Middle East. The idea is weep aloud, expressing uncontainable, audible grief typically accompanied by wailing and sobbing, as when one suffers a traumatic personal loss or despair (like the death of a family member).

**Klaiō - 38x/33 verses weep(18), weeping(17), wept(4).**- Matt. 26:75; Mk. 5:38; Mk. 5:39; Mk. 14:72; Mk. 16:10; Lk. 6:21; Lk. 6:25; Lk. 7:13; Lk. 7:32; Lk. 7:38; Lk. 8:52; Lk. 19:41; Lk. 22:62; Lk. 23:28; Jn. 11:31; Jn. 11:33; Jn. 16:20; Jn. 20:11; Jn. 20:13; Jn. 20:15; Acts 9:39; Acts 21:13; Rom. 12:15; 1 Co. 7:30; Phil. 3:18; Jas. 4:9; Jas. 5:1; Rev. 5:4; Rev. 5:5; Rev. 18:9; Rev. 18:11; Rev. 18:15; Rev. 18:19

**Deeply moved** (1690) *embrimaomai* from *en* = in or on account of + *brimaomai* (to snort with anger) describing a very strong display of emotion -- to be moved with anger, to admonish sternly, give a solemn charge or instruction, exhibit irritation or even anger in expressing a harsh reproof, 'to denounce harshly. It is used of used of the snorting of horses as in the excitement of battle or pulling a heavy load. It is used of a "stern warning" as in Matthew 9:30 where Jesus warned the formerly blind men not to spread the news of their healing. Also spoken of any agitation of the mind as grief, to be greatly moved or agitated (John 11:33, 38). In the uses in John the Lord was deeply moved doubtless with the combination of circumstances, present and in the immediate future.

**Embrimaomai - 5v** - Matt. 9:30; Mk. 1:43; Mk. 14:5; Jn. 11:33; Jn. 11:38

**Troubled** (disturbed, stirred up) (5015) *tarasso* literally means to shake back and forth and therefore to agitate and stir up (like the

pool in John 5:4,7, Lxx = Ezek 32:2, 13, Isa 51:15). To shake together, stir up, disturb, unsettle, throw into disorder (Lxx = Ps 46; 2Sa 22:8 = of earth shaking). Most of the NT uses of **tarasso** are figurative and describe the state of one's mind as stirred up, agitated or experiencing inward commotion. The passive voice is always used in the NT with a negative meaning, conveying the sense of emotional disturbance or inner turmoil, so that one is unsettled, thrown into confusion, or disturbed by various emotions, including excitement, perplexity, fear or trepidation.

**Tarasso** conveys the idea of to disturb mentally or to cause a deep emotional disturbance and thus refers to an unsettled mind, as when Herod heard of the birth of Jesus (Mt 2:3), Zacharias' fear when he saw the angel (Lk 1:12), the terror of the disciples when they witnessed Jesus walking on the water (Mt 14:26), Jesus' reaction to the lack of faith among the people before He raises Lazarus (Jn 11:33), in Jesus' command to not let their hearts be troubled (Jn 14:1) and of disturbing the faith of someone (Gal 5:10). Tarasso emphasizes the intensity of the Lord's reaction to His impending death (Jn 12:27) and His response to Judas' imminent betrayal.

**Tarasso - 18x/18v - disturbed(1), disturbing(2), stirred(3), stirring(1), terrified(2), troubled(9).** Matt. 2:3; Matt. 14:26; Mk. 6:50; Lk. 1:12; Lk. 24:38; Jn. 5:4; Jn. 5:7; Jn. 11:33; Jn. 12:27; Jn. 13:21; Jn. 14:1; Jn. 14:27; Acts 15:24; Acts 17:8; Acts 17:13; Gal. 1:7; Gal. 5:10; 1 Pet. 3:14

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### QUESTION - [What does it mean to groan in the spirit \(John 11:33\)?](#)

**ANSWER** - One of the most heart-wrenching experiences in Jesus Christ's life was the death of His friend [Lazarus](#). Scripture says that, when Jesus saw Lazarus' sister Mary and those around her weeping in grief, He "groaned in the spirit and was troubled" (John 11:33, NKJV).

Some Bible translators render the phrase "groaned in the spirit" as "deeply moved in spirit" (NIV, NASB). In the original language, the terminology suggests that the Lord experienced such a profound emotional response that He was forcefully restraining Himself. The New Living Translation says, "A deep anger welled up within him, and he was deeply troubled." Moments later, "Jesus wept" (John 11:35).

The Greek word for "groaned in the spirit" (*embrimaomai*) is used in four other places in the New Testament, each time of Jesus (Matthew 9:30; Mark 1:43; 14:5; John 11:38). It expresses outrage and indignation. Bible commentators suggest that Christ's deep emotional turmoil was a reaction to sin and death, which had evoked anguish in Mary, Martha, and the friends of Lazarus. The Greek term translated as "troubled" (*etaraxen*) stresses agitation, possibly concentrating on the Lord's heartache at seeing the sisters' grief.

Reference to "the spirit" here in John 11:33 does not indicate the Holy Spirit but the Lord's inner being. Jesus groaned within His spirit, struggling to keep all the emotional upheaval inside. But, when He stood before the tomb, He could no longer restrain Himself, and He wept.

John used one word to define the Lord's weeping and a different one to describe the weeping of Mary and the other Jews in Bethany. Jesus knew Lazarus would soon be resurrected from the dead and, in the end, spend eternity with Him in heaven. The people grieved over the loss of Lazarus, but Jesus' anguish welled up for a different reason.

Revealing His humanity, Jesus wept with deep compassion and empathy for the hurting (Isaiah 53:3). Our good and loving Shepherd stands with us in our pain and weakness (Hebrews 4:14–16). He comes alongside us in our sorrow (Psalm 34:18). Mary, Martha, and Lazarus were among Jesus' dearest friends. He had enjoyed close fellowship with them, rejoiced with them, and in their grief He would shed tears with them (Romans 12:15).

But Jesus groaned in His spirit, roiling with emotion, for a second reason, as mentioned above. He was grieved by the curse of sin, sickness, and death that had inflicted chaos and sorrow upon humanity in this fallen world. As Jesus prepared to raise His friend Lazarus from the dead, His distress over the people's spiritual blindness and unbelief intensified (John 11:37–38). He was frustrated to see their weakness of faith that would only believe in Him after seeing Him perform a mighty miracle (John 4:48; 6:30–31; 11:40–42). Jesus, the One who always did and said what would please His Father (John 8:28–29), was grieved to see the rebellious attitudes of people not yielded to the Father's will as He was (John 5:19, 30; 6:38).

When Lazarus was called back to life from the grave, many people believed in Jesus. But, sadly, some did not. Instead, they went to the Pharisees and reported what Jesus had done (John 11:45–46). Jesus likely groaned in His spirit most for these hard-hearted informants. They had come so near to the kingdom of heaven, yet, because of their darkened hearts, they failed to see the truth and receive the grace of God's salvation in Jesus Christ. [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

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## IMAGERY OF BURIAL & FUNERAL

### [DICTIONARY OF BIBLICAL IMAGERY - PAGE 472](#) - BURIAL, FUNERAL

In the biblical narrative it is customary for successive generations to be buried in the family tomb, either a natural cave or one cut from rock. Thus in the patriarchal narratives we find Sarah (Gen 23:19), Abraham (Gen 25:9), Isaac and Rebekah, Leah (Gen 49:31) and Jacob (Gen 50:13) all buried in the cave of Machpelah east of Hebron. Individual burial is sometimes necessitated by death at a distance from the family tomb, so Deborah is buried near Bethel (Gen 35:8) and Rachel on the road to Ephrath (Gen 35:19–20; see Bethlehem), their tombs being marked by an oak and a pillar respectively.

Besides weeping, mourning includes rending one's garments and donning sackcloth (Gen 37:34–35), scattering dust on the head, wallowing in ashes, weeping and lamentation (2 Sam 1:11–12; 13:31; 14:20; Is 3:24; 22:12; Jer 7:29; Ezek 7:18; Joel 1:8; Amos 8:10; Mic 1:16; for Tyrian seafarers, Philistia and Moab, see Ezek 27:30, 32; Jer 47:5; Is 15:2–3; Jer 48:37) and the period of mourning might last for as long as seven days (Gen 50:10).

In the exceptional circumstance of Jacob and Joseph in Egypt, the bodies are prepared by embalming, and Joseph is placed in an Egyptian coffin (Gen 50:2–3, 26). The process of Egyptian mummification required removal of the viscera for separate preservation and packing the body in salt in order to remove moisture. The body was then packed with an impregnated linen and entirely wrapped in linen. In Genesis 50:3 we read of the embalming of Jacob taking forty days, and the Egyptians mourning seventy days.

Prompt burial, including that of the bodies of criminals who had been hung, is required by Mosaic law (Deut 21:22–23). Contact with the dead and also formal mourning bring ceremonial defilement. In addition to weeping, mourning includes actions such as tearing garments and unbinding the hair. But in Israel both priests (Lev 21:5) and people (Lev 19:27–28; Deut 14:1) are forbidden to cut their flesh, the corners of the beard and other such mutilations and changes of appearance. These and other practices, such as eating tithes in mourning or offering them to the dead (Deut 26:14) are Canaanite practices and are expressly forbidden. In Deuteronomy we find express limits for mourning, where women captured in war might mourn their parents for one month before marrying their captors (Deut 21:11–13) and Israel's leaders Aaron (Num 20:28–29; Deut 10:6) and Moses (Deut 34:5–8) are each honored with thirty days of mourning.

The account of Abner's burial in 2 Samuel 3:31–39 gives us a glimpse of practices in Israel. The bearing of the body on a bier to its place of interment was probably typical (2 Sam 3:31). Once Israel enters the land we find a preference for people to be buried in their ancestral inheritance in a family tomb (Gideon, Judg 8:32; Samson, Judg 16:31; Asahel, 2 Sam 2:32; Ahithophel, 2 Sam 17:23; Saul, 2 Sam 21:12–14). Samuel (1 Sam 25:1, cf. 28:3) and Joab (1 Kings 2:34) are each buried in their "house," but this may simply mean the family tomb. This general custom agrees with the notion that the dead rest with their ancestors (lit. "fathers"; e.g., 1 Kings 1:21; 2:10; 11:43).

In the cultural setting of the Bible it is a great misfortune not to be properly buried (1 Kings 13:22; Jer 16:6). Archeological evidence shows that tombs were usually located outside a town or city. There is some archeological evidence for family tombs consisting of irregular rock-cut chamber (or chambers) with benches, reached by a short, sloping shaft blocked by a stone cut to fit over the entrance. But Isaiah has harsh words of condemnation for the palace treasurer Shebna, who is hewing his "grave on the height" and chiseling his "resting place in the rock" (Is 22:16). Pottery and other objects have been found in Israelite tombs, but they are not as elaborate as Canaanite provisions for the dead. However, Canaanite religion and burial practices were a threat to true worship of Yahweh in Israel. Isaiah 57:7–13 alludes to the wicked who make their tombs on the mountainsides, engage in idolatrous practices. Memorial pillars were sometimes erected in Israel as elsewhere in antiquity, honoring the names of the deceased (cf. Gen 35:20; 2 Sam 18:18; 2 Kings 23:17; cf. Is 56:5). Common people were laid to rest more simply in a tract of land outside Jerusalem (2 Kings 23:6; Jer 26:23), a practice that was no doubt paralleled at other towns.

In keeping with the ceremonious tone of Hebrew history, funerals are recorded with great detail. But unlike our modern ceremonies, they consist primarily of burying the body. The burials of kings and other rulers of Israel are recorded in Scripture, suggesting again the importance of the emerging story of the Israelite nation as the family of God. Those whose burials are described include Jacob (Gen 50); Nadab and Abihu (Lev 10:4–7); Aaron (Num 20:22–29); Moses (Deut 34); Joshua and Joseph (Josh 24); King of Ai (Josh 8:29); Gideon (Judg 8:32); Samson (Judg 16:31); Eli (1 Sam 4:14–18); Samuel (1 Sam 25:1); Saul (1 Sam 31:10–13); Asahel (2 Sam 2:32); Abner (2 Sam 3:31–39); David (1 Kings 2:10–12; 1 Chron 29:26–28); Solomon (1 Kings 11:41–43); Jeroboam and Rehoboam (1 Kings 14:19–20, 31); Asa (1 Kings 15:23–24); Ahab (1 Kings 22:37–40); Ahaziah (2 Kings 9:27–28); Jehu (2 Kings 10:34–36); Joash (2 Kings 12:19–21); Josiah (2 Kings 23:30) and Jesus (Mt 27:57–60; Mk 15:42–46; Lk 23:50–56; Jn 19:38–42).

The grave of an executed criminal, rebel or enemy was not honored with a proper burial, and in some instances (Achan, Josh 7:26; Absalom, 2 Sam 18:17; the king of Ai and the five Canaanite kings, Josh 8:29; 10:27) was only marked by a pile of stones.

Cremation was not a Hebrew practice, but in extreme circumstances, such as when the bodies of Saul and his sons' are shamefully hung from the wall of Beth Shan, a corpse might be burned and the remains later buried in the ancestral tomb (1 Sam 31:12–13; cf. Amos 6:10).

Notable deaths sometimes occasioned poetic laments. So David laments over Saul and Jonathan (2 Sam 1:17–27) and Jeremiah and others over Josiah (2 Chron 35:25). Professional mourners sometimes appear (cf. Jer 9:17–18; Amos 5:16). In Jeremiah we find the mourners' fast broken after the funeral by a meal (Jer 16:7; cf. Hos 9:4). The funeral of Judean kings is sometimes occasioned by a great bonfire in their honor (2 Chron 16:14; 21:19–20; Jer 34:5).

In the NT we find some mourning and burial scenes. A throng of mourners at Jairus's house weep and lament the death of his daughter (Mk 5:38; Mt 9:23), making a great disturbance and presumably beating their breasts in grief (as Lk 18:13; 23:48). Similarly Stephen's burial is accompanied by deep mourning (Acts 8:2). Jairus even hires pipers for the mourning of his daughter (Mt 9:23), presumably to accompany a formal dirge.

Some accounts give us glimpses of the preparation of a corpse for burial. Tabitha (Dorcas), whom Peter raised, was washed and displayed in an upstairs room (Acts 9:37). The arms and legs of Lazarus and Jesus are bound in linen bands impregnated with aromatic perfumes, and a piece of linen is wrapped around their heads (Jn 11:44; 20:6–7). Normal Jewish burial customs are reflected in the anointing of Jesus' feet or head at Bethany (Mt 14:3–9; Jn 11:2; 12:7); but when the women visit the tomb to anoint Jesus, their plans are averted (Mk 16:1; Lk 23:56).

The practice of burial in an earthen or rock tomb coincides with the imagery of going "down" to the grave (Ps 22:29; 28:1; 30:3, 9; 88:4; 115:17; 143:7) and into an abyss (Ps 88:11), a depth (Ps 63:9; 88:6) or even a prison or place of confinement (Ps 88:8). It is a realm of gloom and darkness where the light of the sun cannot penetrate (Ps 88:6; 143:3), a realm of silence (Ps 94:17; 115:17). Imagery of decay is also associated with burial, for the dead return to the dust from which they came (Ps 90:3; 104:29; cf. Gen 3:19).

See also DEATH; GRAVE; MOURN, MOURNING.

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### **Dianne Matthews - Drawing Closer to God -**

Twenty years ago, my mom called to tell me that a close friend from high school had been diagnosed with cancer. I immediately sent Libby's name to our church's prayer chain. Later I talked with her on the phone and made plans for a visit when I returned to Tennessee for Christmas. In early December I received word that Libby had died. I felt heartbroken at her death, and also that I had not been able to see her in time.

Mary felt heartbroken that Jesus had not arrived in time to heal her brother. The tears and sorrow of Mary and other mourners deeply moved Jesus. As he cried along with them, some remarked about his love for the dead man. Others remembered how he had healed the sick. "Couldn't this man who gave a blind man sight keep Lazarus from dying?" they asked. Jesus went on to perform an even greater miracle by restoring life to Lazarus after he'd been dead for four days.

When an acquaintance or loved one is sick, we naturally pray for their healing. Even though God has the power to restore anyone's health, he doesn't always work that way. Sometimes he chooses to set the person free from more than their illness – he releases them from the earthly restraints that hold them back from fully knowing him. He takes them home to an environment free from pain, suffering, and sadness.

God understands our disappointment when our prayers don't bring the outcome we'd hoped for; he understands our struggle to accept his decision. God wants us to trust his love and believe that he's right there sharing our grief and crying with us. As we gradually let go of our desires and learn to submit to his control, we might find ourselves being set free from our sorrow.

Jesus told them, "Free Lazarus, and let him go." John 11:44

Ask yourself: Do I trust God even when he chooses not to heal a loved one?

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### **Two Men**

He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. . . . Jesus wept. —John 11:33,35

Today's Scripture & Insight: John 11:30-37

Two men were killed in our city on the same day. The first, a police officer, was shot down while trying to help a family. The other



was a homeless man who was shot while drinking with friends early that day.

The whole city grieved for the police officer. He was a fine young man who cared for others and was loved by the neighborhood he served. A few homeless people grieved for the friend they loved and lost.

I think the Lord grieved with them all.

When Jesus saw Mary and Martha and their friends weeping over the death of Lazarus, “He groaned in the spirit and was troubled” (John 11:33). He loved Lazarus and his sisters. Even though He knew that He would soon be raising Lazarus from the dead, He wept with them (v.35). Some Bible scholars think that part of Jesus’ weeping also may have been over death itself and the pain and sadness it causes in people’s hearts.

Loss is a part of life. But because Jesus is “the resurrection and the life” (v.25), those who believe in Him will one day experience an end of all death and sorrow. In the meantime, He weeps with us over our losses and asks us to “weep with those who weep” (Rom. 12:15). By: Anne Cetas (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Give me a heart sympathetic and tender;  
Jesus, like Thine, Jesus, like Thine,  
Touched by the needs that are surging around me,  
And filled with compassion divine.  
—Anon.

Compassion helps to heal the hurts of others.

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### [Sorry About The Tears](#)

[Jesus] groaned in the spirit and was troubled. —John 11:33

Today's Scripture: John 11:32-44

My friend was making a major change in her life—she was leaving her employer of 50 years for a new venture. She cried when she said her goodbyes. And as she did, she frequently said, “Sorry about the tears.”

Why do we sometimes feel the need to apologize for crying? Perhaps we look at tears as showing a weakness in our character or a vulnerability we don't like. Maybe we're uncomfortable or think our tears are making others uncomfortable.

Our emotions, however, are God-given. They're a characteristic of our having been made in God's image (Gen. 1:27). He grieves. In Genesis 6:6-7, He was sorrowful and angry about His people's sin and the separation it caused between Him and them. Jesus, God in the flesh, joined His friends Mary and Martha in grieving over the loss of their brother Lazarus (John 11:28-44). “He groaned in the spirit and was troubled” (v.33). He “wept” (v.35). “Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb” (v.38). I doubt that He apologized.

Someday when we get to heaven, there will be no more sorrow or separation or pain, and God will wipe away every tear from our eyes (Rev. 21:4). In the meantime, the tears may flow. No apologies needed. By: Anne Cetas (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

He knows our burdens and our crosses,  
Those things that hurt, our trials and losses,  
He cares for every soul that cries,  
God wipes the tears from weeping eyes.  
—Brandt

If you doubt that Jesus cares, remember His tears.

**John 11:34 and said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see."**

BGT John 11:34 κα ε πεν· πο τεθε κατε α τ ν; λ γουσιν α τ · κ ριε, ρχου κα δε.

KJV John 11:34 And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see.

NET John 11:34 He asked, "Where have you laid him?" They replied, "Lord, come and see."

CSB John 11:34 "Where have you put him?" He asked. "Lord," they told Him, "come and see."

ESV John 11:34 And he said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see."

NIV John 11:34 "Where have you laid him?" he asked. "Come and see, Lord," they replied.

NLT John 11:34 "Where have you put him?" he asked them. They told him, "Lord, come and see."

NRS John 11:34 He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see."

NJB John 11:34 'Where have you put him?' They said, 'Lord, come and see.'

NAB John 11:34 and said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Sir, come and see."

YLT John 11:34 'Where have ye laid him?' they say to him, 'Sir, come and see;'

MIT John 11:34 He said, "Where did you put him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see."

- Jn 1:39 20:2 Mt 28:6 Mk 15:47 16:6
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## WHERE IS LAZARUS?

**and said, "Where have you laid him?"** - Of course He knew. His question illustrates His empathy and compassion.

**They said to Him, "Lord, come and see** - Jesus immediately moves to carry out His work.

**Wiersbe** has an interesting comment - The mystery of our Lord's incarnation is seen by His question in John 11:34. Jesus knew that Lazarus had died (John 11:11), but He had to ask where he was buried. Our Lord never used His divine powers when normal human means would suffice. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

### John 11:35 Jesus wept.

BGT John 11:35 ὁ κρυσεν ἡσο ς.

KJV John 11:35 Jesus wept

NET John 11:35 Jesus wept.

CSB John 11:35 Jesus wept.

ESV John 11:35 Jesus wept.

NIV John 11:35 Jesus wept.

NLT John 11:35 Then Jesus wept.

NRS John 11:35 Jesus began to weep.

NJB John 11:35 Jesus wept;

NAB John 11:35 And Jesus wept.

YLT John 11:35 Jesus wept.

- Jn 11:33 Ge 43:30 Job 30:25 Ps 35:13-15 119:136 Isa 53:3 63:9 Jer 9:1 13:17 14:17 La 1:16 Lu 19:11,41 Ro 9:2,3 Heb 2:16,17 Heb 4:15
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passage:

Hebrews 5:7+ (THIS MOST LIKELY DESCRIBES HIS AGONY IN GETHSEMANE) In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud ([ischuros](#) - strong) crying ( [krauge](#) - wailing or a loud sound accompanied by weeping) and tears ([dakruon](#) related to weeping = [dakruo](#) in Jn 11:35) to the One able to

save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety.

Romans 12:15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.

Luke 19:41 When He approached Jerusalem, He saw the city and wept [klaio](#) like Mary in Jn 11:33) over it,

## JESUS' HUMANITY DEMONSTRATED

All that is recorded in John 11:35–37 occurs on the way to the tomb, before it is reached in Jn 11:38.

Jesus experienced grief and deep feelings, just as we do. Recall Isaiah 53:3 that prophesied Jesus would be "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." (Isaiah 53:3+)

**THOUGHT** - Jesus knows the valley of sorrow and grief you are walking through dear child of the living God.

**Jesus** ([lesous](#)) **wept** ([dakruo](#)) - **Wept** is first in the Greek sentence for emphasis. Jesus was quieting weeping (not wailing). It implies the silent tears of sympathy. While there is no record of Jesus ever laughing, there are other passages that speak of His weeping. The weeping we see another reminder of the fact that Jesus was fully Man and experienced all of the emotional aspects of humanity. As Hebrews 4:15+ says "we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin." Hebrews 2:18+ adds "since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is (CONTINUALLY) able to come to the aid ([boetheo](#)) of those who are (CONTINUOUSLY BEING) tempted." As an aside we have no record of Jesus laughing in the Bible (but see Lk 10:21+). Note that Jesus' reaction teaches a simple principle that it is not sinful to feel or express sorrow.

"Tears are liquid emotion, pressed from the heart."

Note the distinction between **Jesus wept** ([dakruo](#)) and **Mary's weeping** ([klaio](#)) the latter referring to a loud expression of grief (even wailing) as when someone dies (Mk 5:38, 39; 16:10; Lk 7:13; 8:52; Jn 20:11, 13 = weeping at death of Jesus; Acts 9:39). And it is used to describe Jesus' reaction in Luke 19:41+ "When He approached Jerusalem, He saw the city and **wept** ([klaio](#)) over it." **This is the only time Jesus wept loudly and with wailing.** While He shed a tear over Lazarus, He knew Lazarus was saved. But when He came to Jerusalem, He wailed because He knew most of the Jews in the city were unrepentant. And so He wept over their unbelief and refusal to receive Him as their Savior.

**Bob Utley** - "Jesus wept" Death was not God's will for this planet. It is the result of human rebellion. Jesus feels the pain of the loss of a loved one. He feels the life experiences of all His followers! The weeping ([dakruo](#)) of Jesus was a quiet, personal kind, not the public wailing ([klaio](#)) mentioned in John 11:33.

**NET Note** on **Jesus wept**. The Greek word used here for Jesus' weeping ( ἔδακρυσεν, edakrusen) is different from the one used to describe the weeping of Mary and the Jews in v. 33 which indicated loud wailing and cries of lament. This word simply means "to shed tears" and has more the idea of quiet grief. But why did Jesus do this? Not out of grief for Lazarus, since he was about to be raised to life again. L. Morris (John [NICNT], 558) thinks it was grief over the misconception of those round about. But it seems that in the context the weeping is triggered by the thought of Lazarus in the tomb: This was not personal grief over the loss of a friend (since Lazarus was about to be restored to life) but grief over the effects of sin, death, and the realm of Satan. It was a natural complement to the previous emotional expression of anger (Jn 11:33). It is also possible that Jesus wept at the tomb of Lazarus because he knew there was also a tomb for himself ahead.

John 11:35 is the shortest in the English Bible, but there is one verse shorter in the Greek, 1Th 5:16 (Rejoice always!) which reads "*pantote chairete*" (15 letters), compared to 16 letters in "*edakrusen o iesous*."

**Brian Bell** - Twice Scripture wipes the eyes of Jesus' tears! 1. On a hill looking over Jerusalem, as He weeps for the nation. And, On the way to a friend's grave, as He weeps with those who grieve. 2. What an incredible Savior. Weeping not just for us in our sin, but with us in our suffering. 3. So strange, One with absolute power would surrender to so small an army as tears? But He does! "And, for a beautifully tender moment, we are given the privilege to glimpse one of the most provocative embraces between deity and humanity in all the Scriptures" (Ken Gire page 96 BORROW [Incredible moments with the Savior: learning to see](#)). **Thank you Jesus**, for giving dignity to our grief & freedom to our emotions! **Thank you Jesus**, for the beautiful tribute that tears are to the dead, telling them they were loved & will be missed! **Thank you Jesus**, you know what it's like to lose someone you love. **Thank you Jesus**, you know how I feel! **Thank you Jesus**, you've enabled me to weep with those who weep. Help me to feel the pain they feel, the uncertainty, the fear! the heaviness, the regret, the despondency. Help me to share with those who cry out, "Lord, if You had been there..." and help them to see that you were there, weeping with them!

**Spurgeon** - In the original, a very blessed and expressive word is used here concerning Christ's weeping; quite a different word from that used to describe the weeping of Mary and the Jews. It should be a constant comfort to the sorrowing Church of God that "Jesus wept." ([Spurgeon's Exposition - Gospel of John](#))

**Warren Wiersbe** - Our Lord's weeping reveals the humanity of the Saviour. He has entered into all of our experiences and knows how we feel. In fact, being the perfect God-Man, Jesus experienced these things in a deeper way than we do. His tears also assure us of His sympathy; He is indeed "a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" (Isa. 53:3). Today, He is our merciful and faithful High Priest, and we may come to the throne of grace and find all the gracious help that we need (Heb. 4:14-16). ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Alfred Edersheim** speaks to the continual juxtaposition of the truths of the humanity and the deity of Jesus in the Gospels - It has been observed, that by the side of every humiliation connected with the Humanity of the Messiah, the glory of His Divinity was also made to shine forth. The coincidences are manifestly undesigned on the part of the Evangelic writers, and hence all the more striking. Thus, if he was born of the humble Maiden of Nazareth, an Angel announced His birth; if the Infant-Saviour was cradled in a manger, the shining host of heaven hymned His Advent. And so afterwards—if He hungered and was tempted in the wilderness, Angels ministered to Him, even as an Angel strengthened Him in the agony of the garden. If He submitted to baptism, the Voice and vision from heaven attested His Sonship; if enemies threatened, He could miraculously pass through them; if the Jews assailed, there was the Voice of God to glorify Him; if He was nailed to the cross, the sun craped (cover or shroud) His brightness, and earth quaked; if He was laid in the tomb, Angels kept watches, and heralded His rising.

When General William booth was the head of the Salvation Army, one of their missionaries wrote back from England, wanting to come home. He said, "Gen. Booth, I've tried everything." Gen. Boothe sent back this two word reply: "Try Tears!" Ps. 126:5-6

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**Wept** (1145) (**dakruo** from **dakru** = tear - see [dakruon](#)) means to shed tears. John 11:35 is the only NT use of dakruo. In classical usage, in the Septuagint, and in Josephus, dakruō is used alone to mean "cry," "weep," or "shed tears." It is also used with a direct object to mean "to weep for" something or someone. Dakruo means 'to shed tears', as in lament before some calamity.

There are 3 uses in the Septuagint - Job 3:24; Ezek. 27:35; Mic. 2:6

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**ILLUSTRATION** - A mission executive from the United States was visiting a school in Kenya where he was listening as teenage girls shared how they had been blessed by hearing the Bible in their own language. One girl testified that the verse that had the greatest impact on her was Matthew 5:4, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted." Another said that the verse that had the greatest impact on her was John 11:35, "Jesus wept." She said that when she wept in the night, she knew that Jesus was weeping with her. The mission executive wondered why these two girls were mourning and weeping. He thought that maybe they had chosen these verses to share because they were short and easy to remember. But the school's teacher leaned over and whispered to him that both of these girls had lost their parents to AIDS. Jesus' compassion comforted them in their losses. In the same way, the Teacher calls you to come to Him with your tears. He cares for you and He will cry with you. Come to Him! ([Steven Cole](#))

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In a study of the King James Version of the Bible someone gathered the following facts: "The Scriptures contain 3,586,489 letters, 773,692 words, 31,173 verses, and 1,189 chapters. The word 'and' occurs 1,855 times, but the word 'revered' only once. Ezra 7:21 contains all the letters of the alphabet except 'J.' The longest verse is Esther 8:9, and the shortest in the English language is John 11:35." Knowing miscellaneous facts about the Bible is fine. But far better is the diligent searching of its truths for knowledge. (**ED**: EVEN BETTER IS KNOWING THE ONE WHO WROTE THE BOOK!)

## IMAGERY OF TEARS

[Dictionary of Biblical Imagery - page 2840 TEARS](#)

SEE ALSO -

- [MOURN. MOURNING](#);
- [WEEPING](#).

Tears are a manifestation of strong emotion, usually of grief. In the Bible, whereas tears are uncontrollable with "weeping," when

associated with “crying” they are more frequent and multi-caused. Tears are shed as marks of humility (Ps 80:5; Acts 20:19), frustration (Jer 9:1) and disappointment (Lam 1:16). While the actual Hebrew and Greek words for tears occur only thirty-six times in the OT and NT, tears are often implied. However, in texts where other verbs of weeping are used, these are sometimes translated with a phrase that includes tears (more commonly in recent versions than in the KJV). The tears in Genesis 27:38 become explicit in Hebrews 12:17. Even more indirect expressions such as “dried up” (Ps 69:3) or “poured out” (1 Sam 1:15; Job 30:16; Ps 22:14; 42:4; Lam 2:11, 19) may reflect contemporary notions of the physiology of tears.

Characters in biblical narrative shed tears in a wide variety of circumstances: entreaty, whether on one’s own behalf (Gen 27:38) or for the sake of others (Esther 8:3; Mk 9:34), especially in prayer to God (1 Sam 1:10; 2 Sam 12:22; 2 Kings 20:3; Job 16:16, 20; Lam 2:18–19); joy (Gen 43:30); grief for loved ones who have died (Rebekah for her nurse, Gen 35:8; David for Absalom, 2 Sam 18:33; Rachel for her children, Jer 31:15 and Mt 2:18; Mary for Lazarus, Jn 11:33; disciples for Jesus, Mk 16:10 and Jn 20:11; friends for Dorcas, Acts 9:39 NEB); grief for national apostasy (Ps 119:136) or disaster (Is 16:9; Lam 1:2, 16; Lk 23:28; though Ezek 24:16 hints that tears may be insufficient); depression or spiritual longing (Ps 42:3); maltreatment (Ps 31:9; Eccles 4:1; Acts 20:19); exile anticipated (Jer 9:18) or realized (Ps 137:1); physical suffering interpreted as divine disfavor (Ps 6:6–7; 39:12); and remorse (Peter in Mt 26:75). Often we cannot pinpoint a single emotional source. Mixed emotions are ascribed to the elders in Ezra 3:12, and the tears of the woman who was forgiven much (Lk 7:38, 44) surely spring from joy and gratitude mingled with compunction. In many passages, commentators read tears as tokens of contrition and penitence even when these feelings are not explicitly named.

Christ weeps for his dead friend Lazarus (Jn 11:35), for a spiritually unresponsive and therefore doomed Jerusalem (Lk 19:41) and in his own inner struggles (Heb 5:7, an allusion to Gethsemane and perhaps to other, unrecorded episodes). Beyond these specific scenes, he is identified as the “man of sorrows ... acquainted with grief” of Isaiah 53:3 (KJV), and already in earliest Christian times some of the psalms of lament were read as referring to him. His tears are a mark of his humanity, both part and symbol of his self-emptying.

Christ’s tears of compassion for his people are foreshadowed in the OT by those of Jeremiah, both in his prophecy (Jer 9:1; 13:17; 14:17) and in the book of Lamentations ascribed to him (Lam 2:11; 3:48–49). Paul is a follower of Christ in this respect, moved to tears by the strength of his caring for his converts, whether in person (Acts 20:31) or in writing (2 Cor 2:4).

Tears associated with sorrow for one’s sin are, for obvious reasons, especially prominent in homiletic and devotional traditions. Peter’s tears after denying his Lord, the copious outpouring by the woman who washed Jesus’ feet with her tears (identified in tradition with Mary Magdalene, the weeper at the tomb) and the penitential cries found in the psalms attributed to David (e.g., where tears seem a natural expression of the “broken and ... contrite heart” of Ps 51:17)—these are the chief texts used in making a firm link between tears and repentance. There are, however, occasions of weeping when the genuineness of the emotion is uncertain. The tears shed in Jeremiah 3:21, for example, are little more than an attempt to avert the justifiable wrath of God. Very often the context of disobedience and idolatry in which such weeping is set throws in doubt its sincerity.

Scripture suggests that God will relieve people of their tears, unless one is guilty of an irrevocable misdeed (the case of Esau, Heb 12:16–17) or unrepentant despite distress (Mal 2:13 in the more traditional reading). It is true that David’s infant son dies (2 Sam 12:22–23), but the Lord sees Hezekiah’s tears and heals him (2 Kings 20:5 par. Is 38:5). “Thou hast delivered ... mine eyes from tears,” says the psalmist (Ps 116:8 KJV), and the tears of “Rachel” will end in the exiles’ return (Jer 31:16). Indeed there is assurance that “weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning” (Ps 30:5 KJV), and that “they that sow in tears shall reap in joy” (Ps 126:5 KJV); this hope is echoed in Luke 6:21 and John 16:20. The point is not merely that the dismay represented by tears will eventually be replaced by joy, but that tears can be a path to joy and are therefore good. Somewhat related in exegetical tradition is Psalm 84:6, “Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well”; despite the different metaphor (water replacing drought), the miracle is similar. But the word *bākā*, treated in the KJV as a place name, is translated literally in the LXX, and the subsequent Vulgate rendering *vallis lacrymarum* gave rise to the familiar English phrase “vale of tears,” which has become a metaphor for the whole of our earthly pilgrimage. Already in Isaiah the idea of an end to weeping is given an eschatological turn (Is 30:19; 35:10; 51:11; 65:19; and esp. Is 25:8: “The LORD God will wipe away tears from off all faces”). This last image is quoted twice in the book of Revelation (Rev 7:17; 21:4).

Visual images associated with tears include eyes dimmed (Ps 38:10), a face disfigured by weeping (Gen 43:31; 2 Sam 12:20; see DEFORMITY) and the image of exaggerated flow—a fountain (Jer 9:1, 18) or river (Ps 119:136; Lam 2:16, 18) of tears, enough to drench a bed (Ps 6:6) or fill a wineskin (Ps 56:8). This last image (*nō’d*, KJV “bottle”) may begin as a play on *nōd* (“wandering”) in the preceding hemistich, but the conceit that develops of God’s preserving the tears of sufferers becomes the dominant theme of the verse, being paralleled in the succeeding clause. Beyond the purely visual are such figures as that of tears contaminating one’s drink (Ps 102:9) or replacing food and drink (Ps 42:3; 80:5; 127:2, “bread of sorrows”).

See also [BURIAL, FUNERAL, SADNESS & MOURNING](#), [LAMENT PSALMS](#);

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## Henry Blackaby - When It's OK to Cry

Jesus wept. John 11:35

How often do heroes show their emotions? Do you recall many movies where the hero, especially if it was a man, cried? In the old westerns, a cowboy could lose his friends, his ranch, and his family, but as long as nothing happened to his horse, he wouldn't shed a tear. He'd simply wince, scowl, and reach for his gun. Times have changed, somewhat. Now it's okay for real men to show emotion, but we're still a little embarrassed when they do, aren't we?

Jesus showed tremendous self-control when he was baited by the Pharisees and taunted by the crowds. The Bible doesn't record that he cried when soldiers pounded spikes into his hands and feet. The Bible never tells of Jesus' weeping for his own suffering, but it tells us he wept for other people's pain. Lazarus and his sisters were three of Jesus' closest friends. After Lazarus died, Jesus saw the sorrow of Mary and Martha, and it moved him deeply. Jesus could, and would, bring Lazarus back to life. Nonetheless, John records that Jesus was "deeply moved in spirit and troubled" when he saw Lazarus's family and friends overcome by grief and despair (John 11:33). Lazarus had been Jesus' friend too; Jesus wept with them. Jesus didn't weep because Lazarus had died, for Jesus was about to raise him back to life. Jesus wept because he saw the anguish and hopelessness of his friends.

Your family and your friends will go through times of pain and loss. Because you care deeply, you'll want to do something to help. You may grow frustrated when you can't think of the right words to say. Perhaps your compassion will move you to seek answers to their suffering or to find ways to alleviate their pain. But there may be times when there is little you can do to change their circumstances. Sometimes the best thing you can say is nothing; the best thing you can do is simply to listen and share their sorrow (1 Corinthians 12:26). Tears aren't always a sign that you've lost your self-control. Sometimes they show that you, like Jesus, have the capacity for true compassion. (BORROW - [The experience : a devotional and journal : day by day with God](#))

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## Jesus Cried

Jesus wept. — John 11:35

Today's Scripture: John 11:21-35

A friend whose young daughter was killed in a car accident in May 2005 told me: "I cried easily before Natalie's accident. . . . Now I am always crying. Sometimes the tears just slip out."

Anyone who has suffered such intense personal tragedy understands what she is talking about.

Is there anything wrong with crying? Or do we have biblical evidence to suggest that it's okay to cry?

Jesus gives us the answer. Lazarus, a close friend of His, had died. When Jesus arrived at the home of Lazarus' sisters, they were surrounded by friends who had come to console them. Jesus saw Mary and Martha and their friends mourning, and He too was overcome. Sorrowing with them, "Jesus wept" (John 11:35).

Sadness, tears, and mourning are familiar territory for everyone on this earth—even for Jesus. His tears tell us that it's okay if tears "just slip out." And they remind us that the reason tears of sorrow will be extinct in eternity is that "there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain" (Rev. 21:4).

When God wipes out the effects of sin, He will wipe out the need for tears—one more reason to look forward to eternity. By: Dave Branon (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

God shall wipe away all tears;  
There's no death, no pain, nor fears,  
And they count not time by years,  
For there is no night there.  
—Clements

Heaven—no pain, no night, no death, no tears.

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## **God's Tears**

Jesus wept. — John 11:35

Today's Scripture: John 11:28-37

In C. S. Lewis' story *The Magician's Nephew*, Digory recalled his terminally ill mother and how his hopes were all dying away. With a lump in his throat and tears in his eyes, he blurted out to Aslan, the great lion who represents Christ, "Please, please—won't you—can't you give me something that will cure Mother?"

Then, in his despair, Digory looked up at Aslan's face. "Great shining tears stood in the Lion's eyes. They were such big, bright tears compared with Digory's own that for a moment he felt as if the Lion must really be sorrier about his Mother than he was himself. 'My son, my son,' said Aslan. 'I know. Grief is great. Only you and I in this land know that yet. Let us be good to one another.'"

I think of Jesus' tears at Lazarus' grave (John 11:35). I believe He wept for Lazarus as well as for Mary and Martha and their grief. Later, Jesus wept over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41-44). And He knows and shares our grief today. But as He promised, we will see Him again in the place He's preparing for us (John 14:3). In heaven, our grief will end. "God will wipe away every tear from [our] eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying" (Rev. 21:4).

Until then, know that God weeps with you. By: David H. Roper (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

He knows our burdens and our crosses,  
Those things that hurt, our trials and losses,  
He cares for every soul that cries,  
God wipes the tears from weeping eyes.  
—Brandt

If you doubt that Jesus cares, remember His tears.

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## **The Gift Of Tears**

Jesus wept. —John 11:35

Today's Scripture & Insight: John 11:32-44

I called a longtime friend when his mother died. She had been a close friend of my mother, and now both had passed on. As we spoke, our conversation slipped easily into a cycle of emotion—tears of sorrow now that Beth was gone and tears of laughter as we recalled the caring and fun person she had been.

Many of us have experienced that strange crossover from crying one moment and laughing the next. It's an amazing gift that emotions of both sorrow and joy can provide a physical release in this way.

Since we are made in God's image (Gen. 1:26), and humor is such an integral part of almost every culture, I imagine that Jesus must have had a wonderful sense of humor. But we know that He also knew the pain of grief. When his friend Lazarus died, Jesus saw Mary weeping, and "He groaned in the spirit and was troubled." A short time later, He too began to weep (John 11:33-35).

Our ability to express our emotions with tears is a gift, and God keeps track of each tear we cry. Psalm 56:8 says, "You keep track of all my sorrows. You have collected all my tears in your bottle. You have recorded each one in your book" (NLT). But one day—we are promised (Rev. 7:17)—God "will wipe away every tear." By: Cindy Hess Kasper (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Lord, You have made us to laugh, to cry, to yearn, to love—and to miss those who have gone before us. Help us to love even more deeply, confident in Your goodness and in the resurrection You promise.

Our loving heavenly Father, who washed away our sins, will also wipe away our tears.

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## **Rick Renner - The Smallest Verse in the Bible**

Jesus wept. —John 11:35

When I was a teenager, we played games in our youth group that helped us memorize Bible verses. Often our Sunday school teacher or youth leader would ask us Bible questions to see how well we really knew God's Word. A question often asked, and one that nearly everyone in the group could answer, was this: "What is the shortest verse in the Bible?"

Everyone in the group would simultaneously yell out, "I know, I know!" So the teacher would ask, "All right, what is it?" Almost in chorus, the teenagers would shout, "Jesus wept!" Everyone in the group knew the answer to that one!

This little verse is found in John 11, where Jesus had just received information that Lazarus, one of His dearest friends, had died. Several days later, Jesus arrived in Bethany, the city where Lazarus lived with his two sisters, Mary and Martha. As Jesus approached the city, Mary and other friends who had gathered met Him. John 11:33 tells us, "When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled."

The Greek New Testament makes it clear that Jesus was deeply troubled when He arrived in Bethany. Perhaps He was troubled because of the disbelief of those who were present or because of what Satan had attempted to do to His dear friend. But one thing is sure: What Jesus was experiencing wasn't just a matter of human emotions, for the Bible says He "groaned in the spirit, and was troubled."

The word "troubled" comes from the Greek word *taresso*, which depicts one who is deeply stirred. This describes a deep, inward form of prayer when Jesus' spirit hooked up with the Holy Spirit in a powerful, supernatural expression of the Father's will and released the anointing required to meet the need of that moment. I understand this type of deep stirring even from my own prayer life. There are times when prayer is too deep for words, and it may be expressed as groanings or with tears as the Holy Spirit takes hold together with me and helps me pray from my spirit what my mind cannot articulate (see Romans 8:26). It was in this state of being that Jesus said, "... Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see."

Immediately John 11:35 states: "Jesus wept."

The word "wept" is the Greek word *dakruo*, which refers to an abrupt release of tears. So when the Bible says Jesus wept, it means He actually burst into tears and sobbed. It was a torrent of tears. His emotions were gripped by the moment as He looked upon the unbelief of attenders and realized that death that seized His friend. But in that moment, Jesus pushed beyond it all, lifted His voice, and declared, "Lazarus, come forth" (v. 43)!

The Greek here is a command with no hint of a suggestion or any option. What He was commanding, He expected to take place. An interpretive translation of this verse could read: "Lazarus, come out—now!" And just as Jesus had commanded, it came to pass. John 11:44 tells us, "And he that was dead came forth...."

That day was quite revealing about Jesus. It let us know that Jesus was not always stoic about the issues that He faced in His earthly ministry. There were several episodes in the four gospels where Jesus demonstrated emotion: anger with merchants in the temple (see John 2:14–16), sadness that His disciples did not believe (see Matthew 8:26), and joy when His disciples got it right (see Matthew 16:17). We also see that Jesus experienced fleeting moments when He was tempted to be troubled. But rather than give in to that unproductive moment of emotion, Jesus rose above it, took authority over the situation, and turned the moment around for the glory of God. What could have ended in tears ended in victory because Jesus lifted His voice and gave a command!

What are you facing right now? Do you feel the temptation to be gripped with paralyzing emotions? This story lets us know that Jesus was tempted with that too. Do you feel tugged by tears? Tears tugged Jesus' emotions too. Is your voice of authority needed to bring a change to the situation you have found yourself in right now? Jesus' voice was needed too. He understands completely when you cry, and He knows what it means when you need to push beyond the emotion in order to release faith into a situation.

If you have been gripped by emotion in a particular challenge you're currently facing, I urge you to spend some time today with the Lord and pour out your heart to Him. Once you've worked that emotion out of your soul, it will be time for you to lift your voice and take action. Let the authority embedded in your spirit speak! And when your voice releases that authority that is yours by right as a child of God, don't budge an inch! Speak, as Christ spoke, giving no hint of suggestion or a different option. Command in the name of Jesus what you expect to take place! Just as Jesus rose to the moment, took authority over the situation, and turned it around for the glory of God, this can become your moment to rise to victory. What could have ended in tears can end in victory!

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### **J Oswald Sanders - Human in Every Sense John 11:35**

Our Lord's consenting to be subject to human limitations was part of the mystery of His great self-humiliation. While in His incarnate state He did not renounce His divine powers, His knowledge was so subject to human limitations that He submitted to the ordinary laws of human development. He was no exception to the rest of humanity. He acquired His knowledge through the ordinary channels open to the other boys of His day: through instruction, study, and reflection. It would appear that He even voluntarily renounced



knowledge of certain future events. "No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father" (Mark 13:32).

Like us, Jesus was not self-sustained but needed prayer and communion with His Father for the support of His spiritual life. In all the great crises of His life, He resorted not to the counsel of men but to prayer to His Father for guidance (e.g., Luke 5:16; 6:12; 9:18, 28). He was subject to human limitations of power. He obtained the power for His divine works not by drawing on His inherent deity but by depending on the anointing Spirit (Acts 10:38). (ED: See also [The Holy Spirit-Walking Like Jesus Walked!](#)).

One of the strongest evidences of the reality of His humanity was His experience of human suffering. He knew the salty taste of pain. Every nerve of His body was racked with anguish. Though He was God's Son, He was not exempt from suffering (Hebrews 5:8). His sufferings of body and of spirit have formed the theme of many books. The fact that He was sinless made Him more sensitive to pain than His sinful contemporaries, for the latter deserved pain as a consequence of sin. We read of His being in agony. The events of His death on the cross assure us of His ability to sympathize with human suffering.

He displayed the ultimate in human perfections. Both friend and foe acknowledge Him as the only perfect man. All attempts to depict a perfect character in human history, other than those of the four evangelists concerning Jesus, have failed. To conceive and portray a perfect character by an imperfect author is beyond the power of fallible, sinful man.

Then how could these Galilean fishermen create such a life? The simple answer is that they did not. They merely faithfully recorded the life of One who had lived in their midst. His inner life had been open to their scrutiny as they were in daily contact with Him.

If any fact stands out crystal clear in the New Testament, it is the complete and genuine humanity of Jesus Christ. [Earthen Vessels](#)

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### **Are You Afraid to Cry?**

Tears are stronger than words and more binding than treaties. In 1947, President Harry S. Truman visited Chapaltepec Castle, the West Point of Mexico. A hundred years earlier, when U.S. Troops captured the citadel, only six cadets survived, and they all committed suicide rather than surrender. As Truman placed a wreath on the monument to the heroes and bowed his head, the cadets in the color guard burst into tears. Someone said that nothing did more to help cement the two countries together than the emotion expressed on that occasion.

Christians, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, can express their deepest agonies and noblest desires through tears. When mingled with prayer, trust, or compassion, tears become a most beautiful and ennobling expression of the believer's faith.

I have no doubt that Jesus delighted in life's wholesome joys and pleasures, even though Scripture does not mention His smiles or laughter. Yet He was so in touch with the heartbreaks of sin all around Him that He wept unashamedly at a tomb, shed tears over the unbelief of Jerusalem, and entered fully into the sorrows of sin-laden humanity.

Our Savior's tears encourage us to be true to our emotions, letting the Holy Spirit use them to overcome barriers and heal relationships. Moistened eyes often convey faith, honesty, caring, love. We cry because hurting, hardened, unbelieving people need Jesus. And they just might meet Him through our tears. —D J DeHaan (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

The soul could have no rainbow  
if the eyes had no tears.

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### **[Shared Tears](#)**

Weep with those who weep. — Romans 12:15

Today's Scripture: John 11:14-36

A story is told about a little boy with a big heart. His next-door neighbor was an older gentleman whose wife had recently died. When the youngster saw the elderly man crying, he climbed up onto his lap and simply sat there.

Later, his mother asked the boy what he had said to their saddened neighbor. "Nothing," the child replied. "I just helped him cry."

Sometimes that is the best thing we can do for people who are facing profound sorrow. Often, our attempts to say something wise and helpful are far less valuable than just sitting next to the bereaved ones, holding their hand, and crying with them.

One of the ways we can help our fellow believers is to "weep with those who weep" (Rom. 12:15). Jesus demonstrated that principle when He visited Mary and Martha after Lazarus died. Sensing the depths of Mary's despair over her brother Lazarus' death, Jesus shared her grief by weeping (Jn. 11:35). Bystanders took note and said, "See how He loved him!" (v.36).

Sometimes the best thing we can do for those who are traveling life's most sad and lonely road is to "help them cry." Jesus showed us that it's important to share another's tears. Is there anyone who needs your tears today? By: Dave Branon (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

A heartfelt tear can show our love  
As words can never do;  
It says, "I want to share your pain—  
My heart goes out to you."  
—DJD

A sorrow shared is a sorrow halved. —Shakespeare

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## [A Time To Cry](#)

Jesus wept. —John 11:35

Today's Scripture: John 11:1-7,32-36

My father (Richard De Haan) had been battling a debilitating disease for many years. We asked the Lord to take him home. But as I knelt by his bed and watched him take that last breath, the tears I had choked back on other occasions came out like a flood. As my brothers and my mother hugged and prayed, the finality was overwhelming.

That event helped me understand the significance of the shortest verse in the Bible: "Jesus wept" (John 11:35). God the Son wept! He knew the reality of heaven. He was the source of all hope of a future day of resurrection. And yet, Jesus cried. He loved His friends Mary and Martha and Lazarus so much that "He groaned in the spirit and was troubled" (v.33). Jesus truly felt their heartache.

When someone we love dies, we struggle with a wide range of emotions. If a young person dies, we ask "Why?" When death comes after long-term suffering, we struggle to understand why the Lord waited so long to bring relief. We begin to think of God as distant, untouched by our sorrow. We may question His wisdom or His goodness. Then we read, "Jesus wept." God is deeply touched by our anguish.

When a painful situation invades your life, remember the Bible's shortest verse. Jesus shed tears too. By: Kurt DeHaan (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

One year ago today (8-28-2004), Kurt De Haan, managing editor of Our Daily Bread for 13 years, was reunited with his father when God called him Home. (March 29, 1953-August 28, 2003)

If you doubt that Jesus cares, remember His tears.

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## [Letting Go](#)

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his faithful servants. Psalm 116:15

Today's Scripture & Insight: John 11:21–36

"Your father is actively dying," said the hospice nurse. "Actively dying" refers to the final phase of the dying process and was a new term to me, one that felt strangely like traveling down a lonely one-way street. On my dad's last day, not knowing if he could still hear us, my sister and I sat by his bed. We kissed the top of his beautiful bald head. We whispered God's promises to him. We sang "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" and quoted the 23rd Psalm. We told him we loved him and thanked him for being our dad. We knew his heart longed to be with Jesus, and we told him he could go. Speaking those words was the first painful step in letting go. A few minutes later, our dad was joyously welcomed into his eternal home.

The final release of a loved one is painful. Even Jesus' tears flowed when His good friend Lazarus died (John 11:35). But because of God's promises, we have hope beyond physical death. Psalm 116:15 says that God's "faithful servants"—those who belong to Him—are "precious" to Him. Though they die, they'll be alive again.

Jesus promises, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die" (John 11:25–26). What comfort it brings to know we'll be in God's presence forever. By: Cindy Hess

Kasper (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

What did Jesus accomplish by His death on the cross? How does His sacrifice affect every person who has ever lived?

Precious Father, thank You for the promise of eternal life in Your presence.

For help in dealing with loss, read [Life After Loss at discoveryseries.org/cb131](http://discoveryseries.org/cb131).

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### **QUESTION - [Jesus wept - why did Jesus weep?](#)**

**ANSWER** - Two passages in the Gospels and one in the Epistles (Hebrews 5:7) teach that Jesus wept. In the Gospels our Lord wept as He looked on man's misery, and both instances demonstrate our Lord's (loving) human nature, His compassion for people, and the life He offers to those who believe. When Jesus wept, He showed all these things.

John 11:1–45 concerns the death and resurrection of Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha and a friend of our Lord. Jesus wept (John 11:35) when He gathered with the sisters and others mourning Lazarus's death. Jesus did not weep over the death itself since He knew Lazarus would soon be raised and ultimately spend eternity with Him in heaven. Yet He could not help but weep when confronted with the wailing and sobbing of Mary, Martha, and the other mourners (John 11:33). The original language indicates that our Lord wept "silent tears" or tears of compassion for His friends (Romans 12:15).

If Jesus had been present when Lazarus was dying, His compassion would have caused Him to heal His friend (John 11:14–15). But preventing a death might be considered by some to be a chance circumstance or just a "minor" miracle, and this was not a time for any doubt. So Lazarus spent four days in death's grave before Jesus publicly called him back to life. The Father wanted these witnesses to know that Jesus was the Son of God, that Jesus was sent by God, and that Jesus and the Father had the same will in everything (John 11:4, 40–42). Only the one true God could have performed such an awesome and breathtaking miracle, and through this miracle the Father and the Son were glorified, and many believed (John 11:4, 45).

In Luke 19:41–44+ the Lord is taking His last trip to Jerusalem shortly before He was crucified at the insistence of His own people, the people He came to save. Earlier, the Lord had said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not have it" (Luke 13:34+). As our Lord approached Jerusalem and thought of all those lost souls, "He saw the city and wept over it" (Luke 19:41+). Here, **wept** is the same word used to describe the weeping of Mary and the others in John 11:33, so we know that Jesus cried aloud in anguish over the future of the city. That future was less than 40 years distant; in AD 70 more than 1,000,000 residents of Jerusalem died in one of the most gruesome sieges in recorded history.

Our Lord wept differently in these two instances because the eternal outcomes were entirely different. Martha, Mary, and Lazarus had eternal life because they believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, but most in Jerusalem did not believe and therefore did not have life. The same is true today: "Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies'" (John 11:25). [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

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### **["Dead Is Dead"](#)**

O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory? — 1 Corinthians 15:55

Today's Scripture: Hebrews 9:24-28

Do you ever think about your inevitable death? Or are you like the influential theater tycoon Bernard Jacobs, who said, "Of all the things in the world I think least about, it's what happens after you die. Dead is dead."

Is that what happens when we exhale our last breath and our brain cells stop functioning? When our life has come to an end, are we totally extinguished like a flame of a candle plunged into water? That's a common belief. But it isn't what the Bible teaches. Hebrews 9:27 declares that it is appointed for us "to die once, but after this the judgment."

If we have received Jesus as Savior from our sins, we need not fear facing Him. We will enter into blessed fellowship with God for all eternity, for we will be "absent from the body and . . . present with the Lord" (2 Cor. 5:8).

Jesus taught His disciples, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die" (John 11:25-26).

Jesus' message in the Word of God gives hope when we face our own death or the death of someone we love. He promises that we will enter our heavenly home and be with Him forever. We can count on His word. By: Vernon Grounds (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

"I go to prepare a place for you . . .  
That where I am there you may be,"  
Our death is not the end of life—  
Beyond, with Christ, eternity!  
—Hess

Jesus' resurrection spelled the death of Death.

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### **Comfort For Today**

Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. —Matthew 28:20

Today's Scripture: John 11:17-27

Over the last 50 years I have often reminded bereaved people of the wonderful truth that a glorious resurrection awaits all who believe on Jesus Christ. But sometimes grieving people are so overwhelmed with their loss that they cannot rejoice in the prospect of a far-off-in-the-future reunion.

In John 11, we read about Martha's struggle between her feelings and what she knew to be true. She was grieving because her brother Lazarus had died. When Jesus spoke with her, she told Him that she believed in a future day of resurrection. But then Jesus took her a step further and helped her to find comfort by focusing on Him rather than just on a future event. He declared, "I am the resurrection and the life" (v.25). This led her to confess her faith in Him (v.27). Her new focus on Him must have helped her because she then went to her sister Mary and told her to come to Jesus (v.28).

It's wonderful to know that because Jesus died for our sins and rose from the grave we can look forward to a day of resurrection. But it's even more comforting to know and trust the One who is the resurrection and the life. He is present with us today to comfort, reassure, and strengthen us through all our circumstances (Mt. 28:20). By: Herbert Vander Lugt (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

I've been through the valley of weeping,  
The valley of sorrow and pain;  
But the God of all comfort was with me,  
At hand to uphold and sustain.  
—Anon.

The coming King is our present companion.

### **John 11:36 So the Jews were saying, "See how He loved him!"**

BGT John 11:36 λεγον ο ν ο ουδα οι· δε π ς φ λει α τ ν.

KJV John 11:36 Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!

NET John 11:36 Thus the people who had come to mourn said, "Look how much he loved him!"

CSB John 11:36 So the Jews said, "See how He loved him!"

ESV John 11:36 So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!"

NIV John 11:36 Then the Jews said, "See how he loved him!"

NLT John 11:36 The people who were standing nearby said, "See how much he loved him!"

NRS John 11:36 So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!"

NJB John 11:36 and the Jews said, 'See how much he loved him!'

NAB John 11:36 So the Jews said, "See how he loved him."

YLT John 11:36 The Jews, therefore, said, 'Lo, how he was loving him!'

MIT John 11:36 Therefore the Jews said, "See how much he loved him!"

- See: Jn 14:21-23 21:15-17 2Co 8:8,9 Eph 5:2,25 1Jn 3:1 4:9,10 Rev 1:5

## OH HOW HE LOVES US

Jesus loves me! This I know,  
For the Bible tells me so;  
Little ones to Him belong;  
They are weak, but He is strong.

Refrain:

Yes, Jesus loves me!  
Yes, Jesus loves me!  
Yes, Jesus loves me!  
The Bible tells me so.

**So** ([oun](#)) Term of conclusion. The conclusion based on seeing the emotion of Jesus and probably seeing a tear fall from His eye.

**The Jews** ([loudaios](#)) **were saying**, "**See** ([ide](#)) **how He loved** ([phileo](#) - as a friend) **him** - **Jews** ([loudaios](#)) clearly does not refer to the Jews who sought to seize Him and kill Him (which is often the sense of "Jews" in the Gospels - context is the key to interpret accurately). The verb **saying** is in the imperfect tense, indicating they were saying this over and over. **loved** ([phileo](#)) is also in the imperfect tense. And they were correct as described in John 11:3, 5 (see [note above on love in John 11](#)). The Jews witnessed what they interpreted as the visible evidence of Jesus' love for His friend Lazarus when they saw the tears running down His cheeks. **See** ([ide](#)) is strictly, the second-person singular imperative of eidon (see, perceive, look) and is used as a demonstrative particle to prompt attention, with a basic meaning pay attention.

**THOUGHT** - Does He not love us with the same love? (Rhetorical - Ro 5:8+) And will He not love us eternally with that same perfect, indescribably wonderful love? It would behoove each of us to frequently remind ourselves of His great love (enough to die) for us, which could be facilitated by memorizing and meditating on 1 John 3:1+ (**See** [[aorist imperative](#) = "JUST DO IT!"] how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.) and then thanking Him as you play the song [Oh How He Loves You and Me](#).

While clearly Jesus loved Lazarus, He is not weeping so much because Lazarus is dead. After all He knows that Lazarus will soon be resuscitated! Some writers feel His tears were for the grief of the people affected by death which is possible. **Godet** feels His sorrow is over the grief that both Lazarus and the sisters were facing at the separation they were experiencing. That's also possible, but again, He knows that their separation will soon end. Others think He was moved by the bleak inevitability of death. **Leon Morris** thinks He wept because of the wrong attitude of the Jews (cf His weeping over His rejection by Jerusalem). That is possible but Jesus' did not just shed a tear ([dakruo](#)) over Jerusalem but cried out with lamentation ([klaio](#)). (Lk 19:41+ "wept" = [klaio](#), Lk 23:37+)

**NET Note** on **Jews** ([loudaios](#)) - Or "the Judeans"; Grk "the Jews." Here the phrase refers to the friends, acquaintances, and relatives of Lazarus or his sisters who had come to mourn, since the Jewish religious authorities are specifically mentioned as a separate group in John 11:46–47. See also the notes on the phrase "the Jewish leaders" in Jn 11:8 and "the Jewish people of the region" in Jn 11:19, as well as the notes on the word "people" in Jn 11:31, 33.

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**See** ([2396](#))([ide](#) also [eide](#)) to see, calling attention to what may be seen or heard or mentally apprehended in any way. Can denote surprise. **Ide** is "strictly, the second-person singular imperative of eidon (see, perceive, look at); used as a demonstrative particle to prompt attention, with a basic meaning pay attention, and followed by the nominative case or a statement to identify who or what is to be given attention; (1) to focus attention; (a) on a significant participant in a narrative, like behold!; here is (are), this in none other than (Mk 3:34; Jn 1:29); (b) on a significant place (Mk 16:6); (2) to introduce something for special attention; (a) because it is contrary to the hearer's expectation there now! take note! look! (Jn 3:26); (b) because it requires the hearer's response listen! see there! pay attention now! (Mk 15:4) (BORROW [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#)) **Vine** adds "an aorist or point tense, marking a definite point of time, of the imperative mood of eidon, "to see" (taken as part of horaō, "to see"), is used as an interjection, addressed either to one or many persons."

**Ide** - 28x/27v - **behold(18), lo(1), look(4), see(5)**. Matt. 25:20; Matt. 25:22; Matt. 25:25; Matt. 26:65; Mk. 2:24; Mk. 3:34; Mk. 11:21; Mk. 13:1; Mk. 13:21; Mk. 15:4; Mk. 15:35; Mk. 16:6; Jn. 1:29; Jn. 1:36; Jn. 1:47; Jn. 3:26; Jn. 5:14; Jn. 7:26; Jn. 11:3; Jn. 11:36; Jn. 12:19; Jn. 16:29; Jn. 19:4; Jn. 19:14; Jn. 19:26; Jn. 19:27; Gal. 5:2

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**Spurgeon** - "[OH, HOW HE LOVES!](#)" - **John 11:36**- These Jews expressed their wonder at the love that Jesus had for his friend

Lazarus; they did not keep that wonder to themselves, but they said, "Behold how he loved him!" In those days, we are too apt to repress our emotions. I cannot say that I greatly admire the way in which some enthusiastic folk shout "Glory!" "Hallelujah!" "Amen," and so on, in the midst of sermons and prayers; yet I would sooner have a measure of that enthusiastic noise than have you constantly stifling your natural emotions, and checking yourself from giving utterance to your heart's true feelings. If we were in a right state of mind and heart, we should often say to one another, "How wondrous has the love of Jesus been to us!" Our conversation with one another, as brethren and sisters in Christ, would often be upon this blessed subject. We waste far too much of our time upon trifles; it would be well if the love of Jesus so engrossed our thoughts that it engrossed our conversation too. I fear that many, who profess to be Christians, go for a whole year, or even longer, without telling out to others what they are supposed to have experienced of the love of Jesus; yet this ought not to be the case. If we were as we should be, one would frequently say to another, "How great is Christ's love to me, my brother! Dost thou also say that it is great to thee?" Such talk as that between the saints on earth would help us to anticipate the time when we shall want no other theme for conversation in the land beyond the river.

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**Robert Hawker** - THE tears of Jesus at the tomb of Lazarus produced that astonishment in the mind of the Jews, that they thus exclaimed! But had they known, or did the whole world know, what I know of thy love to me, thou dear Redeemer of my soul, every one that heard it might with greater wonder cry out, Behold how he loveth him! I would for the present pass by, in my contemplation of thy love, all the numberless instances of it, which I possess in common with thy church and people; for though these in every and in all cases carry with them the tokens of a love that passeth knowledge, yet, for the meditation of the morning, I would pause over the view of Jesus' love to me a poor sinner, not as it is displayed in general mercies, even the glorious mercies of redemption, but as those mercies come home, in their personal direction to my own heart, even to mine. Think, my soul, what a huge volume thou wilt have to read over in eternity, of Jesus' love to thee, as distinguished, express, personal, and particular. And, amidst all the several chapters of that love, how wilt thou dwell with rapture on those two sweet verses of it, which, like the hymn in one of the Psalms, thou wilt have to chaunt aloud, after the review of every blessing noted down; for his mercy endureth for ever; I mean, first, that Jesus should ever look with pity on thee; and next to this, that after such distinguishing grace, the floods of sin and corruption in thee should not have quenched that love and extinguished it for ever. The thought of Jesus' love, if looked at only in these two points of view, will be enough to employ thy immortal faculties in contemplation, and love, and praise, to all eternity. Pause, my soul, and take a short view of each. Jesus looked on thee, loved thee, called thee, redeemed thee, manifested himself to thee, otherwise than he doth to the world; and this at a time when thousands and tens of thousands are passed by, of temper, mind, disposition, and understanding, in every point of view vastly thy superiors, and far more promising to glorify him! Bow down, my soul, while thou ponderest over the rich mercy, and refer all the praise and all the glory unto Him, whose free grace, not thy deserts, became the sole cause. And when thou hast fully turned this astonishing subject over in thy mind, think again, that after such distinguishing grace, how increasingly astonishing it is, that all thy repeated and aggravated transgressions have not extinguished his love towards thee, but that Jesus still loves, though thou hast been, and still continuest, so ungrateful. Oh! love unequalled, past all comprehension! when shall this base, this shameful heart of mine so love thee, as to live to thy glory? Lord, I abhor myself in this view of thy grace and my vileness!

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### [What a Friend](#)

Then the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" John 11:36

Today's Scripture & Insight: John 11:25–36

It had been a few years since my longtime friend and I had seen one another. During that time, he'd received a cancer diagnosis and started treatments. An unexpected trip to his state afforded me the chance to see him again. I walked into the restaurant, and tears filled both of our eyes. It'd been too long since we'd been in the same room, and now death crouched in the corner reminding us of the brevity of life. The tears in our eyes sprang from a long friendship filled with adventures and antics and laughter and loss—and love. So much love that it spilled out from the corners of our eyes at the sight of one another.

Jesus wept too. John's gospel records that moment, after the Jews said, "Come and see, Lord" (11:34), and Jesus stood before the tomb of His good friend Lazarus. Then we read those two words that reveal to us the depths to which Christ shares our humanity: "Jesus wept" (v. 35). Was there much going on in that moment, things that John did and didn't record? Yes. Yet I also believe the reaction of the Jews to Jesus is telling: "See how he loved him!" (v. 36). That line is more than sufficient grounds for us to stop and worship the Friend who knows our every weakness. Jesus was flesh and blood and tears. Jesus is the Savior who loves and understands. By: John Blase (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

When did you last consider the humanity of Jesus? How does knowing that Jesus understands and shares your tears encourage you today?

Dear Jesus, thank You for being the One who saves and for also being the One who shares my tears.

## John 11:37 But some of them said, "Could not this man, who opened the eyes of the blind man, have kept this man also from dying?"

BGT John 11:37 τινες δὲ ἐὰν ἐπὶ οὗ τοῦ ἀνοήτου τοῦ οὐκ ἔλασεν τοὺς φθαλμοὺς τοῦ τυφλοῦ ποιῶσαι να καὶ οὗτος μὴ ποθῆι;

KJV John 11:37 And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?

NET John 11:37 But some of them said, "This is the man who caused the blind man to see! Couldn't he have done something to keep Lazarus from dying?"

CSB John 11:37 But some of them said, "Couldn't He who opened the blind man's eyes also have kept this man from dying?"

ESV John 11:37 But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?"

NIV John 11:37 But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

NLT John 11:37 But some said, "This man healed a blind man. Couldn't he have kept Lazarus from dying?"

NRS John 11:37 But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

NJB John 11:37 But there were some who remarked, 'He opened the eyes of the blind man. Could he not have prevented this man's death?'

NAB John 11:37 But some of them said, "Could not the one who opened the eyes of the blind man have done something so that this man would not have died?"

YLT John 11:37 and certain of them said, 'Was not this one, who did open the eyes of the blind man, able to cause that also this one might not have died?'

MIT John 11:37 Some of them said, "Could not this one who opened blind eyes have done something so that he might not have died?"

- **Could:** Jn 9:6 Ps 78:19,20 Mt 27:40-42 Mk 15:32 Lu 23:35,39
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### SKEPTICAL SCOFFERS OR PERPLEXED PERSONS?

**But some of them said, "Could not this man (lit - "this one"), Who opened the eyes of the blind man**(about 3 months earlier and about 2 miles away in Jerusalem), **have kept this man also from dying** ([apothnesko](#)) - Their question expects an affirmative reply. There is a divergence of opinion in the interpretation of the intent of this group of Jews, some writers considering them hostile to Jesus (Godet, Beasley-Murray, H. Meyer) and identify them with the group in Jn 11:46. Others considering them friendly (Leon Morris, Lenski, ) and paralleling the words of the Jews with the words of Martha (Jn 11:21) and Mary (Jn 11:32). I would argue that one significant difference between the Jews' question and the sisters' similar question is the manner in which each of the parties addressed Jesus -- the Jews addressed Him as **"this one"** (or "this man" - could this be derogatory as in Jn 9:16, 9:24?) while the sisters addressed Him as **Lord!** Clearly, this suggests a significant difference in the esteem with which Jesus was held by the Jews versus the sisters!

**D A Carson** does not feel this second group was sneering at Jesus but that they were "puzzled and confused." He goes on to add "Nevertheless, even to ask the question in this way betrays **massive unbelief** (**ED: WHICH CLEARLY WAS NOT THE CASE WITH THE SISTERS**). It is the unbelief of the person whose faith does not rest on who Jesus is and what he has revealed of the Father, but on displays of power. Such inchoate 'faith' is so weak it constantly **demands new signs and miracles** (cf. Jn 4:48; Jn 6:30–31). This **unbelief** is the reason the next verse reports that Jesus' quiet outrage flares up again (the verb is [embrimaomai](#) as in Jn 11:33). (BORROW [The Gospel according to John PAGE 416](#))

**R C H Lenski** writes "Instead of hostility their question expresses perplexity, in fact, the very perplexity with which Martha and Mary wrestled. They, too, had used φιλέω (phileo) in their message to Jesus. How could Jesus have such affection for Lazarus and yet somehow fail to be at hand and heal him before he died? As in the case of the sisters and their word of deep regret to Jesus (Jn 11:21, 32), a degree of faith in Jesus is manifested in this question of the Jews. (BORROW [The interpretation of St. John's gospel](#) [PAGE 810](#))

If He loved Lazarus so much why did He not keep Him alive? This question seems to speak somewhat disparagingly of Jesus, and certainly is not an expression of faith. They question His love and His power. However they would soon see a greater miracle than keeping Lazarus from dying.

**John MacArthur** on **some of them** writes "The mourners were probably mocking, but confused; they knew by experience that Jesus had the power to heal, as their reference to that previous incident indicates. But if Jesus truly loved Lazarus as much as He appeared to, why had He delayed? Why had He not made every effort to reach Bethany while Lazarus was still alive?"

**Steven Cole** - They couldn't reconcile Jesus' love and power with Lazarus' death. And in a time of severe trials, the enemy may whisper to you, "God must not love you or He isn't able to prevent trials like you're going through. You shouldn't trust Him!" But at such times, never interpret God's love by your difficult circumstances, but rather interpret your circumstances by His love (modified from, C. H. Mackintosh, BORROW [Miscellaneous Writings \[Loizeaux Brothers\], vol. 6, "Bethany,"](#) [PAGE 117](#) [PAGE 118-119](#) [PAGE 120](#)). He could have prevented your trial. But as H. E. Hayhoe wrote ("Sentence Sermons," exact source unknown), "He will never allow a trial in your life without a needs be on your part and a purpose of love on His part." Thus, Christ is the Teacher and He calls you to come to Him and learn from Him in your trials. And, the Teacher who calls us to Himself is fully God and fully man; thus He can help us in our trials. ([The Teacher's Tears John 11:28-37](#))

**William Hendriksen** - Some asked in criticism, others in sheer perplexity: "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man (the last great miracle at Jerusalem, about which the people were still talking; see John 9) have kept also this man from dying?" This question reminds one of the exclamation of regret recorded in John 11:21 and John 11:32, but does not convey exactly the same thought. Moreover, it does not rise to the height attained by Martha in 11:22 (see on that verse). It seems that the news of the raising of Jairus' daughter and of the widow's son had not reached Jerusalem, or if it had, this death was altogether different: it was now the fourth day! This case was hopeless! (BORROW [Exposition of the Gospel according to John page 156](#))

**NET Note** on **this man** - Grk "**this one**"; the second half of Jn 11:37 reads Grk "Could not **this one** who opened the eyes of the blind have done something to keep this one from dying?" In the Greek text the repetition of "this one" in Jn 11:37b referring to two different persons (first Jesus, second Lazarus) could confuse a modern reader. Thus the first reference, to Jesus, has been translated as "he" to refer back to the beginning of v. 37, where the reference to "the man who caused the blind man to see" is clearly a reference to Jesus. The second reference, to Lazarus, has been specified ("Lazarus") in the translation for clarity.

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**C H Spurgeon** - **COULD HE NOT? AH! BUT HE WOULD NOT** - Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?"—John 11:37. HERE was very good reasoning. Jesus Christ had opened the eyes of the blind; could he not, therefore, have healed Lazarus of the disease which proved fatal? Of course, he could. He who can avert one evil can avert another. It could have been no more difficult for Christ to have turned aside the fever, or whatever it may have been, which afflicted Lazarus, than to have opened the eyes of a man who was born blind. The first was impossible; but, that achieved, no difficulties remained. "Impossible" is a word which does not fall into language when you have to deal with Christ; and, therefore, when he has once proved, by a miracle, that he is truly the Christ, then it is clear that, ever afterwards, nothing is difficult or impossible to him.

The same truth, in another shape, holds good, namely, that when Christ has conferred one blessing, he can also confer another. He is not as we are, who, with one gift, have exhausted our stock, and who can only bestow good wishes afterwards, because we have no more means. But Jesus Christ is just as full of power as if he had never exerted that power; and after a thousand miracles, he is just as willing and as able to bestow further favours. One evil averted is a good argument that another can be; one good received is a good argument that another may be received from the self-same divine hand.

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#### **James Smith - COULD NOT THIS MAN? JOHN 11:37**

There are many things Christ could not do, because He would not

1. Could He not have prevented the Fall of Man? Could, but did not.
2. Could He not destroy the Devil, as well as his works? Could, but did not.
3. Could He not save men without suffering for them? Could, but did not.
4. Could He not save men against their wills? Could, but will not.



5. Could He not bless us without faith and prayer? Could, but will not.
6. Could He not deliver from the possibility of sinning? Could, but does not.

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### Ray Pritchard - Couldn't He Have Kept This Man From Dying? (Who is that Man - Daily Lenten Devotionals)

"Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?" (John 11:37)

Good question.

Fair question.

Honest question.

Just before Jesus raised Lazarus, some of the Jews raised this question. After all, he clearly loved Lazarus, and he had already healed the man born blind (John 9). This means the question doesn't come from the lips of hardened skeptics looking for a reason to discount Jesus altogether. The people who asked this question didn't doubt Jesus' miracle-working power.

If he can give sight to the blind, why couldn't he have healed Lazarus before he died? Then there would have been no funeral with all the attendant sorrow. Then Mary and Martha would not have mourned their brother. Wouldn't it have been better to heal him up front rather than raising him from the dead later?

That brings us back to a detail from earlier in the story. "Yet when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days" (John 11:6). Think about that for a moment. Jesus is the Son of God with power to heal the sick, yet when he hears about Lazarus whom he loved, he did not hurry to heal him. It does not make sense on the surface. If you love someone, and if you can help them, why would you not rush to their aid?

What do we do with God's delays? Clearly God does some things differently than we would if we were God, but that's precisely the point. Jesus stayed away because he intended to raise Lazarus from the dead. He even goes so far as to say to his disciples, "I am glad I was not there" (John 11:15). To us this may seem callous and unkind, but God's ways are not our ways.

**Erwin Lutzer** (BORROW [The Vanishing Power of Death](#), p. 106) has a helpful word at this point: "The delays of Deity are not because of insensitivity to our present needs, but because of greater sensitivity to our ultimate needs."

**J. C. Ryle** explains what this means in practical terms: "We are all naturally impatient in the day of trial . . . We forget that Christ is too wise a Physician to make any mistakes. It is the duty of faith to say, "My times are in Your hand. Do with me as you will, how you will, what you will, and when you will. Not my will, but yours be done." The highest degree of faith is to be able to wait, sit still, and not complain." ([John 11 - Ryle's Expository Thoughts on the Gospels](#))

*Take all your questions, all your doubts,  
all your uncertainties, all your "if onlys,"  
and let them be dots on a piece of paper.*

*Then draw a circle around all those dots.*

*That circle represents the providence of God...*

**You never know when a resurrection is on the way.**

Take all your questions, all your doubts, all your uncertainties, all your "if onlys," and let them be dots on a piece of paper. Then draw a circle around all those dots. That circle represents the providence of God.

If Jesus had healed Lazarus, that would have been a great miracle. Raising him from the dead was an even greater one.

God's delays are not the same as God's denials.

If we know that, we can keep believing even while we wait for an answer that has not yet come.

You never know when a resurrection is on the way.

Lord Jesus, help us to remember that you've got a bigger and better plan. Forgive us for presuming to tell you how to do your work. We're glad that you are God and we are not. Amen. ([Couldn't He Have Kept This Man From Dying?](#))

**John 11:38** So Jesus, again being deeply moved within, came to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone was lying against it.

BGT John 11:38 ἦσο ς ο ν π λιν μβριμ μενος ν αυτ ρχεται ε ς τ μνημε ον· ν δ σπ λαιον κα λ θος π κειτο π α τ .

KJV John 11:38 Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.

NET John 11:38 Jesus, intensely moved again, came to the tomb. (Now it was a cave, and a stone was placed across it.)

CSB John 11:38 Then Jesus, angry in Himself again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it.

ESV John 11:38 Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it.

NIV John 11:38 Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance.

NLT John 11:38 Jesus was still angry as he arrived at the tomb, a cave with a stone rolled across its entrance.

NRS John 11:38 Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it.

NJB John 11:38 Sighing again, Jesus reached the tomb: it was a cave with a stone to close the opening.

NAB John 11:38 So Jesus, perturbed again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay across it.

YLT John 11:38 Jesus, therefore, again groaning in himself, cometh to the tomb, and it was a cave, and a stone was lying upon it,

MIT John 11:38 Jesus again sighed ever so deeply in himself as he came to the tomb. It was a cave-type tomb with a stone closing its entrance.

- **again being deeply moved:** Jn 11:33 Eze 9:4 21:6 Mk 8:12
- **It was:** Ge 23:19 49:29-31 Isa 22:16 Mt 27:60,66
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## JESUS IS MOVED AS HE MOVES TO THE TOMB

**So** (therefore - term of conclusion) is linked to Jesus' question "where have you laid him" (Jn 11:34) and their answer "Lord, come and see." **Therefore** He came to the tomb.

**Jesus** ([lesous](#)), **again being deeply moved** ([embrimaomai](#)) **within, came to the tomb** ([mnemeion](#)) - For a second time John uses this rare verb **deeply moved** ([embrimaomai](#)) which John had just used in Jn 11:33 ("deeply moved"). This could be read as "Jesus was deeply indignant!" The sight of the tomb again stirred this deep emotion in Jesus! Jesus was a Man on mission to bring glory to His Father. **Charles Swindoll** refers to the tomb as "that stone testimony of a creation gone tragically awry!" **The tomb** would be located outside of the village of Bethany to prevent ritual defilement with corpses (Nu 19:16; cf. Mt. 23:27; Lk 11:44).

**Now it was a cave** ([spelaiou](#)), **and a stone** ([lithos](#)) **was lying against it** - **Cave** suggests it was a natural cave (cf uses of [spelaiou](#) in Heb 11:38, Rev 6:15) and not carved as some writers suggest (some were carved Mt 27:60). A parenthetical explanation from John. As [noted](#) in Jn 11:17 the stone covering the entry of the cave (Ge 23:19) was to prevent animals and robbers from entering.

**Bob Utley** on a **cave** - During this period in Palestine graves were either (1) natural caves (Baba Bathra 6:8), (2) caves dug into cliffs and sealed with circular stones rolled into trenches and (3) pits dug into the ground and covered by large stones. From archaeological studies in the Jerusalem area option #1 fits best.

**R C H Lenski** - The sight of this stronghold of death causes the former feeling of indignation "again" to rise. And this time Jesus does not put his feeling into words but promptly proceeds to action.... In some of these tombs, very common in that rocky country, the floor is level with the outside, in others it is lower, a step or two leading down to it. The size of the hewnout chamber would be in accord with the owner's wealth. A heavy slab of stone closed the opening, which might be quite perpendicular or slanting back (BORROW [The interpretation of St. john's gospel PAGE 812](#))

Like many stories in the Bible, Lazarus' tomb has been memorialized with a church in a where the tomb was thought to be located

([see below](#)), but the authenticity of this location is by now means certain. Instead of visiting some crypt with a church built over it, one should believe the story in John and how Lazarus' return to life was a foreshadowing of the Cross of Christ and His resurrection that must be believed in order to receive eternal life.

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**LAZARUS' TOMB** (Wikipedia) - The **Tomb of Lazarus** is a traditional spot of [pilgrimage](#) located in the [East Jerusalem](#) town of [al-Eizariya](#) (meaning "place] of Lazarus"), in [Israel](#), the biblical village of [Bethany](#), on the southeast slope of the [Mount of Olives](#), some 2.4 km (1.5 miles) east of [Jerusalem](#). The tomb is the purported site of a miracle recorded in the [Gospel of John](#) in which [Jesus](#) raised [Lazarus](#) from the dead.<sup>[1]</sup>

## IMAGERY OF THE GRAVE

### [DICTIONARY OF BIBLICAL IMAGERY - PAGE 1200](#) GRAVE

The grave conjures up many kinds of images, most of them negative. In its most concrete expression the grave is simply a tomb or place of burial (Gen 35:20; Mk 16:3). Often, however, imagery of the grave as the abode of the dead is evoked. Sheol (Heb) and Hades (Gk) represent the lowest place imaginable in contrast to the highest heavens (Is 7:11; Mt 11:23). The grave does not simply represent a termination of life but points beyond it to a place where two irreconcilable destinies coexist (Lk 16:22, 26).

The grave is the epitome of darkness (Job 17:13; 18:18; Lam 3:6). Spatially, its abode is the farthest recess from light, a prison detaining one from life and activity in the upper world. It is described as "the pit," and its entrance as going down "into the dust" (Job 17:14, 16). The grave is ritually unclean (Num 19:16) and is a place where such detestable nighttime activities as necromancy take place (1 Sam 28:8; Is 45:18–19; 65:4).

Loneliness and solitude (Ps 31:17–18; Is 47:5) represent the chief epithets on the gravestone. It is a place where one's only companions are worms (Job 17:12, 14), consuming the last vestiges of the flesh that represents the experience of pleasures in the life above. In this sense, experience in the grave is the very antithesis of the enjoyment of life. It is the absence of companionship, the love between man and woman, the sounds of joy and laughter, sampling the fruits of one's labor or participation in worship (Ps 88:10–12; Is 38:18).

By way of contrast the grave also presents a positive image. The social outcast Job looks to the grave for consolation (Job 3:11–19), for there the strife of the upper world ceases. In an even greater sense the grave represents ultimate paradise for the miserable Lazarus (Lk 16:22, 25). This parable highlights the antithetical nature of the experience of the grave for its occupants with respect to their experience in life and their ultimately separate destinies.

Epithets are intimately connected with the grave. The manner in which a person goes to the grave acts as a stamp of finality on the traits that characterized the person's life. Negatively, a person could go down to the grave in sorrow (Gen 44:29), as being dumbfounded (Ps 31:17), as violently slain (1 Kings 2:9) or as alive (Ps 55:15). Positively, the ideal epithet was to retire from this life in peace (1 Kings 2:6), where the absence of strife at death symbolizes harmony both in this life and in life beyond the grave (see AFTERLIFE).

Familial associations are symbolized by the grave. A common metaphor for going to the grave is the phrase "he slept with his fathers" (of David, 1 Kings 2:10) or "he was gathered unto his people" (of Abraham, Gen 25:17). The grave is both a temporary generational gap and the ultimate gathering place of the family.

In Semitic imagery the grave was the entrance to the underworld, just as the womb represented an entrance to life from the underworld (Ps 139:15). For those who never enter into life, the womb is a tomb, as both Job and Jeremiah observe in lamenting the day of their respective births (Job 3:10–16; Jer 20:17).

The grave is not only represented by spatial imagery, but it is often personified as death itself. Here the negative aspects of the grave as Sheol are prominent. Death and the grave are personified as a tyrannical monarch over the kingdom of the dead (Hos 13:14). The grave is also personified as a powerful trap with cords that entangle its victim (2 Sam 22:6; Ps 18:5) or as a secure prison with bars to retain its prisoners (Job 17:16). It allows no escape or return to enjoyment of life in the upper world (Job 14:12). For the wicked dead the grave represents a place of punishment and eternal torment (Mt 10:28; see CRIME AND PUNISHMENT) and of separation from all sources of help or rescue (Lk 16:24).

The grave and death are also personified as having insatiable appetites (Is 5:14; Hab 2:5; Prov 27:20; 30:15–16). Here the grave as

Sheol is associated with swallowing (Prov 1:12; Ps 141:7), which is also represented by the god Mot (= death) in Canaanite mythology. In an interesting play on this metaphor, the Lord reverses the curse of the grave by "swallow[ing] up death for ever" (Is 25:8 RSV; cf. 1 Cor 15:54–57). Here the grave is transformed into a profoundly positive symbol in which those who "die in Christ" are not in Hades but rather are united with Christ (Lk 23:43; 2 Cor 5:8; Phil 1:23). For the righteous, then, the grave becomes a symbol of ultimate hope. This was true even for the miserable Job (cf. Job 19:25–26).

See also BURIAL, FUNERAL; DARKNESS; DEATH; PIT.

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**John 11:39 Jesus said, "Remove the stone." Martha, the sister of the deceased, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there will be a stench, for he has been dead four days."**

BGT John 11:39 λ γει η σο ς· ρατε τ ν λ θον· λ γει α τ δελφ το τετελευτηκ το ς Μ ρθα· κ ριε, δη ζει, τεταρτα ο ς γ ρ στιν.

KJV John 11:39 Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.

NET John 11:39 Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the deceased, replied, "Lord, by this time the body will have a bad smell, because he has been buried four days."

CSB John 11:39 "Remove the stone," Jesus said. Martha, the dead man's sister, told Him, "Lord, he's already decaying. It's been four days."

ESV John 11:39 Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, by this time there will be an odor, for he has been dead four days."

NIV John 11:39 "Take away the stone," he said. "But, Lord," said Martha, the sister of the dead man, "by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days."

NLT John 11:39 "Roll the stone aside," Jesus told them. But Martha, the dead man's sister, protested, "Lord, he has been dead for four days. The smell will be terrible."

NRS John 11:39 Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days."

NJB John 11:39 Jesus said, 'Take the stone away.' Martha, the dead man's sister, said to him, 'Lord, by now he will smell; this is the fourth day since he died.'

NAB John 11:39 Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the dead man's sister, said to him, "Lord, by now there will be a stench; he has been dead for four days."

YLT John 11:39 Jesus saith, 'Take ye away the stone;' the sister of him who hath died -- Martha -- saith to him, 'Sir, already he stinketh, for he is four days dead;'

MIT John 11:39 Jesus said, "Remove the stone." Martha, the sister of the deceased, said, "Lord, already he is giving off an offensive odor, for it has been four days."

- **Remove:** Mk 16:3
- **Lord:** Jn 11:17 Ge 3:19 23:4 Ps 49:7,9,14 Ac 2:27 13:36 Php 3:21
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**BY NOW HE  
STINKETH!**

Jesus ([lesous](#)) said, "**Remove** ([airo](#)) the stone." - **Remove** is a command in the [aorist imperative](#), to take away the stone immediately! It is interesting that Jesus did not need the stone removed in order to call forth Lazarus. So why did He do it this way? I cannot be dogmatic but as the stone was rolled away the stench of the rotting flesh would surely have been apparent to the onlookers. This would be clear evidence that Lazarus was truly dead ("the smell test")! The overwhelming odors would not lie! John

says nothing about odors so my thought is clearly speculative. As an aside what if they had not obeyed and removed the stone? The point is that they obeyed without questioning Jesus' command.

**THOUGHT** - Sometimes the Lord gives us commands which in a given situation or circumstance we do not fully understand. It is then that we must choose to walk by faith not sight and obey without grumbling or questioning His wisdom.

**Martha, the sister of the deceased (teleutao), said to Him, "Lord (kurios), by this time there will be a stench, for he has been dead four days** (literally, "he is a four-day man") - Martha panics! She does not say there is presently even an odor but that there will be if the tomb is opened! Even though Martha had expressed belief in the resurrection, we see a slight faith failure here with her reaction (compare Jesus' question in next verse). Where is her focus? On the tomb, not the One Who had clearly stated He personally was the resurrection and the life. (I surely would have done exactly what Martha did!) She experienced a momentary wavering of her faith (Haven't we all!) Martha's objection is not disobedience but a legitimate point in the context. What she has missed is what Jesus had stated earlier and repeats in the next verse.

**Deceased (teleutao)** is in the perfect tense - died and still dead. The Jews did not embalm bodies and the intense heat typical of this area led to rapid decay of the human flesh! If you have ever smelled an animal that has lain by the roadside for several days, you can imagine what was going through the mind of Martha! Of course, what had Martha failed to remember? Jesus prophetic promise "**Your brother shall rise again.**" (Jn 11:23+) She had simply misinterpreted His promise as a reference to a future general resurrection ([see note above](#)) of all the dead (John 5:25, 28, 29+) She was right about the fact of his having been **dead four days** but the deduction she drew was wrong: she failed to count on a greater fact, the Christ Who would conquer death (and presumably also the revolting smell of decaying flesh)!

**THOUGHT** - There is a principle here. There are times when our circumstances are such that we see no way out and feel like the test (or temptation) is too great. It is in those times that we become like Martha, and forgot the promise of Paul that "No temptation (test) has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and **God is faithful**, Who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation (test) will provide the (SPECIFIC) way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it." (1Co 10:13+).

**Stench** is **ozo** used only here in the NT with one use in the Lxx of Ex 8:10+ where they piled the dead frogs "in heaps and the land (OF EGYPT) became **foul** (ozo)" (**ED**: THAT VERB "OZO" HAS A TOUCH OF [Onomatopoeia!](#) cf "OOZE")." Martha's real fear of a **stench** only serves to accentuate the greatness of the miracle that Jesus was about to perform!

**R C H Lenski** - The Egyptians disemboweled the body and removed the brain and then soaked the body in a chemical solution for seventy days and thus prevented decay. (BORROW [The interpretation of St. John's gospel PAGE 812](#))

**Spurgeon** - "Wilt thou expose that corrupt corpse to the air? "Ah, me! what poor foul creatures we are through the Fall! See what we may, any of us, become in a few days, so that even the one who loves us best will have to say of us, "Bury my dead out of my sight." ([Spurgeon's Exposition - Gospel of John](#))

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**Warren Wiersbe** - There are three resurrections recorded in the Gospels, apart from that of our Lord Himself. Christ raised a twelve-year-old girl who had died (Luke 8:49-56), a young man who had been dead several hours (Luke 7:11-17), and an older man who had been in the tomb four days (John 11). They present a picture of three different kinds of sinners: (1) The little girl. Children are sinners, but open corruption has not yet set in. (2) The young man. Young people are sinners whose outward corruption begins to show. (3) The older man. Adults are sinners whose definite outward corruption can be seen. The point is that all three were dead. One person cannot be "more dead" than another. The only difference lay in the degree of decay. Is this not true of sinners today? The immoral church member is not "**decayed**" like the person on skid row, but he is still dead. (BORROW [Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the New Testament](#) page 240).

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**A Dog Named Lazarus** - In Artesia, New Mexico, Mary Bratcher accidentally ran over her own pet dog Brownie. The family tearfully buried the mixed-breed dog in a field near their ranch home. The family's young son, Toby, age 3, refused to accept that his pet was dead. Brownie's mother refused to accept it also. The mother dog dug Brownie out of the ground and the following day the family returned from a trip to discover Brownie caked with mud and dried blood on their porch. Brownie, barely breathing, was rushed to a veterinarian. Brownie will recover. Brownie has lost an eye, has a broken shoulder and has a new name: Lazarus.

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When my parents were visiting the Holy Land, they sent us a postcard of Lazarus's tomb. Showing it to our six-year-old son Leslie, my husband explained that this is where Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. Leslie asked if Grandma and Grandpa met Lazarus. "Of course not, he's dead," my husband said. To which Leslie retorted, "What? Again?"

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**D L Moody** - BEFORE THE ACT of raising Lazarus could be performed, the disciples had their part to do. Christ could have removed the stone with a word. It would have been easy for Him to have commanded it to roll away, and it would have obeyed His voice, as the dead Lazarus did when He called him back to life. But the Lord would have His children learn this lesson: that they have something to do toward raising the spiritually dead. The disciples had not only to take away the stone, but after Christ had raised Lazarus they had to "loose him, and let him go." (See Related Resource: "[Paradoxical Principle of 100% Dependent and 100% Responsible](#)")

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**Spurgeon** - [The sphere of instrumentality](#) John 11:39, 44

The manufacture of new commandments is a very fascinating occupation for some people. You must not do this or that or the other, till one feels like a baby in reins. I find that ten commandments are more than I can keep without a deal of grace, and I do not mean to pay the slightest regard to any beyond. Liberty is the genius of our faith, nor do we mean to barter it away for the esteem of modern Pharisees. They say to us, 'Thou shalt not laugh on a Sunday. Thou shalt never create a smile in the House of God. Thou shalt walk to public services as though thou wert going to the whipping post, and thou shalt take care when thou preachest that thou dost always make thy discourse as dull as it can possibly be.' We do not reverence these precepts. Anything which is of God we honour, but not the sickening decrees of cant. We are men, not slaves. Our manhood is not annihilated by grace. We think, speak and act for ourselves, and are not the serfs of custom and fashion. We speak out our minds even when propriety is shocked and respectability is enraged. I would always give to young men this piece of advice: 'quit yourselves like men'; let nobody have to say that your religion is mamby-pamby and your conversation affected. Do not be always sugaring every person you speak of as 'Dear this' and 'Dear that,' for this savours of nauseous hypocrisy. Do not whine or turn up your eyes or affect to be very devout. Be holy, but not showy, true, but not obtrusive. Be men, be manly, be Christians, be like Christ. He was the very highest type of man; you never see anything stilted or unnatural in him; he is always himself, transparent, outspoken, brave, honest, true and manly.

**John 11:40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?"**

BGT John 11:40 λ γει α τ η σο ς· ο κ ε π ν σοι τι ν πιστε σ ς ψ τ ν δ ξαν το θεο ;

KJV John 11:40 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?

NET John 11:40 Jesus responded, "Didn't I tell you that if you believe, you would see the glory of God?"

CSB John 11:40 Jesus said to her, "Didn't I tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?"

ESV John 11:40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?"

NIV John 11:40 Then Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?"

NLT John 11:40 Jesus responded, "Didn't I tell you that you would see God's glory if you believe?"

NRS John 11:40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?"

NJB John 11:40 Jesus replied, 'Have I not told you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?'

NAB John 11:40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?"

YLT John 11:40 Jesus saith to her, 'Said I not to thee, that if thou mayest believe, thou shalt see the glory of God?'

MIT John 11:40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believe, you would see God's glory?"

- **Said:** Jn 11:23-26 2Ch 20:20 Ro 4:17-25
- **see:** Jn 11:4 Jn 1:14 Jn 9:3 Jn 12:41 Ps 63:2 Ps 90:16 2Co 3:18 2Co 4:6
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

John 1:14+ And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 9:3+ Jesus answered, "It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of

God might be displayed in him.

Exodus 33:18+ Then Moses said, "I pray You, show me Your glory!"

## **JESUS REMINDS MARTHA BELIEVING LEADS TO SEEING**

**Jesus (lesous) said to her** - Notice Jesus does not denigrate or disparage her for her forgetfulness. He knows our human nature and that we are prone to forget, especially when we are confronted with a "pop test" (like "Remove the stone!")

**Did I not say to you that if** (3rd class condition = action is possible) **you believe (pisteuo), you will see the glory (doxa) of God?** - Notice the order is **believe** and you will **see**, not **see** and you will **believe**. (See Hendriksen below) Faith is the assurance of things hoped for (in this case resuscitation based on Jesus' promise in Jn 11:23) and the conviction of things not seen (Martha's brother alive from the dead as promised) (Heb 11:1+). This would bring **glory** to the Father and the Son which is exactly how this saga began in John 11:4 when Jesus declared "This sickness is not to end in death, but **for the glory of God**, so that the **Son of God may be glorified by it**." The glory of God would be clearly demonstrated by the resuscitation of Lazarus. (Note I call it resuscitation because Jesus Alone must be the first resurrection, the first fruits of all who are after Him resurrected -- 1Co 15:20+). And remember, a simple "definition" of glorify is to give a proper opinion of someone and in this case the idea is to give the witnesses a proper opinion of God the Father and His Son. Upon Jesus' reminding Martha of His promise to raise Lazarus (Jn 11:25-26), she becomes mute and acquiesces to the words of Jesus!

**William Hendriksen** adds on **if you believe, you will see** that "Of course, Jesus cannot have meant that the performance of the miracle was dependent upon Martha's exercise of faith. What he intended to convey was this, that if Martha would only stop thinking about that corpse and would rivet her attention on Jesus, trusting completely in him (his power and his love), she would see this miracle as a true sign, an illustration and proof of the glory of God reflected in the Son of God." (BORROW [Exposition of the Gospel according to John page 158](#))

**Leon Morris** adds that "For [Jesus] the "glory of God" was the one important thing. This means that the real meaning of what He would do would **be accessible only to faith**. All who were there, believers or not, would see the miracle. But Jesus is promising Martha a sight of the glory. **The crowd would see the miracle, but only believers would perceive its real significance, the glory**." (cf. Guthrie, "many saw Lazarus come from the grave but never saw the glory of God"). (Bolding added) (BORROW [The Gospel according to John : the English text with introduction, exposition and notes PAGE 560](#))

How had Jesus told her she would **see the glory of God**? This could have been conveyed by the messenger returning with Jesus' declaration in John 11:4 "This sickness is not to end in death, but for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it."

**Warren Wiersbe** - True faith relies on God's promises and thereby releases God's power. Martha relented, and the stone was rolled away. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

*As Jesus returns to Bethany, He will awaken Lazarus.*

*When Christ returns for us again, He will awaken His Bride, the Church.*

-- Rod Mattoon

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### **James Smith - John 11:40 "BELIEVE AND THOU SHALT SEE"**

This statement may be regarded as a word of—

1. Rebuke to the questioning unbeliever.
2. Guidance to the anxious seeker.
3. Comfort to the suffering believer.
4. Cheer to the discouraged worker.
5. Hope to the dying Christian.

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### **Vance Havner - Thoughts at a Grave** (BORROW [Consider Him - page 8](#))

"When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still." John 11:6

Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. You would have expected him to hurry to Bethany. There is a love that tarries until we grumble: "If you had been here ... this wouldn't have happened."

Martha said, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." She believed in the doctrine of the resurrection. But

Jesus immediately made it a personal thing: "I am the resurrection and the life" (11:24, 25). So many of us have our theology straight but we need to see him who gathers up all doctrine in himself, by whom it all consists. Then theology becomes doxology!

"Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" (11:40). Yes, but we still insist on seeing first, we are such slaves to sense. Are you standing by the grave of the impossible in your life, the thing that just simply can't be done ... and yet there he stands, saying, "Believe, and you shall see."

But he also said, "Take ye away the stone," and you, like Martha, have objected: "It would create too great a stench in my home, in my church, among the neighbors." You don't dare remove the thing that hinders. So he does no mighty works for you because of your unbelief.

"Said I not ...?" "Whatever he says to you, do it." And the impossible shall be done.

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### **F B Meyer - John 11:40**

Yes, we shall see the glory of God. We shall see the graves give up their dead — not only at the last day, but now. Thousands around us are dead in trespasses and sins, in which they walk according to the course of this world. Alas! more than this, they stink in the putridity of their lives and speech. Around their graves gather their friends and relatives, bathed in tears, but unable to arrest the progress of decay. But, if we will believe, we shall see the glory of God.

But how shall we believe for this? It seems easy for some to believe. The Marys who sit at the Lord's feet, feeding on his words, find the life and light of faith in his beloved presence. But others, like Martha, are distracted with so many things, that faith seems impossible. And this is the very point where this story is so abundantly helpful. Jesus must have the co-operation and sympathy of some one's faith before this miracle could be wrought — and these He found, not in Mary, as we might have expected, but in Martha, the harassed housewife.

In educating Martha to this stupendous act of faith, (1) The Lord gave her a distinct promise: "Thy brother shall rise again." (2) He drew her attention from his words to Himself, who lay beneath and behind them: "I am the Resurrection and the Life." (3) He forced her to confess her faith. To express it would confirm and increase it: "Believest thou this?" (4) He compelled her to act on the faith, He had created, by allowing the bystanders to remove the stone. All her soul woke up as she remarked these preparations for her brother's resurrection. She believed; and in her faith gave the Lord the pivot on which his leverage might rest

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### **James Smith - "BELIEVE, AND THOU SHALT SEE." John 11:40**

The happy home at Bethany had been suddenly overshadowed with sorrow, Lazarus was sick. The loving sisters hasten to breathe their trouble into Jesus' ear. When He heard, He said, "This sickness is for the glory of God." What? Sickness for the glory of God. How slow we are to believe this (Rom. 8:28). Jesus Loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, and abode two days still in the same place where He was. How strange that His absence from them should be a proof of His love for them. In refusing their request He desires to give them far above what they asked (v. 15). They had "prayed," now He asks their "trust." Having declared Himself to be the "Resurrection and the Life," He said, "Believest thou this?" Such faith needs to be tested before it can be rewarded. We notice then the—

I. Test of Faith. "Take ye away the stone" (v. 39). If you believe that your brother will rise again, and that "I am the Resurrection, then roll away this stone." Faith without works is dead. James says, "I will show you my faith by my works." If we expect great things from God, then we will attempt great things for God. But here we see—

II. Language of Doubt. "Lord by this time he stinketh" (v. 39). Corruption will be doing its loathsome work. Just so, Martha. You are looking at the difficulty more than at the promise. Your eyes are still on the dead more than on the Life-giving One. Is not this the reason why many of us fail to see the glory of the Lord's power? We are looking more at the giants in the land than at the arm of Omnipotence. We see our friends lying in spiritual death, and we mourn their sad condition as hopeless, because our eyes are not fixed on Him who is the Resurrection and the Life. Then came—

III. Rebuke of Love. "Said I not unto thee that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God" (v. 40). Doubtless these tender, burning words fell with melting power as tears upon the face of Martha's heart. Doubting is not an infirmity, but a sin; a denial of the Word of Him who cannot lie. Oh, how often our unbelief hinders the manifestation of His power (Matt. 13:58). How often do we pray, "Lord, if thou hadst been here?" while He is saying to us, "If thou wouldest believe." Now comes—

IV. Obedience of Faith. "Then they took away the stone" (v. 41). The stone of unbelief—the unbelief of God's people—often lies in the way of the dead in sin being raised. "Believe, and thou shalt see." There are other stones that lie in the way, such as the fear of man, the love of the world, and selfish indifference. This last is a sort of morbid Calvinism or fatalism that says, "If they are going to be saved they will be saved." But what saith the Lord? "Said I not unto thee that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the



glory of God?" After obedience came the—

V. Glory of God. How was His glory seen? In giving life to the dead and liberty to the living (v. 44). Lazarus was restored to their home and their hearts. All their desires and longings were fully met. They believed, and saw His glory, and were satisfied. Have you beheld the glory of His life-giving power in answer to your obedient trust, or are you still mourning hopelessly over the dead, forgetting Him who hath said, "Believe, and thou shalt see?" This prescription, "Believe, and thou shalt see," given by the Great Physician to those troubled sisters, might be taken as a word in season to the—

1. QUESTIONING UNBELIEVER. How am I to know that the Bible is the Word of God? How am I to know that the Blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin? How am I to know that eternal life is in Jesus Christ? "Believe, and thou shalt see."

2. ANXIOUS SEEKER. I do not see how I can be justified by simply believing. No, but "Believe, and thou shalt see." "All that believe are justified from all things" (Acts 13:39).

3. SUFFERING BELIEVER. No affliction for the present seemeth joyous, but rather grievous, nevertheless afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them who are exercised thereby. "Believe, and thou shalt see."

4. DISCOURAGED WORKER. "We have toiled all night and taken nothing: launch out into the deep." "At Thy word we will let down the net." "Believe, and thou shalt see." The Sunday school teacher says, "I long to see my scholars brought to Christ." "Believe, and thou shalt see."

5. DYING CHRISTIAN. The tide of life is ebbing, the things of this world fast fading from the vision, the eyes fast closing to the light of day; but Jesus is near with His sure Word of promise. "BELIEVE, AND THOU SHALT SEE THE GLORY OF GOD."

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### Chris Tiegreen - Faith, Then Sight (from [One Year At His Feet Devotional](#))

"Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?" John 11:40

"Faith expects from God what is beyond all expectation." —Andrew Murray

IN WORD One of the foundational dynamics of the kingdom of God is this principle: faith, then sight. How often we try to reverse the order! Our natural inclination—and probably that of Martha in this passage, as she mourns the death of her brother Lazarus—is to say we'll believe when we see the glory of God. But throughout Jesus' ministry, He is emphatic that we have it backward. We'll see the glory of God when we believe. It's the way of the flesh that says, "I'll believe it when I see it." Jesus says, "You'll see it when you believe it." It's one of the hardest principles for Christians to grasp. The work of almighty, sovereign God is often actually dependent on the level of our faith. It isn't that we limit Him; it's that He has limited Himself. His modus operandi in this world is to act in response to faith: the prayers of faith, the obedience of faith, the attitude of faith. As incredible as it seems, the biblical witness is that our belief prompts His intervention. And without belief, He often does not intervene.

IN DEED Do you find yourself in a difficult situation? Believe God, and you will see His glory. That doesn't mean that we lay out a plan of action for Him and then complain when He meets our needs another way. Faith does not dictate God's method of intervention. But it certainly invites His act of intervention—in His way and in His time. This will mean believing that God has specifically allowed your crisis in the first place. Jesus let Lazarus die—on purpose! He said His friend's sickness was for the glory of God to be revealed (v. 4), and He intentionally stayed where He was for two days after hearing of Lazarus' illness (v. 6). When a crisis comes, do we complain that God was not watching over us, or do we watch for His glory? Our inward response might have more impact than we think. Jesus is clear: "If you believed, you would see the glory of God."

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### Streams in the Desert - John 11:40

MARY and Martha could not understand what their Lord was doing. Both of them said to Him, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Back of it all, we seem to read their thought: "Lord, we do not understand why you have stayed away so long. We do not understand how you could let death come to the man whom you loved. We do not understand how you could let sorrow and suffering ravage our lives when your presence might have stayed it all. Why did you not come? It is too late now, for already he has been dead four days!"

And to it all Jesus had but one great truth: "You may not understand; but I tell you if you believe, you will see."

Abraham could not understand why God should ask the sacrifice of the boy; but he trusted. And he saw the glory of God in his restoration to his love. Moses could not understand why God should keep him forty years in the wilderness, but he trusted; and he saw when God called him to lead forth Israel from bondage.

Joseph could not understand the cruelty of his brethren, the false witness of a perfidious woman, and the long years of an unjust imprisonment; but he trusted, and he saw at last the glory of God in it all.

Jacob could not understand the strange providence which permitted the same Joseph to be torn from his father's love, but he saw the glory of God when he looked into the face of that same Joseph as the viceroy of a great king, and the preserver of his own life and the lives of a great nation.

And so, perhaps in your life. You say, "I do not understand why God let my dear one be taken. I do not understand why affliction has been permitted to smite me. I do not understand the devious paths by which the Lord is leading me. I do not understand why plans and purposes that seemed good to my eyes should be baffled. I do not understand why blessings I so much need are so long delayed.

Friend, you do not have to understand all God's ways with you. God does not expect you to understand them. You do not expect your child to understand, only believe. Some day you will see the glory of God in the things which you do not understand.—J. H. McC.

"If we could push ajar the gates of life,  
And stand within, and all God's working see,  
We might interpret all this doubt and strife,  
And for each mystery could find a key.

"But not today. Then be content, poor heart;  
God's plans, like lilies pure and white, unfold.  
We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart—  
Time will reveal the calyxes of gold.

"And if, through patient toil, we reach the land  
Where tired feet, with sandals loosed, may rest,  
When we shall clearly know and understand,  
I think that we shall say, 'God knew best.' "

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### Oswald Chambers - Sublime intimacy

Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? John 11:40.

Every time you venture out in the life of faith, you will find something in your common sense circumstances that flatly contradicts your faith. Common sense is not faith, and faith is not common sense; they stand in the relation of the natural and the spiritual. Can you trust Jesus Christ where your common sense cannot trust Him? Can you venture heroically on Jesus Christ's statements when the facts of your commonsense life shout 'It's a lie'? On the mount it is easy to say—'Oh yes, I believe God can do it'; but you have to come down into the demon-possessed valley and meet with facts that laugh ironically at the whole of your mount-of-transfiguration belief. Every time my programme of belief is clear to my own mind, I come across something that contradicts it. Let me say I believe God will supply all my need, and then let me run dry, with no outlook, and see whether I will go through the trial of faith, or whether I will sink back to something lower.

Faith must be tested, because it can be turned into a personal possession only through conflict. What is your faith up against just now? The test will either prove that your faith is right, or it will kill it. "Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in Me." The final thing is confidence in Jesus. Believe steadfastly on Him and all you come up against will develop your faith. There is continual testing in the life of faith, and the last great test is death. May God keep us in fighting trim! Faith is unutterable trust in God which never dreams that He will not stand by us.

**John 11:41 So they removed the stone. Then Jesus raised His eyes, and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me.**

BGT John 11:41 παν ο ν τ ν λ θον. δ η σο ς ρεν το ς φθαλμο ς νω κα ε πεν· π τερ, ε χαριστ σοι τι κουσ ς μου.

KJV John 11:41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.

NET John 11:41 So they took away the stone. Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you that you have listened to me.

CSB John 11:41 So they removed the stone. Then Jesus raised His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that

You heard Me.

ESV John 11:41 So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me.

NIV John 11:41 So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me.

NLT John 11:41 So they rolled the stone aside. Then Jesus looked up to heaven and said, "Father, thank you for hearing me.

NRS John 11:41 So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you for having heard me.

NJB John 11:41 So they took the stone away. Then Jesus lifted up his eyes and said: Father, I thank you for hearing my prayer.

NAB John 11:41 So they took away the stone. And Jesus raised his eyes and said, "Father, I thank you for hearing me.

YLT John 11:41 They took away, therefore, the stone where the dead was laid, and Jesus lifted his eyes upwards, and said, 'Father, I thank Thee, that Thou didst hear me;

MIT John 11:41 They rolled away the stone. Jesus lifted his eyes upward and spoke, "Father, I thank you that you heard me.

- **Then Jesus:** Jn 12:28-30 17:1 Ps 123:1 Lu 18:13
- **Father:** Mt 11:25 Lu 10:21 Php 4:6
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

John 12:28-30 "Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came out of heaven: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." 29 So the crowd of people who stood by and heard it were saying that it had thundered; others were saying, "An angel has spoken to Him." 30 Jesus answered and said, "This voice has not come for My sake, but for your sakes.

## JESUS PRAYS PUBLICLY TO HIS FATHER

**So** - Term of conclusion. Based on Jesus' explanation in Jn 11:40, there is no more objection by Martha. All that was left to do to conclude this portion of the discourse was to remove the stone.

**They removed the stone** - Even though there was unbelief, they did remove the stone.

**Then Jesus raised His eyes, and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me-** Jesus action of looking up was a natural prelude to prayer. Jesus did this before he multiplied the loaves (Mark 6:41) and before the High Priestly Prayer (John 17:1) Note Jesus does not say "our Father," as believers do when they address God, because His relationship was unique, that of Father and Son. It is notable that Jesus always addressed God directly as Father (Jn 12:28; 17:1, 5, 11, 21, 24-25; Mt. 11:25-26; 26:39, 42; Luke 23:34, 46). Note the past tense **have heard**, which indicates He had prayed previously about this matter, presumably when He first received news that Lazarus was ill (Jn 11:4). The clear implication also is that the Father had already granted Jesus' request.

**Spurgeon** feels that Jesus groaning in Jn 11:38 was in fact His private, silent prayer to which He refers in this audible prayer. In any event, this is an expectant, grateful prayer. Jesus is in such oneness with His Father (Jn 10:30) that He knows His Father always hears Him.

*Oh, for faith to bless God for the mercies that are on the way to us!*

-- C H Spurgeon

**Spurgeon** - That is grand praying, is it not? Sometimes we ought to say, "Just so." "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me." That groaning in spirit was Christ's prayer to his Father, that inward tumult of his soul was his earnest supplication; and now he thanks his Father that he has heard him. Yet Lazarus was still dead, and lying, a mass of corruption, in the grave. Oh, for faith to bless God for the mercies that are on the way to us! ([Spurgeon's Exposition - Gospel of John](#))

**Dods** describes Jesus' prayer - "No pomp of incantation, no wrestling in prayer even; but simple words of thanksgiving, as if already Lazarus was restored" ([Expositor's Greek Testament](#))

**Warren Wiersbe** - The sisters' Jewish friends could only sympathize and weep; it took Christ to give the man life. How did Christ give him life? By the power of His word. This is the way He raised all three dead people mentioned above (see John 5:24 and Eph. 2:1–10). Why did Christ raise Lazarus? Because He loved him (Jn 11:5, 36) and because it brought glory to God (Jn 11:4). This is why He has saved us. We deserve to die and go to hell, but because of His great love, He rescued us. (Read again Eph 1:3–14 and Eph 2:1–10.) Keep in mind that salvation is not a set of rules; it is life (John 3:14–21, 36; 5:24; 10:10; 1 John 5:10–13). This life is a Person—Jesus Christ. When dead sinners hear the voice of the Son of God (the Word) and believe, they are given eternal life (John 5:25). To reject that Word is to be dead forever. (BORROW [Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the New Testament](#) page 240 - this is a great resource for sermon preparation).

*This is a resuscitation, not a resurrection.*

**Bob Utley** on **You have heard Me** - Jesus "hears" the Father (cf. John 8:26,40; 15:15) and the Father "hears" Him. Those who "hear" Jesus have eternal life. This is the continuing word play on "see" and "hear" as parallel to "receive" (John 1:12) and "believe" (John 3:16). Lazarus "heard" the voice of Jesus and came back to life. This is a resuscitation, not a resurrection.

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### **Streams in the Desert - John 11:41.**

THIS is a very strange and unusual order. Lazarus is still in the grave, and the thanksgiving precedes the miracle of resurrection. I thought that the thanksgiving would have risen when the great deed had been wrought, and Lazarus was restored to life again. But Jesus gives thanks for what He is about to receive. The gratitude breaks forth before the bounty has arrived, in the assurance that it is certainly on the way. The song of victory is sung before the battle has been fought. It is the sower who is singing the song of the harvest home. It is thanksgiving before the miracle!

Who thinks of announcing a victory-psalm when the crusaders are just starting out for the field? Where can we hear the grateful song for the answer which has not yet been received? And after all, there is nothing strange or forced, or unreasonable in the Master's order. Praise is really the most vital preparatory ministry to the working of the miracles. Miracles are wrought by spiritual power. Spiritual power is always proportioned to our faith.—Dr. Jowett.

### **PRAISE CHANGES THINGS**

Nothing so pleases God in connection with our prayer as our praise, and nothing so blesses the man who prays as the praise which he offers. I got a great blessing once in China in this connection. I had received bad and sad news from home, and deep shadows had covered my soul. I prayed, but the darkness did not vanish. I summoned myself to endure, but the darkness only deepened. Just then I went to an inland station and saw on the wall of the mission home these words: "Try Thanksgiving." I did, and in a moment every shadow was gone, not to return. Yes, the Psalmist was right, "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord."—Rev. Henry W. Frost.

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### **JESUS AT A GRAVE John 11:32-45.**

HERE is Jesus weeping. "Jesus wept." Why did He weep? Perhaps He wept out of sheer sympathy with the tears of others. And perhaps, too, He wept because some of our tears were needless. If we were better men we should know more of the love and purpose of our Lord, and perhaps many of our tears would be dried. Still, here is the sweet and heartening evangel. He sympathizes with my grief! Never a bitter tear is shed without my Lord sharing the pang and the pang.

Here is Jesus praying! "Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me." Then it is not so much a prayer as a thanksgiving. He gives thanks for what He is "about to receive." Is this my way? Perhaps I do it before I take a meal. Do I do it before I begin to live the day? In the morning do I thank my God for what I am about to receive? Can I confidently give thanks before I receive the gifts of God, before the dish-covers are removed? Can I trust Him?

And here is Jesus commanding, clothed in sovereign power: "Lazarus, come forth!" That is the same voice which "in the beginning created the heavens and the earth."

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### **Oswald Chambers - Prayer in the Father's hearing**

Father, I thank Thee that thou hast heard Me. John 11:41.

When the Son of God prays, He has only one consciousness, and that consciousness is of His Father. God always hears the prayers of His Son, and if the Son of God is formed in me the Father will always hear my prayers. I have to see that the Son of God

is manifested in my mortal flesh. "Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost," the 'Bethlehem' of the Son of God. Is the Son of God getting His chance in me? Is the direct simplicity of the life of God's Son being worked out exactly as it was worked out in His historic life? When I come in contact with the occurrences of life as an ordinary human being, is the prayer of God's Eternal Son to His Father being prayed in me? "In that day ye shall ask in My name...." What day? The day when the Holy Ghost has come to me and made me effectually one with my Lord.

Is the Lord Jesus Christ being abundantly satisfied in your life or have you got a spiritual 'strut' on? Never let common sense obtrude and push the Son of God on one side. Common sense is a gift which God gave to human nature; but common sense is not the gift of His Son. Supernatural sense is the gift of His Son; never enthrone common sense. The Son detects the Father; common sense never yet detected the Father and never will. Our ordinary wits never worship God unless they are transfigured by the indwelling Son of God. We have to see that this mortal flesh is kept in perfect subjection to Him and that He works through it moment by moment. Are we living in such human dependence upon Jesus Christ that His life is being "manifested in our mortal flesh"?

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## Giving Thanks

Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me." — John 11:41

Today's Scripture: John 11:32-44

A tragedy left a family with a void that nothing could fill. A toddler chasing a cat wandered into the road and was run over by a delivery truck. A 4-year-old watched in shocked silence as her parents cradled the lifeless body of her little sister. For years, the cold emptiness of that moment encased the family in sadness. Feelings were frozen. The only comfort was numbness. Relief was unimaginable.

Author Ann Voskamp was the 4-year-old, and the sorrow surrounding her sister's death formed her view of life and God. The world she grew up in had little concept of grace. Joy was an idea that had no basis in reality.

As a young mother, Voskamp set out to discover the elusive thing the Bible calls joy. The words for joy and grace come from the Greek word *chairō*, which she found out is at the center of the Greek word for thanksgiving. Could it be that simple? she wondered. To test her discovery, Voskamp decided to give thanks for 1,000 gifts she already had. She started slowly but soon gratefulness was flowing freely.

Just as Jesus gave thanks before, not after, raising Lazarus from the dead (John 11:41), Voskamp discovered that giving thanks brought to life feelings of joy that had died along with her sister. Joy comes from thanksgiving. By: Julie Ackerman Link (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Lord, I thank You that You have the power  
to raise the dead. May the feelings of joy  
that arise from our thanksgiving be seeds of  
grace to those who are afraid to feel.

The joy of living comes from a heart of thanksgiving.

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**John 11:42 "I knew that You always hear Me; but because of the people standing around I said it, so that they may believe that You sent Me."**

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BGT John 11:42 γ ὁ δὲ εἶπεν τιπυτοτ μου κοεις, ἀλλ ὁτι τιν χλον τιν περιεσττα επον, να πιστε σωσιν τι σμε πστειλας.

KJV John 11:42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

NET John 11:42 I knew that you always listen to me, but I said this for the sake of the crowd standing around here, that they may believe that you sent me."

CSB John 11:42 I know that You always hear Me, but because of the crowd standing here I said this, so they may believe You sent Me."

ESV John 11:42 I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me."

NIV John 11:42 I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me."

NLT John 11:42 You always hear me, but I said it out loud for the sake of all these people standing here, so that they will believe you sent me."

NRS John 11:42 I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me."

NJB John 11:42 I myself knew that you hear me always, but I speak for the sake of all these who are standing around me, so that they may believe it was you who sent me.

NAB John 11:42 I know that you always hear me; but because of the crowd here I have said this, that they may believe that you sent me."

YLT John 11:42 and I knew that Thou always dost hear me, but, because of the multitude that is standing by, I said it, that they may believe that Thou didst send me.'

MIT John 11:42 I have known all along that you always listen to me, but for the crowd's sake standing around, I spoke aloud that they might believe you commissioned me."

- **I knew:** Jn 11:22, Jn 8:29, Jn 12:27-28, Mt 26:53, Heb 5:7, Heb 7:25
- **but:** Jn 11:31 Jn 12:29-30
- **that they:** Jn 11:45-50 9:24-34 10:37,38 20:31 Mt 12:22-24
- **that You:** Jn 3:17 6:38-40 7:28,29 8:16,42 10:36 17:8,21,25 Ro 8:3 Ga 4:4 1Jn 4:9,10,14
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

John 12:27-30+ "Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. 28 "Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came out of heaven: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." 29 So the crowd of people who stood by and heard it were saying that it had thundered; others were saying, "An angel has spoken to Him." 30 Jesus answered and said, "This voice has not come for My sake, but for your sakes.

## THE PURPOSE OF JESUS PUBLIC PRAYER

**I knew** ([eido](#)) **that You always hear** ([akouo](#)) **Me - Knew** ([eido](#)) means Jesus knew beyond a shadow of a doubt the Father always heard His prayers. And note the qualifier of **always!** **THOUGHT** - Oh, to pray to God with such confidence, assurance and expectation! Of course God hears everything, but this refers to a hearing that accepts the petition.

**But because of the people standing around I said it, so that**([hina](#)) **they may believe** ([pisteuo](#)) **that You sent** ([apostello](#)) **Me** - The implication of I said it publicly suggests that Jesus also prayed silently, even independent of the times when He went away to pray (Mk 1:35+ Lk 6:12+) . **Sent** ([apostello](#)) repeatedly speaks of the Father sending the Son on mission (sample of over 30 passages - Luke 10:16 John 3:17 John 5:36 John 6:29). So here we see another reason for Jesus' delay in coming to Bethany. The purpose of the audible prayer and miracle is **that they may believe** a purpose ultimately achieved in John 11:45 when "**many...believed in Him.**" His audible prayer also would make it clear to all who heard that he depended on the Father.

**THOUGHT** - See what wonders our Lord can work, and ask Him to work similar miracles in the spiritual realm, and to raise to life those who are dead in trespasses and sins (Eph 2:1+). (Spurgeon)

**Bob Utley** on **so that** ([hina](#)) **they may believe** ([pisteuo](#)) - This states the purpose of Jesus' prayer and miracle. Jesus often performed miracles to encourage the faith of the disciples, and in this case it was to initiate faith in the Jewish friends of Lazarus from Jerusalem. Theologically Jesus again magnifies the Father's authority and priority in His works (cf. John 5:19,30; 8:28; 12:49; 14:10). This miracle reveals Jesus' intimate relationship with the Father.

John repeatedly notes the fact that Jesus had been **sent** by the Father - John 4:34; 5:23-24, 30, 36-38; 6:29, 38-39, 44, 57; 7:16, 18, 28-29, 33; 8:16, 18, 26, 29, 42; 9:4; 10:36; 12:44-45, 49; 13:3, 20; 14:24; 15:21; 16:5, 27; 17:3, 8, 18, 21, 23, 25; 20:21; see also Mt. 10:40; Mark 9:37; Luke 4:43; 10:16. This fact repeatedly affirmed Jesus' oneness with His Father and His claim of deity.

**R C H Lenski** - The very essence of prayer is to say to God what is in our hearts. As far as those are concerned who hear us pray,

the very object is that they may hear and may be impressed and affected by what they hear. Genuine prayers, uttered aloud, always have a corresponding effect. These prayers would draw also the hearts of others up to God, that they may recognize him and may also glorify him in their own hearts. (BORROW [The interpretation of St. John's gospel PAGE 816](#))

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**Sent** (649) **apostello** rom **apo** = from, away from + **stello** = to withdraw from, avoid) means to send off, to send forth, to send out. To send out; to commission as a representative, an ambassador, an envoy. The idea is to send forth from one place to another. But the meaning of **apostello** is more than just to send because it means "to send off on a commission to do something as one's personal representative, with credentials furnished" (Wuest) To send upon some business (Mt. 2:16; 10:5; 20:2). To send away in the sense of to dismiss (Mk 12:3, 4). To send or thrust forth as a sickle among corn (Mk 4:29). The rabbis used the term **apostello** to refer to one called and sent as an official representative of another (something like our English "Ambassador")

**Apostello in John's Gospel** - Jn. 1:6; Jn. 1:19; Jn. 1:24; Jn. 3:17; Jn. 3:28; Jn. 3:34; Jn. 4:38; Jn. 5:33; Jn. 5:36; Jn. 5:38; Jn. 6:29; Jn. 6:57; Jn. 7:29; Jn. 7:32; Jn. 8:42; Jn. 9:7; Jn. 10:36; Jn. 11:3; Jn. 11:42; Jn. 17:3; Jn. 17:8; Jn. 17:18; Jn. 17:21; Jn. 17:23; Jn. 17:25; Jn. 18:24; Jn. 20:21;

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### Chris Tiegreen - Public Prayers (from One Year At His Feet Devotional)

"I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me." John 11:42

"Large asking and large expectation on our part honor God." —A. L. Stone

IN WORD Too often our prayers are the private matter of our own hearts. That is, of course, where they begin. That is where God deals with us and speaks to us. But not all prayers are to be left there. The glory of God is a public matter, and nowhere on earth is God more glorified than when He is clearly at work. Miracles occur every day, but they often go unnoticed or are considered "coincidental" because no one heard the specific prayer of someone's heart that God answered in His mercy and power. When mercy and power come, the prayer needs to have already been on record. God is glorified as He responds to public requests. Jesus spells this out for us. As He approaches the tomb of Lazarus, He is grateful for the public forum. He could have done this miracle with a minimum of onlookers and in the privacy of the tomb. He could have lifted up a silent prayer, leaving people to wonder whose prayers were answered. Was Lazarus raised because of Mary and Martha's goodness? because of Lazarus's faithfulness? because of a huge medical misunderstanding? No, it was a divine response to Jesus' prayer. It was, in essence, yet another sign from heaven saying, "This is My Son." It was validation that God was at work in Jesus and that Jesus was doing God's work. How do we know? Because before Lazarus got up, Jesus prayed. Out loud.

IN DEED We're afraid to pray such risky prayers. That's understandable; we should only pray them after we've arrived at a position of faith and confidence in God's will and with sensitivity to His timing. But once we're there, we need to let God show His glory publicly. His demonstration of power is usually not a private, personal matter. It is more often a showcase for His mercy. When our prayers are witnessed by others and then God answers, He receives honor, and the faith of others is strengthened.

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**John 11:43 When He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth."**

BGT John 11:43 κα τα τα ε π ν φων μεγ λ κρα γασεν· Λ ζαρε, δε ρο ξω.

KJV John 11:43 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

NET John 11:43 When he had said this, he shouted in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!"

CSB John 11:43 After He said this, He shouted with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!"

ESV John 11:43 When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out."

NIV John 11:43 When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!"

NLT John 11:43 Then Jesus shouted, "Lazarus, come out!"

NRS John 11:43 When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!"

NJB John 11:43 When he had said this, he cried in a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out!'

NAB John 11:43 And when he had said this, he cried out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!"

YLT John 11:43 And these things saying, with a loud voice he cried out, 'Lazarus, come forth;'

MIT John 11:43 After saying this, he shouted with full voice, "Lazarus, come out!"

- **Lazarus:** 1Ki 17:21,22 2Ki 4:33-36 Mk 4:41 Lu 7:14,15 Ac 3:6,12 9:34,40
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## LAZARUS COME FORTH!

**When He had said these things, He cried out** ([kraugazo](#) - cry loudly) **with a loud** (megas) **voice** - **Cried out** ([kraugazo](#)) describes a loud cry and the addition of "with a loud voice" emphasizes the "divine decibel level" so to speak! It is notable that when Jesus put forth this same power in calling back to life Jairus' daughter Luke recording "He, however, took her by the hand and called, saying, "Child, arise!" (Lk 8:54+) Mark records "Taking the child by the hand, He \*said to her, [Talitha kum!](#)" (which translated means, "Little girl, I say to you, get up!")." (Mk 5:41+) Almost certainly the loud voice was for the sake of the Jews who witnessed this event that they might clearly associate Jesus' calling forth with Lazarus' coming forth. There could be no argument of the cause-effect relationship. Recall that the raising of Jairus' daughter was done in the presence of only "Peter and John and James, and the girl's father and mother." (Lk 8:51+) This miracle was public and Jesus knew the effect would be to catalyze the desire of the Jewish leaders to put Him to death. Admittedly, Jesus' raising of the widow's son in Lk 7:12-17+ was more public and the report went throughout Judea, but there is no record of the Jewish leaders reacting to this miracle. (Related Resource - [How many people were raised from the dead in the Bible?](#))

[A T Robertson](#) - The loud voice was not for the benefit of Lazarus, but for the sake of the crowd standing around that they might see that Lazarus came forth simultaneously with the command of Jesus.

**Lazarus, come forth** (literally "Here! Outside!" or "Come here out") - **Forth** (exo) is outside (Lazarus was inside a tomb). Jesus could have whispered but He shouted, surely so that all would hear His clear command to a dead man! There would be no excuses such as "we could not understand what He said." And imagine Lazarus, dead but conscious of his state and presumably the first words he hears is a command from Jesus to "**Come forth!**" As with most of the commands believers receive in the New Testament, God's Spirit enables obedience to the commands just as He did in this case (cf Jn 6:63+ "It is the Spirit Who gives life; the flesh profits nothing"). One wag said if Jesus had not used his name Lazarus, but just gave the command, all the dead would have come forth!

**THOUGHT** - Beloved, don't miss the vital point of why this man came forth alive from the dead! Why did Lazarus arise? **THE WORD OF JESUS!** The powerful words of the omnipotent Jesus brought Lazarus forth. This was the same voice that spoke all creation into existence. "By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by **the word of God**, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible." (Hebrews 11:3+, see Jn 1:3+, Heb 1:2+, Col 1:16+). In Christ Alone is Life ("THE LIFE" - Jn 11:25+) Lazarus was resurrected by a word from Christ! Recall Jesus' words in John 10:27+ "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me." Why am I emphasizing Jesus' Word as the Source of life? Because when we speak the good news to a person who is still an "entombed Lazarus," we should include the words of Jesus such as John 11:25, John 14:6+ or similar declarations by our Lord. I personally have not done this in the past but from now on (August 10, 2024) I will be sure to add some life giving words from Jesus. If that person is an elect sheep and they will hear His voice, and they may come forth from the dead at that time or perhaps later, as the Spirit gives them life (Jn 6:63+ and again note the power of His Words = "the **words that I have spoken** to you are spirit and are life."). As [Adrian Rogers](#) affirms "You see, I can call forth the dead because I have the **words of Jesus Christ**. Jesus has given me words, and **Jesus has given you words to say to those in the stench of death and corruption, "Come forth."** And, that's the reason the Apostle Paul says in Philippians chapter 2 and verse 16 that you and I are "holding forth the word of"—what?—"life." (Philippians 2:16+) It's **the Word of life**.

[Adrian Rogers](#) I've often wondered, did Lazarus have a choice? Boy, we could get in a big debate about that. And, if you know the answer, you tell me later, but don't tell me now. I don't think you know. But anyway, did Lazarus have a choice? "Lazarus, come forth." (John 11:43) I don't know, but I know that you have a choice: you can hear the voice of the Son of God and say "no" if you want. You can refuse. You can stay in the stench and the rotteness and the grave of death if you want. But, how do you raise the dead? Not by example, not by encouragement, not by environment, not by education, but through the Word of Christ. "The words that I speak unto you, they are [truth], and they are life." (John 6:63) Number one: You must have life through Christ or from Christ.

[A T Robertson](#) - on **come forth** - "Hither out." No verb, only the two adverbs, deuro here alone in John. Lazarus heard and obeyed the summons.



**THOUGHT** - What a great picture of regeneration, the new birth! Like Lazarus every man and woman is born dead in Adam (Ro 5:12+), totally, completely dead spiritually, dead in trespasses and sins (Eph 2:1+) and can do absolutely nothing to obtain spiritual life. We all must hear and respond to "\_\_\_\_\_, **come forth!**" Put your (my) name in that blank! Has Jesus commanded you to "**Come forth?**" Then do not procrastinate, but hear and heed His voice calling you, for the door of opportunity will not always be open and we do not know the day it will be irrevocably slammed shut!

**ANOTHER THOUGHT** - This event suggests another great resurrection which could occur any day now, the [Rapture](#) of Christ's Bride! "The Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and **the dead in Christ will rise first**" (1Th 4:16+) Are you ready for the rapture beloved? Are you abiding daily in your Bridegroom "so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming" (1Jn 2:28+)? (cf 1Co 15:51, 52+) (**Related** - Chart on [Order of Resurrection; The two Resurrections - "First" and "Second" - charted out](#) - see youtube video I did on [The Rapture - Is It Real or Fantasy? What is the Timing - Pre-, Mid- or Post-Tribulation?](#))

[Steven Cole](#) adds "C. H. Spurgeon applied this verse by challenging his congregation to believe God for the conversion of sinners who were as corrupt in their morals as Lazarus was in his body. We sometimes see people who are debauched sinners and think, "There's no way that that person could ever get saved." If salvation comes from human will power, that's true. But if salvation is of the Lord, then He is mighty to save the chief of sinners."

[The Apologetics Study Bible Holman Christian Standard Bible](#) - It is often argued that the other Gospels could scarcely have left out this greatest of all Jesus' miracles if it really happened. But they do record two other resurrections Jesus performed (Mk 5:21–42; Lk 7:11–17), and by choosing to omit all but Jesus' final journey to Jerusalem, they have no place in their outline for other events in and around the holy city.

[David Guzik's](#) - Jesus speaks to a dead body as if Lazarus lived, because He is God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did (Romans 4:17).. This is how Jesus can call forth the person dead and defeated in sin and deception to a new life in Him. He is still calling the dead forth from their tombs today!

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#### **Robert Morgan - BORROW [From this Verse](#) - Recalled from Death**

"Prayer," said Martin Luther, "is a climbing up of the heart into God. None can believe how powerful prayer is, and what it is able to effect, but those who have learned it by experience."

Luther spoke from his own experience, for he received many interesting answers to prayer. One of them occurred when his dearest friend and associate, Philip Melancthon, fell ill. According to an ancient biography, Luther arrived to find Philip about to "give up the ghost. His eyes were set; his consciousness was almost gone; his speech had failed, and also his hearing; his face had fallen; he knew no one, and had ceased to take either solids or liquids."

Luther, beside himself with grief, exclaimed, "Blessed Lord, how has the devil spoiled me of this instrument!" He turned toward the window and began praying aloud earnestly. Almost instantly Philip began to move, and he was soon completely restored. Melancthon later said, "I should have been a dead man had I not been recalled from death itself by the coming of Luther."

A similar event in 1541 involved Friedrich Myconius, another of Luther's friends, who was found in the last stages of tuberculosis and was almost speechless. Luther was unable to visit Myconius' bedside, so he wrote a prayer and sent it to him by courier, saying: May God not let me hear so long as I live that you are dead, but cause you to survive me. I pray this earnestly, and will have it granted. Amen.

Myconius later said, "I was so horrified when I read what the good man had written, that it seemed to me as though I had heard Christ say, 'Lazarus come forth!' "

And it so happened as Luther prayed. Myconius recovered and was kept from the grave until a short time after Luther's death in 1546.

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#### **Jon Courson - John 11:43–45 (from A Day's Journey)**

'Where are You, Lord?' we cry. 'I sent a message to You in prayer. I've cried out to You in sincerity. But You're not working. You're not coming. Where are You?' This story teaches you and me that delays are determined by the Lord for His glory.

'Lord, come and heal our brother,' cry Mary and Martha.

'I'm going to do something a whole lot more impacting than that,' answers Jesus. 'I'm going to resurrect him. But that means he has to die first.'

I have found that the longer the Lord waits to do His work in my life, oftentimes the greater blessing it is for His glory and my good. You more mature believers have sung, 'Lord, use my life.' But what if that means tragedy? What if it means setback, bankruptcy, cancer, pain, or death? What if God can get the maximum amount of glory when a world who doesn't believe watches you go through terrible times and sees His strength carry you through? Samson's greatest victory did not take place until he stood as a blind man in the temple of Dagon and brought the roof down upon himself and the Philistines (Judges 16:30).

'Use my life, Lord,' I pray. 'I'm ready for the Jon Courson Evangelistic Association, or the 'Jon Courson's Greatest Hits' album.'

But the Lord says, 'OK. I'll use you. I'll show My goodness and reality as you go through horrendous difficulty—for when the roof caves in and the house comes down,

The demons will flee;  
The Philistines will fall;  
And I will be glorified.'

If you really want your life to be used, precious people, let the Lord do what He knows will bring Him the greatest glory. Be one who says, 'To God be the glory—whatever that may mean in my life.'

**John 11:44 The man who had died came forth, bound hand and foot with wrappings, and his face was wrapped around with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."**

BGT John 11:44 ξ λθεν τεθνηκς δεδεμνος τος πδας κα τς χειρας κειραις κα ψις ατο σουδαρ περιεδ δετο. λγει ατο ς ησο ς λσατε α τ ν κα φετε α τ ν π γειν.

KJV John 11:44 And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

NET John 11:44 The one who had died came out, his feet and hands tied up with strips of cloth, and a cloth wrapped around his face. Jesus said to them, "Unwrap him and let him go."

CSB John 11:44 The dead man came out bound hand and foot with linen strips and with his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him and let him go."

ESV John 11:44 The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

NIV John 11:44 The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go."

NLT John 11:44 And the dead man came out, his hands and feet bound in graveclothes, his face wrapped in a headcloth. Jesus told them, "Unwrap him and let him go!"

NRS John 11:44 The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

NJB John 11:44 The dead man came out, his feet and hands bound with strips of material, and a cloth over his face. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, let him go free.'

NAB John 11:44 The dead man came out, tied hand and foot with burial bands, and his face was wrapped in a cloth. So Jesus said to them, "Untie him and let him go."

YLT John 11:44 and he who died came forth, being bound feet and hands with grave-clothes, and his visage with a napkin was bound about; Jesus saith to them, 'Loose him, and suffer to go.'

MIT John 11:44 The dead exited, bound feet and hands by linen windings, his face covered by a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him and let him go free."

- **he that:** Jn 11:25,26 5:21,25 10:30 Ge 1:3 1Sa 2:6 Ps 33:9 Eze 37:3-10 Ho 13:14 Ac 20:9-12 Php 3:21 Rev 1:18
- **bound:** Jn 20:5-7
- **Loose:** Jn 11:39 Mk 5:43 Lu 7:15

### Related Passages:

John 20:5-7+ and stooping and looking in, he \*saw the linen wrappings lying there; but he did not go in. 6 And so Simon Peter also \*came, following him, and entered the tomb; and he \*saw the linen wrappings lying there, 7 and the face-cloth ([soudarion](#)) which had been on His head, not lying with the linen wrappings, but rolled up in a place by itself.

## LAZARUS LIVES AGAIN

**The man who had died** ([thnesko](#)) **came forth** ([exerchomai](#)), (Literally, "Came out the dead man") - This is an understatement to say the least - a man who **had died came forth**. Did he hop out, run, jump, crawl, etc? If the legs were bound separately he could have ambulated. John simply does not say. Let's ask Lazarus in heaven!

**Bound** ([deo](#) - perfect) **hand and foot with wrappings** ([keiria](#) - graveclothes), **and his face was wrapped around with a cloth** ([soudarion](#)) (YLT = "his visage with a napkin was bound") - Although Lazarus is **bound** he is able to obey the command and still able to come **forth!** And even with a face cloth which would surely have obscured Lazarus' vision. What a sight this must have been to the witnesses!

**Jesus** ([lesous](#)) **said to them, "Unbind** ([luo](#)) **him, and let** ([aphiemi](#)) **him go** ([aphiemi](#)) - Then Jesus follows with two commands in the [aorist imperative](#) (**unbind...let**) calling for onlookers to participate in the miracle! Their participation in the miracle would make them first hand witnesses to spread the news of this miracle (e.g., "Yes, I unwrapped Lazarus' hands, and he was clearly alive.") John records no words from Lazarus like "Hallelujah!"

In Mk 5:21–24, 35–43 Jesus resuscitated the daughter of Jairus. The parents 'were astonished with a great astonishment', and 'he ... commanded that something should be given her to eat'. (Mk 5:43+) He knows all the needs of those raised from the dead—**food** in Mk 5:43, **freedom** in John 11:44, and **fellowship** in Luke 7:15+. For us today in our newness of life He has made the same provisions.

- [See this relatively accurate youtube video of Jesus calling Lazarus out of the tomb](#)
- [See scene from The Chosen of Jesus Calling Lazarus](#)

**Leon Morris** - John concludes his account of the miracle with Jesus' command to loose Lazarus and let him go. We are reminded of Synoptic incidents that show a similar thoughtfulness, as when he commanded that something to eat be given to the daughter of Jairus (Mark 5:43). Jesus was never so carried away by the wonder of his miracles that he forgot the needs of the person. (BORROW [The Gospel according to John PAGE 562](#)).

**Bob Utley** - Bodies were prepared for burial by washing with water, then wrapping with strips of linen cloth interspersed with spices that helped with the odor. Corpses had to be buried within twenty-four hours because the Jews did not embalm their dead. See [SPECIAL TOPIC: BURIAL PRACTICES](#)

**D A Carson** - Many commentators cite Basil (c. AD 330–379), who, supposing that the graveclothes bound Lazarus so tightly he could not possibly, by himself, emerge from the tomb, speaks of 'a miracle within a miracle'. John does not think in such terms, and in any case the **grave clothes** were not so restrictive. The corpse was customarily laid on a sheet of linen, wide enough to envelop the body completely and more than twice the length of the corpse. The body was so placed on the sheet that the feet were at one end, and then the sheet was drawn over the head and back down to the feet. The feet were bound at the ankles, and the arms were tied to the body with linen strips. The face (Greek *opsis*, which normally means 'appearance' as in Jn 7:24, but here means 'face', as often in the papyri cf. MM, p. 471) was bound with another cloth ([soudarion](#), a loan-word from the Latin sudarium, 'sweat-cloth', often worn in life around the neck). Jesus' body was apparently prepared for burial in the same way (cf. Jn 19:40; 20:5, 7). A person so bound could hop and shuffle, but scarcely walk. Therefore when Jesus commanded Lazarus to come forth, and the dead man came out, Jesus promptly gave the order, **Take off the grave clothes and let him go**. (BORROW [The Gospel according to John - PAGE 418](#))

Lazarus did not strictly speaking experience a resurrection like Jesus did, for Lazarus came back in the same body he died in and

will die again in, while Jesus came back in an immutable supernatural resurrection body.

It is interesting to note that Lazarus' returning to life at the word of Jesus is a foreshadowing of Jesus' prediction in Jn 5:28 "Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice." Lazarus in the tomb "heard His voice."

**THOUGHT** - We hear about so-called "Near Death Experiences," and yet here in John 11 we have something far more than a "Near Death Experience" for death was not just "near!" (His was an "After Death Experience!") It is worth noting that Lazarus spoke nothing of heavenly wonders even though he clearly had passed from life to death. And he did not write a book or make a documentary! Mark Hitchcock addresses so-called "Near Death Experiences" [below](#). As he lay dying, D. L. Moody cried out "Earth is receding. Heaven is approaching. This is my crowning day."

While this was not His first resurrection miracle (two others = Jairus' daughter - Mt 9:18-26; Mk 5:42, 43; Lk 8:40-56, widow's son - Lk 7:11-15), but it was certainly the [proverbial last straw](#) and convinced the religious leaders they had to kill Him.

**Spurgeon** - Lazarus had been publicly raised from the dead. A great number of persons saw the miracle, and there was never any question about its having been wrought.

I like [David Guzik's](#) description of this great event writing that "Jesus fought death at Lazarus' tomb, and plundered the grave, serving it notice that shortly He would completely conquer it. This was "coming attraction" for what would happen at the empty tomb of Jesus."

[Steven Cole](#) - This miracle validates Jesus' astounding claims in John 5:21+, "For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes." He added (Jn 5:28-29+), "Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, and will come forth; ..." Because Jesus raised Lazarus, we can know that He will make good on His promise to raise all the dead someday, either for eternal life or for judgment. So this miracle should result in our seeing the fact that Jesus is the Author and Giver of both physical and eternal life and that He has all power over death (Rev 1:18+).

**Herschel Hobbs** has an interesting question and comment - Was the raising of Lazarus a true resurrection? Hardly so, since Jesus was the firstfruits from the dead (1 Cor. 15:20+). Resurrection means that one is raised from the dead to die no more. This was not the case with Lazarus, the widow's son at Nain, or the daughter of Jairus. They were restored to life, but they would die again physically. Thus their experiences were resuscitation — they were truly dead and then were made alive, but they were still subject to physical death. Nevertheless, Jesus' acts in raising them were evidence of His power over death and of His power to bring about the resurrection at the last day.

**TSK** note on **bound**: "Swathed about with rollers" or bandages, [keiria] long strips of linen, a few inches in breadth, brought round the [sindon] or sheet of linen in which the corpse was involved, and by which the [aromata,] or spices, were kept in contact with the flesh. In reply to sceptical objections, it is sufficient to observe, that he who could raise Lazarus from the dead, could, with a much less exertion of power, have so loosened or removed the bandages of his feet and legs as to have rendered it practicable for him to come forth. Tittman well observes, that Lazarus was restored not only to life but also to health, as appears from the alacrity of his motion; and this would constitute a new miracle.

*"Put off" the grave clothes and  
"put on" the "grace clothes" of the new life.*

**Warren Wiersbe** - Lazarus was bound hand and foot and so could not free himself. The believer is not to be bound by the grave clothes of the old life, but should walk in the freedom of the new life. Read carefully Col. 3:1–17 to learn how the Christian is to "**put off**" the **grave clothes** and "**put on**" the "**grace clothes**" of the new life. It is a poor testimony for a Christian to carry with him the things of the old life. (BORROW [Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the New Testament](#) page 240). (**ED COMMENT**: Yes, put off and put on, but don't get legalistic about this and attempt it relying solely on your own power to accomplish it for you will soon experience a "power failure." You must rely on the provision of supernatural power. But it is not just "let go, let God," but more like "Let God, let's go!" See "[Paradoxical Principle of 100% Dependent and 100% Responsible](#)")

**THOUGHT** - Which "wardrobe" are you wearing today, grave clothes or grace clothes?

***Many...have come to Calvary for pardon,  
but they've never been to Pentecost for power.  
-- Adrian Rogers***

[Adrian Rogers \(p 637\)](#) - (LAZARUS) has life, but he doesn't have liberty. And, you see, my dear friend, what I want you to learn tonight is Jesus said, "[I've] come that [you] might have life, and...have it"—what?—"abundantly," (John 10:10) see. Our Lord doesn't want you just to have life; our Lord wants you to have abundant life. He doesn't want you to be wrapped in the grave clothes of that old life. Now, the problem with many of our folks is they've been saved, but they don't have liberty. I mean, they have come to Calvary for pardon, but they've never been to Pentecost for power. They've just kind of bogged down between Calvary and Pentecost..... James talks about "*the superfluity of naughtiness.*" (James 1:21KJV+)....What is the *superfluity of naughtiness*? Well, the word *superfluity* means "that which remains," "that which is left over"—what we would call "hangover sins" when you get saved. You can be saved; you can have life, but you still have the grave clothes—the grave clothes of that old language. You know, some people, when they get saved, they lose about half their vocabulary, don't they? They've got another half they still need to lose. Old language, old lust, old laziness, old learning, old loves—they have to be taken away; they have to be stripped away. And friend, a lot of us are saved, but we have the grave clothes of the old life that keep us from having abundant life. Now, here's the news: number one, you must have **life** in Christ; number two, you must have **liberty** from Christ. And, Jesus says, "Loose him, and let him go." (John 11:44) By now, my dear friend, I want to tell you this: the same Jesus that gives us life, by a corresponding miracle, gives us liberty. **There are three miracles: the miracle of the new birth, the miracle of the Christian life, and the miracle of our resurrection.** Our salvation begins with a miracle, continues with a miracle, commences with a miracle. I mean, it's a miracle all the way. He doesn't just save us and then just turn us loose. My dear friend, He breaks the power of cancelled sin. He sets the prisoner free. Jesus Christ did not call you from the grave to leave you bound and gagged and defeated. Look in John 8:32+. All of this is bound together. Look, if you will. Jesus said, "[You] shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32+) The same word that gives life gives liberty. Look, if you will, in verse 36: "If the Son therefore shall make you free, [you] shall be free indeed." (John 8:36+) Now, you say, "Adrian, do you have power to raise the dead?" I do—I do. His Word gives life. I hold forth the Word of life. I'm talking to those who are dead in trespasses and sin. "Do you have power to unwrap the saints?" I do. Jesus said to those who were standing by, "Loose him, and let him go." (John 11:44) **That's the job of the Church—not only to get them baptized but to get them unwrapped.....**You see, there's liberty in Christ—there's liberty in Christ. I thank God for those who helped unwrap me because I had a lot wrapped around me, friend. I still think I've got a few layers of gauze. Maybe you do, too.

**THOUGHT** - Beloved, what needs to be unwrapped from your life in Christ so that you might be enabled by the Spirit to walk in newness of life, in liberty? Do you still have a few "layers of gauze" that need to be lain aside (Eph 4:22). I do!

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#### **Brian Bell - Lessons:**

- When delay occurs, God has a better time & a better way.
- When death occurs, God has a better plan & a better purpose.
- It revealed Jesus is who He said He was - the Resurrection & the life! But it revealed something else.

The Tears of God! Now which do you say is more incredible? A man who raises the dead...or a God who weeps? What do you find more amazing? The power of Jesus or the emotions of Jesus?

End: God warned Adam that disobedience would bring death, physical death (the separation of the soul from the body) and spiritual death (the separation of the soul from God). Revelation 20:14 calls hell the second death, that is eternal death. What sinners dead to God's ways need is not: education, medicine, morality, or religion; they need new life in Jesus Christ. When dead sinners hear the voice of the Son of God (the Word) and believe, they are given eternal life. To reject that Word is to be dead forever. Keep in mind that salvation is not a set of rules; it is life. This life is a Person - JESUS CHRIST!

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**Died** (2348)(**thnesko**) is only in the perfect tense in the NT and usually refers to literal physical death. 1Ti 5:6+ is figurative describing a widow who continually (present tense) gives herself to wanton pleasure, this rotten fruit being a sure marker of one who is physically alive but spiritually dead (perfect tense = in such a state).

**Thnesko - 9x/9v - dead(7), died(2).** Matt. 2:20; Mk. 15:44; Lk. 7:12; Lk. 8:49; Jn. 11:44; Jn. 19:33; Acts 14:19; Acts 25:19; 1 Tim. 5:6

**Septuagint** - Gen. 50:15; Exod. 4:19; Exod. 12:30; Exod. 14:30; Exod. 21:35; Lev. 11:31; Lev. 11:32; Num. 16:48; Num. 16:49; Num. 19:11; Num. 19:13; Num. 19:18; Num. 25:9; Num. 33:4; Deut. 25:5; Deut. 26:14; Jdg. 3:25; Jdg. 16:30; Ruth 1:8; Ruth 2:20; Ruth 4:5; Ruth 4:10; 1 Sam. 4:17; 1 Sam. 4:19; 1 Sam. 17:51; 1 Sam. 24:14; 1 Sam. 31:5; 1 Sam. 31:7; 2 Sam. 1:5; 2 Sam. 1:19; 2 Sam. 2:7; 2 Sam. 4:1; 2 Sam. 4:10; 2 Sam. 9:8; 2 Sam. 12:18; 2 Sam. 12:19; 2 Sam. 12:23; 2 Sam. 14:2; 2 Sam. 16:9; 1 Ki. 3:20; 1 Ki. 3:21; 1 Ki. 3:22; 1 Ki. 3:23; 1 Ki. 11:21; 1 Ki. 12:24; 1 Ki. 16:4; 1 Ki. 21:14; 1 Ki. 21:15; 1 Ki. 21:16; 1 Ki. 21:24; 1 Ki.

22:37; 2 Ki. 4:32; 2 Ki. 8:5; 2 Ki. 8:13; 2 Chr. 22:10; Job 39:30; Prov. 13:14; Eccl. 4:2; Isa. 14:19; Jer. 16:7; Jer. 22:10

**Bound** (bind, imprison, tie)([1210](#)) **deo** means literally to bind, tie, fasten (Mt 12:29, Mt 13:30, Mt 21:2, 22:13, of Jesus = Mt 27:2, of demon possessed man - Mk 5:3, of Jesus' body "**bound** it in linen wrappings" = 19:40, Paul to bring Christians "**bound** to Jerusalem" = Acts 9:2, [14+](#)), fasten with chains, to throw into chains (of John the Baptist - Mt 14:3, Barabbas "**imprisoned**" = Mk 15:7, Acts 24:27, Co 4:3). A woman who was bent together, had been "bound" by Satan through the work of a demon, Luke 13:16 (commentary). To be obliged to do something, as if one were bound with a physical restraint (Acts 20:22 - commentary "bound in spirit" = compelled by his convictions, under the constraining power of the Spirit of God, to go to Jerusalem) **Binding and loosing** - Mt 16:19, ("**bind** and loose") Mt 18:18 ("whatever you bind on earth shall have been **bound** in heaven") (See What does the Bible mean by binding and loosing?) "the married woman is **bound** by law to her husband while he is living" = Ro 7:2+ (be under the authority of), see also 1 Cor 7:39; 1 Cor 7:27. "The word of God is not **imprisoned**" 2 Ti 2:9+ (its ministry, course and efficacy were not hindered by the bonds and imprisonment suffered by Paul). Of angels (demons) who "are bound at the great river Euphrates." (Rev 9:14+). Of Satan "bound...for 1000 years." (Rev 20:2+)

**Deo - 40v - bind(7), binding(1), binds(2), bound(23), imprisoned(4), prisoners(1), put...in chains(1), tied(4).** Matt. 12:29; Matt. 13:30; Matt. 14:3; Matt. 16:19; Matt. 18:18; Matt. 21:2; Matt. 22:13; Matt. 27:2; Mk. 3:27; Mk. 5:3; Mk. 5:4; Mk. 6:17; Mk. 11:2; Mk. 11:4; Mk. 15:1; Mk. 15:7; Lk. 13:16; Lk. 19:30; Jn. 11:44; Jn. 18:12; Jn. 18:24; Jn. 19:40; Acts 9:2; Acts 9:14; Acts 9:21; Acts 12:6; Acts 20:22; Acts 21:11; Acts 21:13; Acts 21:33; Acts 22:5; Acts 22:29; Acts 24:27; Rom. 7:2; 1 Co. 7:27; 1 Co. 7:39; Col. 4:3; 2 Tim. 2:9; Rev. 9:14; Rev. 20:2

**Wrappings** ([2750](#)) **keiria** was a band or bandage for swathing infants or dead bodies and only used in Jn 11:44 of wrapping Lazarus' corpse.

**Gilbrant** writes that "From the days of Aristophanes (ca. Fifth– Fourth Century B.C.) this term can be traced as speaking of a bandage, but especially of the cloth used to wrap a corpse before burial. In the Septuagint the writer used it in the sense of the perfumed bedclothes used by a prostitute to allure her customers (Proverbs 7:16). The Gospel of John uses the term to refer to the grave clothes that still encircled Lazarus' body after Jesus miraculously raised him from death (John 11:44). The Lord commanded the onlookers to remove these bandages." ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**Vine** - denotes, firstly, "a band" either for a bed girth, or bed sheets themselves (Sept. of Prov. 7:16.); then, "the swathings wrapped round a corpse;" it is used in the plural in John 11:44. ([Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament and New Testament Words](#))

**Cloth** (napkin)([4676](#)) **soudarion** is from a Latin loan word sudarium from **sudor** (sweat) transliterated into Greek soudarion which is a sweatcloth handkerchief or napkin. (Luke 19:20; Acts 19:12). A small piece of cloth used as a towel, napkin, or face cloth similar to our 'handkerchief'. In Acts 19:12 the sweatcloths ("handkerchiefs," KJV, NIV, NASB) "The head cloth probably was about one yard square" (Keener). Paul apparently tied around his head while making tents were taken to heal the sick (Bruce, New International Commentary on the New Testament, Acts, p.384). In John 11:44 and Jn 20:7 the "cloths" were used, according to Jewish custom, to cover the faces of the corpses of Lazarus and Jesus (cf the "[Shroud of Turin](#)"). **Soudarion** is found in papyrus marriage contracts as part of the dowry. Soudarion is used only 4 times in the NT - [Lk. 19:20](#); [Jn. 11:44](#); [20:7](#); [Acts 19:12](#) and there are no uses in the Septuagint.

**Soudarion - 4x - cloth(1), face-cloth(1), handkerchief(1), handkerchiefs(1).** - Lk. 19:20; Jn. 11:44; Jn. 20:7; Acts 19:12

**Unbind** (loose, destroy, untie, break) ([3089](#)) **luo** means to loose, release, dissolve. This word means to set free what is bound and possibly here pictures the world being set free from the corruption that exists because of sin (Ro 8:21+). The elements shall be loosened and broken up into their component parts, like a building being torn down. The physical structure of the present world will disintegrate. This picture is the very opposite of the consistency claimed by mockers in (2Pe 3:5+).

**Friberg** - (1) literally, as freeing someone or something tied or bound loose, untie, set free, release (Mk 1.7; AC 22.30), opposite bind; figuratively, as freeing from a legal obligation free, release (1Co 7.27); as freeing from spiritual bondage set free ( Rev 1.5); (2) literally, as breaking something up into its component parts destroy, tear down, break up (2Pe 3.10); as breaking up a crowd dismiss, disperse (Acts 13.43); figuratively, as bringing something to an end do away with, undo (1Jn 3.8); (3) of law, commandments, scriptures set aside, annul, invalidate (Jn 7.23) (BORROW [Analytical lexicon of the Greek New Testament PAGE 250](#))

**Luo - 39v - annuls(1), break(1), breaking(1), broke down(1), broken(4), destroy(2), destroyed(3), loose(2), loosed(2), putting an end to(1), release(1), released(7), removed(1), take off(1), unbind(1), untie(8), untied(1),**

untying(4). Matt. 5:19; Matt. 16:19; Matt. 18:18; Matt. 21:2; Mk. 1:7; Mk. 7:35; Mk. 11:2; Mk. 11:4; Mk. 11:5; Lk. 3:16; Lk. 13:15; Lk. 13:16; Lk. 19:30; Lk. 19:31; Lk. 19:33; Jn. 1:27; Jn. 2:19; Jn. 5:18; Jn. 7:23; Jn. 10:35; Jn. 11:44; Acts 2:24; Acts 7:33; Acts 13:25; Acts 13:43; Acts 22:30; Acts 27:41; 1 Co. 7:27; Eph. 2:14; 2 Pet. 3:10; 2 Pet. 3:11; 2 Pet. 3:12; 1 Jn. 3:8; Rev. 1:5; Rev. 5:2; Rev. 9:14; Rev. 9:15; Rev. 20:3; Rev. 20:7

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**Norman Geisler - JOHN 11:44—How could Lazarus come forth from the tomb if he was bound hand and foot? ([When Critics Ask](#))**

**PROBLEM:** This verse states what seems impossible, namely, when Jesus raised Lazarus “he who had died came out bound hand and foot.”

**SOLUTION:** It is not impossible. The Jewish corpses were not wound so tight (like an Egyptian mummy) that it precluded all motion. When life came back into Lazarus body he was no doubt jolted into action. He could have slid from his slab, stood upright on the floor, and if necessary, even jumped to the cave opening. Nothing more than this is implied in the term “came forth.” Having done what only He could do (namely, raise Lazarus from the dead), Jesus expected Lazarus and others to do what they could do. So Jesus asked them to unloose Lazarus’ cords.

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**Mark Hitchcock - What About Near-Death Experiences? ([BORROW 101 answers to the most asked questions about the end times](#))**

Some of the bestselling books in the last decade are about near-death experiences (NDEs). Books like *Embraced by the Light* and *Saved by the Light* have captured the attention of millions who want to peer behind death’s curtain to get a sneak preview of the afterlife.

Two points about NDEs are important to understand.

**First, they are called "near-death" experiences, not "death" or "afterlife" experiences.** The fact that the person came back from whatever state they were in seems to be proof that they didn't really die. Therefore, we shouldn't put any stock in what their stories purport to tell us about the afterlife. After all, these people were only near death, not dead. It's as ridiculous as a woman telling another woman about her "near-pregnancy" experience. You're either pregnant or you're not. Likewise, you're either dead or you're not.

As one writer in *Christianity Today* said, near-death experiences "tell us no more about death than someone who has been near Denver but never within city limits can tell us about that town. Both NDEs (near-Denver and near-death experiences) are bereft of certitude.... In both cases, more reliable maps are available."

The only people who ever really came back from the dead are the few individuals in Scripture that the Lord or one of His servants raised. And none of them wrote a book about their experience or hit the talk show circuit. Even the apostle Paul, who was caught up to heaven on one occasion, did not reveal the things he saw there (2 Corinthians 12:1-5).

**Second, the only reliable source of information about the afterlife is the Bible.** Much of the idle speculation that is related from NDEs sounds like it has more in common with the occult and the New Age movement than the Bible. We should turn to God's Word to discover what we want to know about the afterlife, and we should be satisfied with what God has chosen to reveal to us about heaven and hell.

For anyone who wants to know more about the afterlife, I would suggest reading the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31) and the description of heaven in Revelation 21-22

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**Spurgeon - [Unbinding Lazarus](#) John 11:43-44**

Let us consider what are these bands which often bind newly regenerated sinners. Some of them are blindfolded by the napkin about their head; they are very ignorant, sadly devoid of spiritual perception, and moreover the eye of faith is darkened. Yet the eye is there, and Christ has opened it; and it is the business of the servant of God to remove the napkin which bandages it, by teaching the truth, explaining it, and clearing up difficulties. This is a simple thing to do, but exceedingly necessary. Now that they have life we shall teach them to purpose. Besides that, they are bound hand and foot, so that they are compelled to inaction; we can show them how to work for Jesus. Sometimes these bands are those of sorrow; they are in an awful terror about the past; we have to unbind them by showing that the past is blotted out. They are wrapped about by many a yard of doubt, mistrust, anguish, and remorse. 'Loose them, and let them go.' Another hindrance is the band of fear. 'Oh,' says the poor soul, 'I am such a sinner that God must punish me for my sin.' Tell him the grand doctrine of substitution. Unwrap this by the assurance that Jesus took our sin, and that 'with his stripes we are healed.' It is wonderful what liberty comes by that precious truth when it is well understood. The penitent soul fears

that Jesus will refuse its prayer; assure it that he 'will in no wise cast out' any that come to him. Let fear be taken from the soul by the promises of Scripture, by our testimony to their truth, and by the Spirit bearing witness to the doctrine which we endeavour to impart.

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## **Alive Again**

Today's Bible Reading: John 11:1–14, 40–44

The dead man came out. -John 11:44

Henry Ossawa Tanner burst onto the art scene in 1896 with his masterpiece *The Resurrection of Lazarus*. The painting earned a medal at the Paris Salon, making Tanner a phenomenon. The most stunning feature of *Lazarus* is the many evocative expressions painted on the faces of those gathered round Jesus and Lazarus. Tanner explained his desire to illuminate the biblical narrative while also adding the human touch "which makes the whole world kin."

Tanner knew that whatever our differences, we're all bound together by the inevitability of death. And we all together find our hope in Jesus who is victorious over death. In John, it was "a man named Lazarus [who] was sick," but the truth is we're all sick (11:1). We're all, one way or another, doomed to the grave. Though Mary and Martha asked for Christ's help, Lazarus died before Jesus arrived. Surely, then, this was the end of the story. Everyone knew death owned the final word.

Jesus disagreed. Standing before the dead man's tomb and the astonished crowd, He thundered, "Lazarus, come out!" (v. 43). And Lazarus walked out of his crypt.

All of us know the weight and fear of death. The death of our bodies and our relationships and our hopes. Jesus has the final word. His transforming ways continue to bring light and life to our world. See the link below to view the "In Pursuit of Jesus" video of how God brings transforming life through Christ. —Winn Collier

How have you experienced the bitter effects of death? Where do you sense God speaking life into you and your experience?

Jesus, there's death everywhere. Would You bring me Your life? Would You speak the final word?

[go.odb.org/thedivine](http://go.odb.org/thedivine)

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## **QUESTION - [What happened to Lazarus after Jesus raised him from the dead?](#)**

**ANSWER** - John 11:1–44 gives the account of a man named [Lazarus](#) being raised from the dead. Lazarus was a friend of Jesus, along with his sisters, Mary and Martha. He had grown sick, and his sisters sent for Jesus to come to Bethany. Jesus delayed His arrival, and Lazarus died. Jesus did not arrive in Bethany until four days after Lazarus passed away.

Martha was confused and hurt that Jesus had allowed His friend Lazarus to die. But He told her, "Your brother will rise again" (John 11:23). Martha assumed Jesus was referring to the final resurrection of the dead, but He was telling her of something that was going to happen momentarily.

When Jesus went to the place of Lazarus' tomb, He had men roll away the stone from the opening. Then He shouted, "Lazarus, come out!" (John 11:43). The crowd around the tomb was shocked when the dead man hobbled out of the cave, still bound with burial cloths. Verses 45–46 tell us that many who saw this miracle believed in Jesus, but others reported it to the religious leaders. It was this miracle that sealed Jesus' fate with the Pharisees and rulers. "From that day on they plotted to take his life" (verse 53).

It was not only the life of Jesus the Jewish leaders conspired to take, but that of Lazarus as well: "The chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus . . . for on account of him many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and believing in him" (John 12:10–11). News travels fast, and many people wanted to see the man who had been raised from the dead. Alarmed, the Pharisees called a meeting of the [Sanhedrin](#), the ruling body of Israel. Most likely, Lazarus was reciting his experience over and over again, which resulted in the desperate decision of the Pharisees: Lazarus must die. Again! In the darkened minds of the temple leaders, Lazarus, the latest evidence of Jesus' claim to be the Messiah, had to go.

After Lazarus was raised from the dead, he returned to the home he shared with Mary and Martha (John 12:1–2). He was present when Mary poured expensive perfume on Jesus' feet and wiped them with her hair. Knowing the miracle Jesus had recently performed, we understand why Lazarus' sister was so overcome with gratitude that she would go to such extravagant lengths. Lazarus may have been his sisters' only provider, and his death could have meant poverty for them both. Jesus had returned to them not only the brother they loved but the protector and provider they needed to survive.

The Bible gives us no further information about Lazarus. Any additional details stem from church history and may or may not be accurate. One tradition holds that, after Jesus' ascension back into heaven, Lazarus and his sisters moved to Cyprus where Lazarus



became the bishop of Kition and died of natural causes in AD 63. Another theory claims that Lazarus and his sisters moved to Gaul to preach the gospel, and Lazarus became the bishop of Marseilles, where he was beheaded under the tyranny of [Emperor Domitian](#). Whatever happened to Lazarus is unknown. But we can be certain that his physical body died a second time. And we know that, according to 1 Corinthians 15:51–53 and 1 Thessalonians 4:14–17, Lazarus will be raised again from the dead to join all God's saints in eternity. [GotQuestions.org](#)

#### Related Resource:

- [How many people were raised from the dead in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)

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**ILLUSTRATION** - Miracle or Obedience - Jesus performed a mighty miracle in raising Lazarus from the dead. But He did not take away the stone from the door of the sepulcher, nor did He remove the grave clothes when His resurrected friend came out of the tomb, "bound hand and foot" (John 11:44). Commenting on this fact, J. Boyd Nicholson wrote, "Standing before the grave of Lazarus, whose body was corrupting, the Lord demanded something of those who longed for a miracle. They might have questioned, 'Lord, You are going to raise the dead; why not move this heavy stone with but a word—a thought?' Herein lies a great principle: The Lord will not do by a miracle what we are to do by obedience. Is there a stone He wants you to roll away? Is there some hard, unyielding attitude; someone you will not forgive; some unconfessed sin; some step of obedience He awaits? It is ours to obey, it is His to do the miracles."

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#### Chris Tiegreen - Shedding the Old (from One Year At His Feet Devotional)

"Take off the grave clothes and let him go." John 11:44

"We should always regard communion with other believers as an eminent means of grace." —J. C. Ryle

IN WORD Is this an afterthought reported by John or a statement laden with meaning? Perhaps we should not make too much of the fact that Jesus is specific in His instructions after Lazarus exits the tomb. But in the framework of inspired Scripture, words are included for a purpose. Bound by strips of linen around his hands and feet, with a cloth over his face, Lazarus hears this explicit command first after he is called out of the grave: "Take off the grave clothes and let him go." The stunned onlookers surely needed some instruction, and Lazarus, disoriented and still confined, surely needed assistance. At first he sees nothing. He has only heard the voice of Jesus. The visual illustration is good theology. When Jesus raises us out of our sinful state of death, there is something left to do before we run free. The grave clothes must go.

IN DEED What grave clothes have had us bound? Habitual sins? Guilt? The philosophies of this age? We must be free of them, and we are helpless to shed them on our own. Jesus tells our loved ones to help. He raises us to new life, but we in the church must be in the business of "taking off grave clothes and letting people go." In bearing one another's burdens, in being priests unto each other, in our fellowship with one another, we, the walking resurrected, are assisting one another in removing the remnants of death.

Consider two questions: (1) How do you need the assistance of others in shedding your burial garments? (2) How can you help others shed theirs? This—freedom from the trappings and legacy of death—is the work of the fellowship of believers.

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#### REMOVE THE "GRAVE CLOTHES"!

Ephesians 4:22 put off the old man, which is corrupt.

The raising of Lazarus from the dead is a most striking portrayal of what occurs when one who is lost and dead in sin is given life everlasting through faith in Christ. We are told that when Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth," he who was dead emerged from the tomb "bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin" (John 11:44). Here was a wonderful miracle, and yet he who was raised had his hands and feet bound like a mummy, and his face wrapped about with a cloth.

What a picture of many who indeed have been brought to life through faith in Christ, but who still are not fit for service because **certain hindering remnants of the old life must first be removed** Note that Lazarus' face was bound, implying that his mouth was covered! This is symbolic of those who, although spiritually alive, still have their mouths gagged by the "graveclothes" of worldly habits. In many ways they may be eloquent, but in spiritual things they are silent.

Lazarus' hands and feet were also bound. This speaks of restricted service. Many believers do very little for the Lord because they are still inhibited by selfish attitudes and the distracting cares of this life. They are hampered in their Christian walk by those things which characterized their "former conversation." How important it is to get rid of those bindings of the world with their "deceitful lusts" (Eph. 4:22).

Removing the graveclothes means putting off the hindrances to spiritual power such as "anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, [and] filthy communication out of [our] mouth" (Col. 3:8, cf Heb 12:1). Only after we have thus "put off . . . the old man" of sin and carnality will we be "meet for the Master's use" (2 Tim. 2:21).

Stir me, Lord, I long to serve Thee,  
Know the fullness of Thy power.  
Help me, Lord, to yield completely  
Day by day and hour by hour.  
— I. G. Hallan

Removing the "bindings of sin" readies one for the "blessings of service"!—H.G.B.

### John 11:45 Therefore many of the Jews who came to Mary, and saw what He had done, believed in Him.

BGT John 11:45 Πολλοὶ οὐκ ἔβουδαν ὁ λήντες πρὸς τὴν Μαρὶμ καθεασμένοι ποήσεν πιστεύσαντες αὐτὸν.

KJV John 11:45 Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.

NET John 11:45 Then many of the people, who had come with Mary and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in him.

CSB John 11:45 Therefore, many of the Jews who came to Mary and saw what He did believed in Him.

ESV John 11:45 Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what he did, believed in him,

NIV John 11:45 Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, put their faith in him.

NLT John 11:45 Many of the people who were with Mary believed in Jesus when they saw this happen.

NRS John 11:45 Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

NJB John 11:45 Many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what he did, believed in him,

NAB John 11:45 Now many of the Jews who had come to Mary and seen what he had done began to believe in him.

YLT John 11:45 Many, therefore, of the Jews who came unto Mary, and beheld what Jesus did, believed in him;

MIT John 11:45 Of those Jews who came with Mary and saw what he did, many believed in him.

- **Jews:** Jn 11:19,31 2:23 10:41 12:9-11,17-19,42
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

John 11:4 But when Jesus heard this, He said, "This sickness is not to end in death, but for **the glory of God**, so that the **Son of God may be glorified by it**"

John 7:31+ But many of the crowd believed in Him; and they were saying, "When the Christ comes, He will not perform more signs than those which this man has, will He?"

**MANY SAW  
MANY BELIEVED**

**Therefore** - This is one of the more wonderful terms of conclusion in the Gospels, for the conclusion of the people was Jesus was Messiah. And yet sadly as the next verse shows this miracle results in division as we have often seen in John's Gospel (Jn 11:36–

37; Jn 7:12, 43; Jn 9:16; Jn 10:19–21). Because Jesus is who and what he is he inevitably divides people. As Jesus declared "Do you suppose that I came to grant peace on earth? I tell you, no, but rather division." (Luke 12:51+)

In Jn 11:40 Jesus had declared "if you believe, you will see the glory of God." Now, the Jews see the glory of God (cf Jn 11:4) and they believe!

**Many of the Jews who came to Mary, and saw what He had done, believed ([pisteuo](#)) in Him** - Earlier we saw many Jews had come to their home and now they participate in the miracle of believing in Jesus and receiving not just temporal life like Lazarus but eternal life in Christ.

One might argue that John records no evidence of fruit in keeping with repentance, so perhaps we cannot be dogmatic regarding the genuineness of their faith. The statement in John 12:17-18+ would tend to support their belief as saving faith. And so I personally believe (my opinion) that on this occasion the belief of these Jews led to salvation in contrast to the belief of the Jews in John 8:30+. In this latter situation John gives a detailed description of the "fruit" of their belief (John 8:31-58+), ending with their attempt to stone the One they claimed to have believed in (John 8:59+)!

What did these Jews see? A living testimony to the supernatural, life giving power of Jesus. There is no record of Lazarus ever speaking, and yet they **believed**.

**THOUGHT** - Dearly beloved of God, you are in effect a "walking Lazarus" for you have been raised with Christ to walk in newness of life. This begs the question whether others can see clear evidence that you are a new creation in Christ (2Co 5:17+)? Does my daily conduct at home, work, school give others indisputable evidence of the transforming power of the Gospel of God's grace? Don't misunderstand. There is a saying which sounds good but is not the full truth, saying something like "*Preach the Gospel daily with your life and if necessary, use words.*" While your godly life may/should/will open an opportunity for the presentation of the Gospel, the fact is that the Gospel absolutely must be spoken, listened to, received, and believed, if the recipient is to be saved by the Spirit. While there is no record of Lazarus speaking, that does not mean he gave no oral testimony to the fact that he was dead and now he was alive.

**Samuel Chadwick** - If God is at work week by week raising men from the dead, there will always be people coming to see how it is done. You cannot find an empty church that has conversion for its leading feature. Do you want to know how to fill empty chapels? Here is the answer: Get your Lazarus."

**Bob Utley** - **Therefore many of the Jews. . .believed in Him"** This is the stated theme of the Gospel (cf. John 20:30-31). This phrase becomes a pattern (cf. John 2:23; 7:31; 8:30; 10:42; 11:45; 12:11,42). However, it must be restated that faith in John's Gospel has several levels and is not always saving faith (cf. John 2:23-25; 8:30ff).

**Brian Bell** - A certain medieval monk announced he would be preaching next Sunday evening on "The Love of God." As the shadows fell and the light ceased to come in through the cathedral windows, the congregation gathered. In the darkness of the altar, the monk lighted a candle and carried it to the crucifix. First of all, he illumined the crown of thorns, next, the two wounded hands, then the marks of the spear wound. In the hush that fell, he blew out the candle and left the chancel. There was nothing else to say. Oh, the extravagant love Jesus showed us! Is it possible for us to show Him extravagant love? What would it look like?

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**Steven Cole** - John reported this miracle so that you would believe in Jesus and have eternal life in His name. But Satan always attacks essential truths. So, it's no accident that liberal critics dispute that this miracle really happened. They argue that John presents the raising of Lazarus as a crucial event that precipitated Jesus' death at the hands of the Jewish leaders. If this is so, they say, why do the other three Gospels omit this important event? They conclude that John fabricated this story to illustrate some spiritual truths about Jesus. For example, William Barclay concludes (*The Gospel of John*, 2:103), "It does not really matter whether or not Jesus literally raised a corpse to life in A.D. 30, but it matters intensely that Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life for every man who is dead in sin and dead to God today." **Strange reasoning! (ED: I QUOTE BARCLAY BUT WITH CAUTION. WHY? See [discussion of his orthodoxy](#) especially the article "[The Enigmatic William Barclay](#)")** That's like saying that it doesn't really matter whether Jesus was raised bodily from the dead, as long as we learn the spiritual lessons from the story. Paul refutes that nonsense by arguing that if Christ is not literally raised from the dead, our faith is worthless (1 Cor. 15:1-19). **If Jesus did not literally raise Lazarus from the dead, then John's credibility as an eyewitness of Jesus' glory is worthless. His entire Gospel becomes just a clever fable, alongside Aesop's fables, but not worth staking your life and eternal destiny on.** It's clear that John is narrating an event that he saw take place in actual history. The story does not read as a concocted fable or myth. It is straightforward and realistic, with many factual details. Even Jesus' enemies acknowledged that He was doing many miracles (John 11:47). They couldn't question that Lazarus had been dead and now was alive. So Jesus' critics who lived at that time didn't doubt the fact that Lazarus was raised from the dead, but modern critics, living 20 centuries later do doubt it! Thus what we have here is not a parable or a fable making some moral point. Rather, it is a historical account of Jesus raising a decomposing corpse to life. But

John wants us to apply this actual miracle to our lives:

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## **FAITH AND UNBELIEF John 11:45–57 - Croft Pentz (Expository Outlines on the Gospel of John)**

### **I. THE POWER—John 11:45–48**

A. Faith—John 11:45. Many of the Jews who saw Lazarus raised from the dead now believed in Christ. They knew He had to be God's Son to perform these miracles. Note Nicodemus's words, "For no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him."—John 3:2

B. Fear—John 11:46–48. The Jewish leaders were afraid. They feared all the Jews would believe in Him, and their nation would be under His control. **WHY DOESN'T MAN ACCEPT CHRIST?** Here are some reasons:

1. Pride. Too proud to admit they are sinners.
2. People. Fearful what people may think and do.
3. Persecution. This keeps people away, and causes others to backslide.

### **II. THE PROPHECY—John 11:49–52**

Caiaphas, not realizing it, prophesied of Christ's death. Compare with John 18:14. Here are some predictions of Christ's death:

- A. The Pentateuch (first five books of the Bible)—Genesis 3:15: The promised Redeemer to come and destroy Satan.
- B. The Psalms—Psalm 22. Of course, there are many more, but this Psalm tells of His suffering and death.
- C. The prophets—Isaiah 53. Isaiah speaks often of Christ's birth, suffering, and death. Many of the prophets spoke of His coming.

The New Testament Scriptures are a fulfillment of the Old Testament, showing us that God's Word is inspired. Many of the Old Testament prophecies came true in the New. The remainder will come true.

### **III. THE PRIVATION—John 11:53–54**

- A. Plan—John 11:53. The Jews again plan to kill Christ. This was the ninth time they sought to take His life.
- B. Privation—John 11:54. Christ escaped those seeking to kill Him. If he had been killed before the cross, man would have no hope. The prophecy of Isaiah 53 would be untrue. Many other Scriptures, including the words of Christ, would be untrue.

Satan tried to destroy Christ many times. Before He entered the ministry He was tempted for 40 days and nights. Through the Jewish people, Satan attempted to destroy Christ.

### **IV. THE PLAN—John 11:55–57**

- A. The Passover—John 11:55. The Passover started as "The Lord's Passover."—Exodus 12:11, 27; Leviticus 23:5; Numbers 28:16. Now it had become "The Jewish Passover." Man's opinions are often added, destroying God's Word.
- B. The plan—John 11:56–57. If any saw Jesus, they were to report it.

**John 11:46 But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them the things which Jesus had done.**

BGT John 11:46 τινες δὲ ἔατην πλθον πρς τος Φαρισαους κα επανατος ποησεν ησος.

KJV John 11:46 But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done.

NET John 11:46 But some of them went to the Pharisees and reported to them what Jesus had done.

CSB John 11:46 But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done.

ESV John 11:46 but some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done.

NIV John 11:46 But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done.

NLT John 11:46 But some went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done.

NRS John 11:46 But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what he had done.

NJB John 11:46 but some of them went to the Pharisees to tell them what Jesus had done.

NAB John 11:46 But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done.

YLT John 11:46 but certain of them went away unto the Pharisees, and told them what Jesus did;

MIT John 11:46 Some of them, however, went away to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done.

- Jn 5:15,16 9:13 12:37 Lu 16:30,31 Ac 5:25
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

Luke 16:30-31+ But he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!' 31 "But he said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, **they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.**'"

Acts 7:51+ (STEPHEN JUST BEFORE HE WAS STONED) "You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit; you are doing just as your fathers did.

## JESUS ACCUSED OF RAISING A MAN FROM DEAD!

**But** - What a sad contrast. Sadly seeing is not always believing, as this group of "some" testify! They had just witnessed a miracle that only God could do and yet they refused to believe Jesus was the Messiah. Their response reminds me of a number of responses in the Revelation where the earth dwellers can discern without question that it is God sending the plagues, etc, and yet what is their response? John describes it writing that "men were scorched with fierce heat; and **they blasphemed the name of God** Who has the power over these plagues (THEY KNEW EXACTLY WHO WAS BEHIND THE SCENES!); and they did not repent, so as to give Him glory." (Rev 16:9+). Belief in Jn 11:45 and unbelief in Jn 11:46. Is this not a "microcosm" of all humanity's response to Jesus? Once again we see that Jesus divides all humanity even as He did on the cross between two criminals, one saved and the other lost.

**Some of them went to the Pharisees ([pharisaios](#)) and told them the things which Jesus ([Iesous](#)) had done** - **The things** rather than the thing (resurrection/resuscitation) is interesting, possibly referring to other miracles or signs He had done. The point is that they came not denying the miracle of a dead man coming back (in bandages no less) alive. They could not deny it because they witnessed it! Miracles per se do not cause belief in Jesus! Could they be "spies" the Pharisees had sent? We cannot be certain, but what we can be certain of (assuming they never repented and believed) is that they will have an even greater degree of punishment throughout eternity for have rejected such clear evidence of the divinity of Jesus Christ (read Mt 11:21-24+)

*Even seeing a resurrection did not result in belief in Jesus.*

These witnesses of the miracle of resurrection remind us that God has given all men evidence of His power, Paul writing

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who (WILLFULLY, ACTIVELY, CONTINUALLY HOLD DOWN OR) suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because **that which is known about God is evident within them** for God made it evident to them. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, **have been clearly seen**, being **understood** through what has been made, so that (PURPOSE CLAUSE) **they are without excuse** (READ THAT AGAIN IF YOU ARE WORRIED ABOUT THE NATIVES IN DEEPEST JUNGLES BEING GIVEN A FAIR CHANCE FROM GOD - FOR MORE DISCUSSION READ [What happens to those who have never heard about Jesus? | GotQuestions.org](#)). (Romans 1:18-20+)

[Steven Cole](#) points out that "If God exists and created all things, then sinners know that they're in big trouble. So they invent myths, like evolution, to dodge the reality of God so that they can continue in their sin."

[A T Robertson](#) - This "**some**" (tines) did who were deeply impressed and yet who did not have the courage to break away from the rabbis without consulting them. It was a crisis for the Sanhedrin.

**Homer Kent** notes that "This response of unbelief in the face of the clearest proof is confirmation of Christ's teaching in Luke 16:31+: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." The chief cause of unbelief is not inadequate information, but a heart in rebellion against the authority of God and his word. (BORROW [Light in the darkness : studies in the Gospel of John page 152](#))

**Spurgeon** - We could hardly have conceived it possible that men would have been guilty of such conduct as this to post off to Christ's enemies, and lay it as an accusation against him, that he had raised a man from the dead. ([Spurgeon's Exposition - Gospel of John](#))

[Steven Cole](#) - In the narrative, Jesus tells Martha (Jn 11:40), "Did I not say to you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?"

Believing would result in seeing. But (in Jn 11:45-46) others who saw this stupendous miracle did not believe, and their foolish hearts were darkened (Ro 1:21). The lesson is: If we believe in Christ, we will see the glory of God; but if we see miracles without believing we will be hardened in our sin.

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### John Henry Jowett - THE NEMESIS OF BIGOTRY John 11:46-57

FEARFUL nemesis waits upon the spirit of bigotry. Oliver Wendell Holmes has said that bigotry is like the pupil of the eye, the more light you pour into it the more it contracts. The scribes and Pharisees became smaller men the more the Lord revealed His glory. In the raising of Lazarus they saw nothing of the glory of the resurrection life, nothing of the joy of the reunited family, nothing of the gracious ministry of the Lord! "Darkness had blinded their eyes."

And it is also the nemesis of bigotry to be bitter, cruel, and violent. They sought to kill the Giver of life!

It is the ministry of light to ripen and sweeten the dispositions. "The fruit of the light is in all goodness." It is the ministry of the darkness to make men sour and unsympathetic, and revengeful, and to so pervert the heart as to make it a minister of poison and death.

And yet, how powerless is bigotry in the long run! It can no more stay the progress of the Kingdom than King Canute could check the flowing tide! Bigotry slew the Lord, and He rose again! And so it ever is. "Truth crushed to earth shall rise again; the eternal years of God are hers."

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### John 11:47 Therefore the chief priests and the Pharisees convened a council, and were saying, "What are we doing? For this man is performing many signs."

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BGT John 11:47 Συν γαγον ο ν ο ρχιερε ς κα ο Φαρισαοι συν δριον κα λεγον· τ ποιο μεν τι ο το ς νθρωπο ς πολλ ποιε σημε α;

KJV John 11:47 Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles.

NET John 11:47 So the chief priests and the Pharisees called the council together and said, "What are we doing? For this man is performing many miraculous signs.

CSB John 11:47 So the chief priests and the Pharisees convened the Sanhedrin and said, "What are we going to do since this man does many signs?

ESV John 11:47 So the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered the council and said, "What are we to do? For this man performs many signs.

NIV John 11:47 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 miraculous signs.

NLT John 11:47 Then the leading priests and Pharisees called the high council together. "What are we going to do?" they asked each other. "This man certainly performs many miraculous signs.

NRS John 11:47 So the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the council, and said, "What are we to do? This man is performing many signs.

NJB John 11:47 Then the chief priests and Pharisees called a meeting. 'Here is this man working all these signs,' they said, 'and what action are we taking?

NAB John 11:47 So the chief priests and the Pharisees convened the Sanhedrin and said, "What are we going to do? This man is performing many signs.

YLT John 11:47 the chief priests, therefore, and the Pharisees, gathered together a sanhedrim, and said, 'What may we do? because this man doth many signs?

MIT John 11:47 The executive priests and Pharisees convened a council and kept saying, "What shall we do, because this man does many miraculous signs?

- **convened a council** : Ps 2:2-4 Mt 26:3 27:1,2 Mk 14:1 Lu 22:2 Ac 4:5,6,27,28 5:21
- **What**: Jn 12:19 Ac 4:16,17 5:24
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## Related Passages:

2 Corinthians 4:4+ (PHARISEES WERE BLINDED) in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

John 9:39+ And Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, so that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may become blind (JEWISH RELIGIOUS LEADERS - THE WITNESSES OF LAZARUS RAISING WHO THEN WENT TO PHARISEES)." 40 Those of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these things and said to Him, "We are not blind too, are we?" 41 Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but **since you say, 'We see,' your sin remains.**

## THE LAST STRAW "CATALYZES" CONVENING OF COUNCIL

**Therefore** ([oun](#)) - From a great term of conclusion in Jn 11:45 we descend to a polar opposite, for now instead of life (belief in Jesus), the prevalent thought is death (to the Miracle Worker).

**The chief priests** ([archiereus](#)) **and the Pharisees** ([pharisaios](#)) **convened a council** ([sunedrion](#) = Sanhedrin, NIV = a meeting of the Sanhedrin), **and were saying** (imperfect - back and forth, over and over), **"What are we doing? For this man** (derogatory designation) **is performing many signs** ([semeion](#)) - Notice they do not question whether the **signs** are really **signs**. They were not interested in truth but in killing the One called Truth (Jn 14:6)! What is sad is that of the Jewish leaders it was the **the Pharisees** ([pharisaios](#)) who believed in the resurrection, however just not the one that had been reported to them!

**THOUGHT-** The point is crystal clear that when one's heart is hardened to truth, no evidence however spectacular will convince such a person of the truth of Jesus Christ and their need to believe in Him for eternal life!

**John MacArthur** - Alarmed by the news of the most astonishing miracle yet performed by Christ, and understanding the public effect of it, the Pharisees were galvanized into action. They did not have the authority to act on their own (since the Sadducees were the majority party and controlled the Sanhedrin), so along with some of the chief priests (former high priests and members of important priestly families) the Pharisees convened a meeting of the full council (the Sanhedrin). The Sanhedrin was the ruling body of Israel and had wide-ranging authority in civil and criminal, as well as religious, matters (though the Romans withheld the right of capital punishment [Jn 18:31]). (See [John Commentary - click for full page](#))

Recall that this is at least the third significant sign Jesus carried out before the Jewish leaders - (1) paralyzed man healed (Jn 5:1-14) and (2) a man congenitally blind healed (Jn 9:1-34). They rejected both of these miracles, discounting them because Jesus had performed both on the Sabbath! Lazarus was not raised on the Sabbath so they could not use that as an excuse. While they were not at Lazarus resurrection, they had eye witnesses of the "sign" of the resurrection of Lazarus and accepted their testimony. But their hearts were so hardened to the truth that even a man rising from the dead (cf Lk 16:31+) could not convince them that Jesus was the Messiah, the Savior of Israel! Their unbelief was not based on insufficient evidence that Jesus was the Messiah. These hypocrites knew that the resurrection of Lazarus and many Jews believing in Jesus was the proverbial "[last straw](#)" and that they must take action which they continue to do in Jn 11:48

**Signs** ([semeion](#)) have the function to point to something or point the right way. **Signs** point to something beyond themselves. The signs were **many** and they were clearly pointing to Jesus as the Messiah, except to those who were too blind to see or had hearts too hardened to receive the signs!

The sign of Lazarus resurrection was pointing to a deeper spiritual truth, to the truth that even as Lazarus had no power to give himself physical life, but needed the supernatural power from the Spirit of God, so too, all those who are spiritually dead need the exercise of that same supernatural power! "It is the Spirit Who gives life; the flesh profits (ABSOLUTELY) nothing. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life." (Jn 6:63+), [Steven Cole](#) says that for Lazarus "It required the **life-giving Word of Jesus** to call him from death to life. That's true every time a sinner is born again." The corollary is that we need to be sure to use the living Word when we are sharing the Gospel with a lost soul (**ED**: BECAUSE HIS SHEEP HEAR HIS VOICE AND FOLLOW HIM - John 10:27+), and not trust on our debating skills or our intellectual prowess! Like I tell my disciples "K.I.S.S." **Keep It Simple Stupid**)

[Steven Cole](#) adds "You may ask, "Doesn't the sinner have to choose to believe?" The Bible is clear, yes, the sinner must choose to believe. But no one who is dead in their sins is able to choose to believe until the Spirit of God quickens them from the dead (**ED**: [see free will](#)). We saw this in John 1:12-13+, "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of

God, *even* to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God." Those who believe didn't do so because of their will (which is not "free," but bound in sin), but rather because God caused them to be born again (1 Pet. 1:3+). So go to the Father in believing prayer and ask Him to save those who are so dead in sin that they stink! And, Jesus' words apply to any who have not yet trusted in Him for salvation: If you will believe in Him, you will see the glory of His love, grace, and justice at the cross. If we believe in Christ, we will see the glory of God.

**NET Note** - The phrase "chief priests and Pharisees" is a comprehensive name for the groups represented in the ruling council (the Sanhedrin) as in John 7:45; 18:3; Acts 5:22, 26.

**NET Note** - Or "Sanhedrin" (the Sanhedrin was the highest legal, legislative, and judicial body among the Jews). The sunedrion (sunedrion) which they gathered was probably an informal meeting rather than the official Sanhedrin. This is the only occurrence of the word sunedrion in the Gospel of John, and the only anarthrous singular use in the NT. There are other plural anarthrous uses which have the general meaning "councils." The fact that Caiaphas in 11:49 is referred to as "one of them" supports the unofficial nature of the meeting; in the official Sanhedrin he, being high priest that year, would have presided over the assembly. Thus it appears that an informal council was called to discuss what to do about Jesus and his activities.

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## Bob Utley - [SPECIAL TOPIC: THE SANHEDRIN](#)

### 1. Sources of Information

1. The New Testament itself (i.e., Gospels and Acts)
2. Flavius Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews*
3. The Mishnah section of the Talmud (i.e., Tractate "Sanhedrin")

Unfortunately the NT and Josephus do not agree with the rabbinical writings, which seem to assert two Sanhedrins in Jerusalem

1. one priestly (i.e., Sadducean, see [SPECIAL TOPIC: SADDUCEES](#)), controlled by the High Priest and dealing with civil and criminal justice
2. a second controlled by the Pharisees (see [SPECIAL TOPIC: PHARISEES](#)) and scribes (see [SPECIAL TOPIC: SCRIBES](#)), concerned with religious and traditional issues

However, the rabbinical writings date from A.D. 200 and reflect the cultural situation after the fall of Jerusalem to the Roman general, Titus, in A.D. 70. The Jews (i.e., Pharisee leadership) reestablished a headquarters for their religious life at a city called Jamnia and later (i.e., A.D. 118) moved to Galilee.

### 2. Terminology

The problem with identifying this judicial body involves the different names by which it is known. There are several words used to describe judicial bodies within the Jewish community of Jerusalem.

1. *Gerousia* – "senate" or "council." This is the oldest term which was used toward the end of the Persian period (cf. Josephus' *Antiquities* 12.3.3 and II Maccabees 11:27). It is used by Luke in Acts 5:21 along with "Sanhedrin." It may have been a way of explaining the term to Greek speaking readers (cf. I Macc. 12:35).
2. *Synedrion* – "Sanhedrin." This is a compound from *syn* (together with) and *hedra* (seat). Surprisingly this term is used in Aramaic, but it reflects a Greek word. By the end of the Maccabean period this had become the accepted term to designate the supreme court of the Jews in Jerusalem (cf. Matt. 26:59; Mark 15:1; Luke 22:66; John 11:47; Acts 5:27). The problem comes when the same terminology is used of local judicial councils outside Jerusalem (cf. Matt. 5:22; 10:17; Mark 13:9).
3. *Presbyterion* – "council of elders" (cf. Luke 22:66). This is an OT designation for tribal leaders. However, it came to refer to the supreme court in Jerusalem (cf. Acts 22:5).
4. *Boulē* – This term "council" is used by Josephus (i.e., *Wars* 2.16.2; 5.4.2, but not the NT) to describe several judicial bodies:
  1. the Senate in Rome
  2. local Roman courts
  3. the Jewish supreme court in Jerusalem
  4. local Jewish court

Joseph of Arimathea is described as a member of the Sanhedrin by a form of this term (i.e., *bouleutēs*, which means "councilor," cf. Mark 15:43; Luke 23:50).

### 3. Historical Development

Originally Ezra is said to have set up the Great Synagogue (cf. Targum on Song of Songs 6:1) in the post-exilic period, which seems to have become the Sanhedrin of Jesus' day.

1. The Mishnah (i.e., Talmud) records that there were two major courts in Jerusalem (cf. Sanh. 7:1).



1. One made up of 70 (or 71) members (Sand. 1:6 even states that Moses set up the first Sanhedrin in Numbers 11, cf. Num. 11:16-25).
  2. One made up of 23 members (but this may refer to local synagogue courts).
  3. Some Jewish scholars believe there were three 23-member Sanhedrins in Jerusalem. When the three got together, they constituted "the Great Sanhedrin" of 71 members (i.e., *Nasi* and *Av Bet Din*).
    1. one priestly (i.e., Sadducees)
    2. one legal (i.e., Pharisees)
    3. one aristocratic (i.e., elders)
  2. In the post-exilic period (see [SPECIAL TOPIC: POST-EXILIC CHART](#), the returning Davidic seed was Zerubbabel and the returning Aaronic seed was Joshua (cf. Hag. 1:1). After Zerubbabel's death, no Davidic seed continued, so the judicial mantle passed exclusively to the priests (cf. I Macc. 12:6) and local elders (cf. Neh. 2:16; 5:7).
  3. This priestly role in judicial decisions is documented by Diodorus 40:3:4-5 during the Hellenistic period.
  4. This priestly role in government continued during the Selucid period. Josephus quotes Antiochus "the Great" III (223-187 B.C.) in *Antiquities* 12.138-142.
  5. This priestly power continued during the Maccabean period according to Josephus' *Antiquities* 13.10.5-6; 13.15.5.
  6. During the Roman period the governor of Syria (i.e., Gabinius from 57-55 B.C.) established five regional "Sanhedrins" (i.e., administrative districts, cf. Josephus' *Antiquities* 14.5.4; and *Wars* 1.8.5), but this was later annulled by Rome (i.e., 47 B.C.).
  7. The Sanhedrin had a political confrontation with Herod (i.e., *Antiquities* 14.9.3-5) who, in 37 B.C., retaliated and had most of the high court killed (cf. Josephus' *Antiquities* 14.9.4; 15.1.2).
  8. Under the Roman procurators (i.e., A.D. 6-66) Josephus tells us (cf. *Antiquities* 20.200,251) that the Sanhedrin again gained considerable power and influence (cf. Mark 14:55). There are three trials recorded in the NT where the Sanhedrin, under the leadership of the High Priest's family, executes justice.
    1. Jesus' trial (cf. Mark 14:53-15:1; John 18:12-23,28-32)
    2. Peter and John (cf. Acts 4:3-6)
    3. Paul (cf. Acts 22:25-30)
  9. When the Jews revolted in A.D. 66, the Romans subsequently destroyed Jewish society and Jerusalem in A.D. 70. The Sanhedrin was permanently dissolved, although the Pharisees at Jamnia tried to bring a supreme judicial court (i.e., *Beth Din*) back into Jewish religious (but not civil or political) life.
4. Membership
1. The first biblical mention of a high court in Jerusalem is 2 Chr. 19:8-11. It was made up of
    1. Levites
    2. priests
    3. the heads of families (i.e., elders, cf. I Macc. 14:20; II Macc. 4:44)
  2. During the Maccabean period it was made up of
    1. Sadducean priestly families
    2. local aristocracy (cf. I Macc. 7:33; 11:23; 14:28)
    3. Later in this period "scribes" (Mosaic lawyers, usually Pharisees) were added, apparently by Alexander Jannaeus' wife, Salome (76-67 B.C.) She is even said to have made the Pharisees the predominant group (cf. Josephus' *Wars of the Jews* 1.5.2).
  3. By Jesus' day the court was made up of
    1. the families of the High Priests
    2. local men of wealthy families
    3. scribes (cf. Luke 19:47)
5. Sources Consulted
1. BORROW [Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels](#), IVP, [PAGE 730](#) [PAGE 732](#)
  2. BORROW [The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible, vol. 5, pp. 268-273](#) ([PAGE 268](#), [PAGE 270](#), [PAGE 272](#))
  3. *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, vol. 10, pp. 203-204
  4. *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. 4, pp. 214-218
  5. *Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol. 14, pp. 836-839

**John 11:48 "If we let Him go on like this, all men will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation."**

κα τ ν τ πον κα τ θνος.

KJV John 11:48 If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.

NET John 11:48 If we allow him to go on in this way, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away our sanctuary and our nation."

CSB John 11:48 If we let Him continue in this way, everyone will believe in Him! Then the Romans will come and remove both our place and our nation."

ESV John 11:48 If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation."

NIV John 11:48 If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation."

NLT John 11:48 If we allow him to go on like this, soon everyone will believe in him. Then the Roman army will come and destroy both our Temple and our nation."

NRS John 11:48 If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and destroy both our holy place and our nation."

NJB John 11:48 If we let him go on in this way everybody will believe in him, and the Romans will come and suppress the Holy Place and our nation.'

NAB John 11:48 If we leave him alone, all will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our land and our nation."

YLT John 11:48 if we may let him alone thus, all will believe in him; and the Romans will come, and will take away both our place and nation.'

MIT John 11:48 If we let him go on this way, everyone will believe in him. Then the Romans will come and remove from us both our place and our national identity."

- **we let:** Ac 5:28,38-40
- **all:** Jn 1:7 Lu 8:12 11:52 1Th 2:15,16
- **and the:** De 28:50-68 Da 9:26,27 Zec 13:7,8 14:1,2 Mt 21:40-42 22:7 Mt 23:35-38 27:25 Lu 19:41-44 21:20-24 23:28-31
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## ALL MEN WILL BELIEVE

If (3rd class condition = potential action) **we let Him go on like this, all men will believe** ([pisteuo](#)) in Him - Now these supposedly brilliant leaders have become "[universalists](#)" saying **all** will be saved!

[Brian Bell](#) - They cared more about their political status & power on earth than they did about whether Jesus really was sent by God. [were simply trying to save their political skins!] They feared that Jesus might get such a following that even Rome would feel threatened.

[Bob Utley](#) - "**all men will believe in Him**" Jealousy as well as theological disagreement was the source of their distrust and fear of Jesus. The "all" may have referred even to the Samaritans and Gentiles (cf. John 10:16). There was also a political aspect to their fear (i.e., Roman reprisals).

**And the Romans will come and take away** ([airo](#)) **both our place and our nation** - This of course was their ultimate fear that they would lose their power and prestige. Same verb for **take away** ([airo](#)) used for **remove** ([airo](#)) **the stone** (Jn 11:39, 41)! **Our place** refers to the Holy Temple, which the Romans would in fact **take away** in 70AD (Why? see Lk 13:34+, Mt 23:37)!

[Spurgeon](#) - They pretended that if Jesus Christ gathered to himself a great party, the Romans would take umbrage at it — pounce upon the whole nation and destroy it, for fear of its revolting from under their sway. A gross falsehood throughout. ([Spurgeon's Exposition - Gospel of John](#))

[Bob Utley](#) - This is one of those ironic prophecies of John's Gospel, for this was fulfilled literally in A.D. 70 when Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed by the Roman general (later Emperor) Titus. The political reality of Roman domination was an integral part of Jewish end-time (eschatological) hope. They believed that God would send a religious/military figure, like the Judges of the OT, to

physically deliver them from Rome. Several Messianic pretenders started rebellions in Palestine to accomplish this very expectation. Jesus claimed that His kingdom was not a temporal/political reign (cf. John 18:36), but a spiritual reign that would be consummated globally in the future (i.e., the book of Revelation). He claimed to fulfill the OT prophecies (cf. Matt. 5:17-19), but not in a literal, Jewish, nationalistic sense. For this He was rejected by most Jews of His day.

**John 11:49 But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all,**

BGT John 11:49 ες δ τις ξατν Καϊ φας, ρχιερεις ν το νιαυτο κε νου, επεν α το ς· με ς ο κ ο δατε ο δ ν,

KJV John 11:49 And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all,

NET John 11:49 Then one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said, "You know nothing at all!

CSB John 11:49 One of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all!

ESV John 11:49 But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all.

NIV John 11:49 Then one of them, named Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, spoke up, "You know nothing at all!

NLT John 11:49 Caiaphas, who was high priest at that time, said, "You don't know what you're talking about!

NRS John 11:49 But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all!

NJB John 11:49 One of them, Caiaphas, the high priest that year, said, 'You do not seem to have grasped the situation at all;

NAB John 11:49 But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing,

YLT John 11:49 and a certain one of them, Caiaphas, being chief priest of that year, said to them, 'Ye have not known anything,

MIT John 11:49 One of them, Caiaphas, the high priest that year, said to them, "You do not understand at all.

- **Caiaphas:** Jn 18:13-14 Lu 3:2 Ac 4:6
- **You know nothing:** Jn 7:48,49 Pr 26:12 Isa 5:20-23 1Co 1:20 2:6 3:18,19
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

John 18:13-14 and led Him to Annas first; for he was father-in-law of **Caiaphas**, who was high priest that year. 14 Now **Caiaphas** was the one who had advised the Jews that it was expedient for one man to die on behalf of the people.

Luke 3:2+ in the high priesthood of Annas and **Caiaphas**, the word of God came to John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness.

Acts 4:6+ and Annas the high priest was there, and **Caiaphas** and John and Alexander, and all who were of high-priestly descent.

### AN AMAZING OPENING LINE: YOU ARE IGNORAMUSES!

John 11:49-52 deals with prophecy.

An [ignoramus](#) is an ignorant or stupid person, a [dunce](#). Caiaphas' opening line was not designed to [win friends and influence people!](#)

**But One of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest (archiereus) that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all-** NJB - 'You do not seem to have grasped the situation at all. **Caiaphas** first insults the Sanhedrin's intelligence! He was ruler over the Sanhedrin

and could get away with an insult like this.

**R Kent Hughes** paraphrases Caiaphas - Roughly translated he was saying, "You fools! If you had any intelligence at all, you would see that the answer is very simple. It is better that one die rather than a whole nation." He was a cold, calculating, capable, self-sufficient, shrewd, self-satisfied ecclesiastical climber. He had come to the top of his profession. (BORROW [Preaching the Word – Behold the Man - PAGE 14](#))

**Bob Utley** - "**Caiaphas, who was the high priest that year**" The high priesthood was meant to be a lifelong position passed on to one's children (cf. Exodus 28), but after the Romans became the occupiers, it was sold to the highest bidder because of the lucrative trade available on the Mount of Olives and in the temple area. Caiaphas was high priest from A.D. 18-36 (son-in-law of Annas, High Priest from A.D. 6-15).

**Josephus**, himself a Pharisee (which might taint his commentary regarding Sadducees), characterized the Sadducees. "The behavior of the Sadducees one toward another is in some degree wild," he wrote, "and their conduct with those who are of their own party is as barbarous as if they were strangers to them" ([The Wars of the Jews, 2. scroll to paragraph 166](#))

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**High priest** (749) **archiereus** from **arche** = first in a series, the leader or ruler, idea of rank or degree + **hierous** = priest - **hieros** is that which is determined, filled or consecrated by divine power) refers to the priest that was chief over all the other priests in Israel. This office was established by God through Moses instructions in the Pentateuch. The high priest functioned as the mediator between Jehovah and Israel (cp new order under the [New Covenant](#) - 1Ti 2:5) performing sacrifices and rituals like other priests, but in addition acting to expiate the sins of the nation on the annual [Day of Atonement \(another source\)](#) (Read Lev 16:1-34)

In the **plural archiereus** (AS IN John 11:47 = "chief priests") refers to all the ruling priests, the members of the high-priestly families as a group, the upper echelons of the priestly class, especially those who served on the Sanhedrin, the Jewish high court (Lk 9:22+, Mk 8:31+). In the **singular archiereus** refers to the acting high priest (Lk 3:2+, Mk 14:47, 53, 54, 60, 61, 63, 66+), who by Jesus' day was more of a role obtained by political connections than priestly lineage. The Biblical motif was God appointed the priest

**Archiereus in John** - Jn. 7:32; Jn. 7:45; Jn. 11:47; Jn. 11:49; Jn. 11:51; Jn. 11:57; Jn. 12:10; Jn. 18:3; Jn. 18:10; Jn. 18:13; Jn. 18:15; Jn. 18:16; Jn. 18:19; Jn. 18:22; Jn. 18:24; Jn. 18:26; Jn. 18:35; Jn. 19:6; Jn. 19:15; Jn. 19:21

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#### QUESTION - [Who was Caiaphas in the Bible?](#)

(ED: **Caiaphas** - 9x/9v - Matt. 26:3; Matt. 26:57; Lk. 3:2; Jn. 11:49; Jn. 18:13; Jn. 18:14; Jn. 18:24; Jn. 18:28; Acts 4:6)

**ANSWER** - Joseph Caiaphas was the Jewish high priest during the time of Jesus' ministry and a few years afterwards (ED: APPOINTED HIGH PRIEST IN ABOUT A.D. 18 BY ROMAN [PREFECT VALERIUS GRATUS](#) [HIMSELF REPLACED BY PREFECT PONTIUS PILATE IN A.D. 26] AND DEPOSED IN A.D. 36) . He was a strong opponent of Jesus and His message.

**Caiaphas** was the son-in-law of [Annas](#), the former high priest (from A.D. 6-15), which may have accounted for his own rise to power. **Caiaphas** was also a member of one of the ruling Jewish sects, the Sadducees. Sadducees were often wealthy men of high position and, as they sought to appease their Roman rulers, were heavily involved in politics. They held the majority seat in the Sanhedrin, the Jewish high court, over which **Caiaphas** ruled for the 18 years he served as high priest. In terms of theology, Sadducees denied the afterlife (ED: WHICH IS WHY THEY WERE "SAD YOU SEE!") and any existence of the spiritual world (angels, demons, etc.). Because of these things, they were often at odds with Jesus due to His teachings about humility, heaven, and His own deity.

*Caiaphas was unknowingly prophesying about God's plan for Jesus' death*

After Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, both the [Pharisees and the Sadducees](#) met at Caiaphas's palace to express their concern that Jesus' growing number of followers would incite the anger of the Roman Empire (Matthew 26:2; John 11:47). They were unsure how to proceed until Caiaphas spoke: "**You know nothing at all! You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish**" (John 11:50). This statement calling for Jesus' death was a cold, calculating move of political expediency; at the same time, Caiaphas was unknowingly prophesying about God's plan for Jesus' death. Through the Sanhedrin's wicked actions, God would save both the Jewish nation and anyone else who would believe in Christ (Jn 11:51–52).

When the Jewish leaders had Jesus arrested at Passover, they first brought Him before [Annas](#) (John 18:13). After he had questioned Jesus, [Annas](#) sent Jesus to his son-in-law **Caiaphas**, who as the high priest would be the one to rule on Jesus' fate (See [famous picture](#)). When Jesus stood before Caiaphas and the entire Sanhedrin, many false witnesses were brought forward, but nothing was found to warrant a death sentence (Matthew 26:59–60). Finally, **Caiaphas** stood up and addressed Jesus directly, "I

charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God" (Mt 26:63). Jesus replied just as directly, "You have said so. . . . But I say to all of you: From now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven" (Mt 26:64). Caiaphas had what he was looking for; he tore his robe and cried, "Blasphemy!" (Mt 26:65). The result of the sham trial was that Jesus was pronounced "worthy of death" and beaten and mocked (Mt 26:66–67). However, since the Jews could not legally execute prisoners, Caiaphas sent Jesus to the Roman governor [Pontius Pilate](#).

Jesus endured another [series of trials](#) that night under Roman jurisdiction. **Caiaphas** and the other religious leaders stirred up the crowd against Jesus. When Pilate attempted to release Jesus by giving them a choice between Him and the convicted felon [Barabbas](#), "the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for [Barabbas](#) and to have Jesus executed" (Matthew 27:20). [Pilate](#) acquiesced, and Jesus was sentenced to die, beaten, led outside the city, and crucified (Mt 27:26–35). It's what **Caiaphas** wanted all along. It's important to note that these things did not happen at the whim of **Caiaphas**, the priests, or Pilate, for it was all part of God's plan to save the world through the death of His Son (Acts 2:23-24+). As Jesus had said, "No one takes [my life] from me, but I lay it down of my own accord" (John 10:18).

Three days later, Jesus rose again from the grave, fulfilling prophecy, defeating death, and emboldening His followers to share the good news of salvation with thousands throughout the known world. **Caiaphas** continued to persecute the followers of Christ, being present at the trial of Peter and John (Acts 4:1–22), but his opposition did nothing to stop the spread of the gospel.

**Caiaphas's** story is a tragic one. **Caiaphas** was faced with the reality of Who Jesus is and yet denied the Truth that literally stood before him. As high priest **Caiaphas** had wealth, an honorable position, and the respect of the people, but he was deficient in the one area that truly matters: saving faith in Jesus Christ (cf Mk 8:36-37+). [GotQuestions.org](#)

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**Norman Geisler - JOHN 11:49–52—Does this text support the Catholic claim for papal infallibility?** (See [When Cultists Ask](#))

**MISINTERPRETATION:** Some Catholic scholars claim that since the high priest in the Old Testament had an official revelatory function connected with his office, it is to be expected that there be an equivalent in the New Testament, the Pope. Catholics use this passage about the Jewish high priest exercising authority to substantiate their claim. Is this a correct interpretation?

**CORRECTING THE MISINTERPRETATION:** Roman Catholics are making an argument from analogy that is not based on any New Testament affirmation. The Catholic view cannot be derived from any proper exegesis of the text. The New Testament explicitly says that the Old Testament priesthood has been abolished. The writer to the Hebrews declared that "there is a change of priesthood" from that of Aaron (Heb. 7:12). The Aaronic priesthood has been fulfilled in Christ, who is a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek (vv. 15–17).

Even Catholics acknowledge that there is no new revelation after the time of the New Testament. So no one after the first century (Popes included) can have a revelatory function in the sense of giving new revelations. There is a New Testament revelatory function in the apostles and prophets (cf. Eph. 2:20; 3:5). But their revelation ceased when they died. To assume that a revelatory function was passed on after them and is resident in the Bishop of Rome is to beg the question.

**John 11:50 nor do you take into account that it is expedient for you that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation not perish."**

BGT John 11:50 ο δ λογ ζεσθε τι συμφ ρει μ ν να ες νθρωπος ποθ ν π ρ το λαο κα μ λον τ θνος π ληται.

KJV John 11:50 Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

NET John 11:50 You do not realize that it is more to your advantage to have one man die for the people than for the whole nation to perish."

CSB John 11:50 You're not considering that it is to your advantage that one man should die for the people rather than the whole nation perish."

ESV John 11:50 Nor do you understand that it is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish."

NIV John 11:50 You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish."

NLT John 11:50 You don't realize that it's better for you that one man should die for the people than for the whole nation to be destroyed."

NRS John 11:50 You do not understand that it is better for you to have one man die for the people than to have the whole nation destroyed."

NJB John 11:50 you fail to see that it is to your advantage that one man should die for the people, rather than that the whole nation should perish.'

NAB John 11:50 nor do you consider that it is better for you that one man should die instead of the people, so that the whole nation may not perish."

YLT John 11:50 nor reason that it is good for us that one man may die for the people, and not the whole nation perish.'

MIT John 11:50 Do you not think it is to your advantage that one person should die on behalf of the people so that the whole nation not be ruined?"

- Jn 11:48 18:14 19:12 Lu 24:46 Ro 3:8
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

John 18:14 Now Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was expedient for one man to die on behalf of the people.

Proverbs 17:15 (TRUE OF CAIAPHAS) He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous, Both of them alike are an abomination to the LORD.

## CAIAPHAS' PROPHECY OF JESUS' SUBSTITUTIONARY DEATH

**Expedient** means convenient and practical and a means of attaining an end, an easy and quick way to solve a problem, thus a means that is convenient but which may be improper or immoral and in this case it was both! So much for the integrity of the high priest! Religious o

**nor do you take into account that it is expedient for you that one man die**([apothnesko](#)) **for** ([huper](#)) **the people, and that the whole nation not perish** ([apollumi](#)) - Note the two alternatives - one man die or the entire nation perish! In a pinnacle of hypocrisy, Caiaphas' national patriotism veiled his perfidious intention - death to Christ. Caiaphas prophecy was partially correct for Jesus died, but the bitter irony is that nation also died in A.D. 70 when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem.

*John's Irony - Caiaphas preaches the Gospel!*

**That one man die** ([apothnesko](#)) **for the people** - It is fascinating that the preposition **for** is the Greek word [huper](#) which means instead of or in place of and clearly speaks of substitution. In this case it speaks of Jesus' substitutionary atonement on the Cross, but obviously Caiaphas did not intend it to convey that profound meaning. Caiaphas meant it for evil but to paraphrase Joseph in Genesis 50:20 "**God meant it for good** in order to bring about this present result (IN CONTEXT THE FUTURE RESULT), to preserve many people alive (JESUS WOULD BE THE SUBSTITUTIONARY SACRIFICE FOR MANY PEOPLE WHO BELIEVED IN HIM AND THUS THEY WOULD BE PRESERVED FOREVER!)."

**John MacArthur** explains that Caiaphas "did not say this on his own initiative does not mean that he was forced to act against his will; he was no puppet, and was responsible for his own wicked words. But God providentially invested those words with a meaning that he did not intend. In his capacity as high priest and hence technically by office God's spokesman (cf. Num. 27:21; 2 Sam. 15:27), God ordained an opposite meaning when Caiaphas prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation. He spoke cynical words of political expediency, claiming that Jesus must die to preserve the Sanhedrin's power and the nation's existence. However, Caiaphas unwittingly spoke prophetically of Christ's sacrificial death (cf. 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24). God sovereignly turned his wicked, blasphemous words into truth (cf. Gen. 50:20; Ps. 76:10; Prov. 16:9; 19:21; Acts 4:27-28). (See [MacArthur Commentary](#))

**Bob Utley** - "**one man should die for the people**" The OT background for this is the Jewish view of "corporality." One person (good or bad) could affect the whole (i.e., Adam/Eve; Achan). This concept came to be an underpinning of the sacrificial system, especially the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16), where one innocent animal bore the sin of the nation. This becomes the Messianic concept behind Isaiah 53. In the NT the Adam/Christ typology of Rom. 5:12-21 and 1 Cor. 15:20-23 reflect this concept.

**Brian Bell** - Caiaphas proposes, a simple lethal solution - "Why should the whole nation be destroyed? Let this one man die for the people." [He didn't realize how correct he was!] **Admire the bee:** It sees its hive being threatened, it will use its one defense...its stinger! They will die in their defense of their hive. They have one thought only - the safety of the others in the hive, & gladly will give their lives for the good of the many.

**Life Application Note** - They were so hardened that they preferred to reject God's Son rather than admit that they were wrong. They preferred "closure" instead of being open to God's marvelous power. Beware of pride. If we allow it to grow, it can lead us into enormous sin. (BORROW [Life Application Study Bible](#))

**Spurgeon** - That was his advice. You are, none of you, up to the mark. You do not handle this thing rightly. Let us kill this man. Let him be put to death —not that he deserves it, but that it is **expedient** that it should be, lest our nation should be destroyed; and this is the way that governors and kings have been accustomed to think — not "Is it right?" but "Is it expedient" "and we may always pray to God that we may have a Government that will do that which is right, and not be guided by the evil direction of that which is expedient. One has well said that if the death of a righteous man would save ten thousand, yet it would be an atrocious thing that he should be put to death unwillingly for the saving of any. The right is, after all, expedient. Yet Caiaphas did not know what he said. He was speaking a great truth. [Spurgeon's Exposition - Gospel of John](#)

**One for All** In [Makkoth 1:10](#) it is stated that it was rare for the Sanhedrin to issue the death penalty. "The Sanhedrin that puts to death one person in seven years is termed tyrannical. R. Elazar ben Azariah says, One person in seventy years." So the condemnation of our Lord by the Sanhedrin was evidently very unusual and supports the testimony of Scripture to the antipathy for Him, as well as evidences a sense of urgency in Caiaphas's plot that "one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation should not perish."

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### **Stung By A Bee**

It is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish. —  
John 11:50

Today's Scripture: John 11:47-52

Caiaphas the high priest unknowingly spoke prophetically about Jesus when he said it would be better for one man to die than for the whole nation to perish (Jn. 11:50-52). This reminds me of an all-but-forgotten truth: When on the cross Jesus took the penalty we deserved, He put the welfare of others ahead of His own.

Oh, that we would follow His example in our churches, and realize that the church is bigger than any individual, its ministry far more important than our personal rights and desires! If we would only ask, "How would my action affect the church and the program of Christ?" Instead, we insist on our rights and hold to our position, even though it splits the church, ruins our testimony, and stops progress.

One summer I was picking beans near one of my beehives. Some of the bees spotted me and supposed me to be the enemy. In their attack, two bees stung me and died in the defense of the hive. They had only one goal—the safety of the others in the hive, so they gave their lives for the good of the many.

Instead of being angry, I admired those bees and prayed that we would be like that, not seeking our own comfort and safety, but living for the good of the body of Christ! By: M.R. DeHaan (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Love yourself last, and you will grow in spirit  
To see, to hear, to know, and understand;  
The blessing of the Lord, you will receive it,  
And all God's joys will be at your command.  
—Anon.

We are most useful to God when we are most useful to others.

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### **The Scapegoat**

It is expedient for us that one man should die for the people. — John 11:50

Today's Scripture: Leviticus 16:1-10,20-22

The company was losing money. The price of its stock was sliding, and the corporate board was grumbling. So the president,

desperate to do something, fired the vice-president in charge of sales.

In a similar situation, a college basketball team was mired in a losing season after 6 consecutive successful years and three visits to the NCAA Tournament. Attendance was down and the alumni were howling. So the university fired the coach.

In both cases, good people were released because the organization needed a scapegoat. They focused the blame on one person, even though many were at fault.

That's what happened to Jesus. The high priest Caiaphas, without knowing the full import of his words, said it would be best to sacrifice one man, Jesus. He thought it would save the nation from the oppressive Romans (Jn. 11:47-50). What he didn't realize was that Jesus was bearing the guilt and penalty for the sins of the world in fulfillment of the Old Testament picture of the two goats—one a sacrifice for sin, the other a scapegoat which symbolically carried their sins away (Lev. 16).

We deserve eternal death. How grateful we can be that God made Jesus our scapegoat. By: David C. Egner (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Lord, thank You for eternal life,  
For dying in my place,  
For taking all my punishment,  
For showing me Your grace.  
—Sper

Christ became our scapegoat that we might escape sin's penalty.

**John 11:51 Now he did not say this on his own initiative, but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation,**

BGT John 11:51 το το δ φ αυτο ο κ ε π εν, λ λ ρ χ ι ε ρ ε ς ν το ν ι α υ τ ο κ ε ν ο υ π ρ ο φ τ ε υ σ ε ν τ ι μ ε λ λ ε ν η σ ο ς π ο θ ν σ κ ε ι ν π ρ ο τ ο θ ν ο υ ς,

KJV John 11:51 And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation;

NET John 11:51 (Now he did not say this on his own, but because he was high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the Jewish nation,

CSB John 11:51 He did not say this on his own, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation,

ESV John 11:51 He did not say this of his own accord, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation,

NIV John 11:51 He did not say this on his own, but as high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation,

NLT John 11:51 He did not say this on his own; as high priest at that time he was led to prophesy that Jesus would die for the entire nation.

NRS John 11:51 He did not say this on his own, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus was about to die for the nation,

NJB John 11:51 He did not speak in his own person, but as high priest of that year he was prophesying that Jesus was to die for the nation-

NAB John 11:51 He did not say this on his own, but since he was high priest for that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation,

YLT John 11:51 And this he said not of himself, but being chief priest of that year, he did prophesy that Jesus was about to die for the nation,

MIT John 11:51 He did not say this merely by his own motivation, but as the high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus was about to die on behalf of the nation.



- **he prophesied:** Nu 22:28 Nu 24:2,14-25 Mt 7:22,23 1Co 13:2 2Pe 2:15-17
- **that Jesus:** Jn 10:15 Isa 53:5-8 Da 9:26 Mt 20:28 Ro 3:25,26 2Co 5:21 Ga 3:13 Ga 4:4,5 1Pe 2:24 3:18
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## AN AMAZING PROPHECY BY AN UNBELIEVER!

Caiaphas speaks better than he knows!

**Now he did not say this on his own initiative** - Clearly God is behind the scene and is causing Caiaphas to give this incredible prophecy, for as Jehovah says "as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts." (Isa 55:9)

**But being high priest** ([archiereus](#)) **that year, he prophesied** ([propheteuo](#)) **that Jesus** ([lesous](#)) **was going** ([mello](#) - inevitability with respect to the future = "was about to die") **to die** ([apothnesko](#)) **for** ([huper](#) - on behalf of) **the nation** - Caiaphas' prophecy of Jesus vicarious atonement. As far as I can discern **Caiaphas** was unregenerate and yet God used him to speak forth a revelation that would prove true, even as He used an unregenerate donkey to speak in Nu 22:28+! We see the mysterious juxtaposition of God's sovereign movement and man's free will. Caiaphas' words were evil (calling for murder of a man), so he would be held responsible for his words, even as God was able to use them providentially as a prophecy. "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!" (Ro 11:33+)

**Spurgeon** - He did not understand his own words. He was saying a great deal more than he meant to say — for it was expedient — blessedly expedient — that Jesus should die willingly and of his own accord, giving himself up to death for the sake of his people. [Spurgeon's Exposition - Gospel of John](#)

[The Apologetics Study Bible Holman Christian Standard Bible](#) - It is unlikely that John would view Caiaphas as a true prophet. Rather, he was referring to the Jewish tradition that high priests could prophesy and was pointing out (ironically) how Caiaphas spoke better than he knew. Caiaphas only wanted to protect his people from the Romans; Jesus' death would actually make possible the forgiveness of anyone's sins.

[Bob Utley](#) - [The NIDOTTE, vol. 1, p. 326 \(BORROW\)](#), has a good comment about the theological use of the VERB [mello](#) ("must," "to have to," "to be certain") when used of God's will for Christ's redemptive work. (1) Mark 10:32 (2) Matthew 17:22 (3) Luke 9:31,44; 24:21; Acts 26:23 (4) John 7:39; 11:51; 12:33; 14:22; 18:32 It is also used of the necessity of Judas' betrayal - (1) Luke 22:23 (2) John 6:71; 12:4. Luke, in Acts, uses it for prophetic fulfillment (i.e., Acts 11:28; 24:15; 26:22). All of the redemptive events were in the hands of God (cf. Acts 2:23; 3:18; 4:28; 13:29)! History is not random!

**John 11:52 and not for the nation only, but in order that He might also gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad.**

BGT John 11:52 κα ο χ π ρ το θνους μ von λλ να κα τ τ κνα το θεο τ διεσκορπισμ να συναγ γ ε ς ν.

KJV John 11:52 And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.

NET John 11:52 and not for the Jewish nation only, but to gather together into one the children of God who are scattered.)

CSB John 11:52 and not for the nation only, but also to unite the scattered children of God.

ESV John 11:52 and not for the nation only, but also to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad.

NIV John 11:52 and not only for that nation but also for the scattered children of God, to bring them together and make them one.

NLT John 11:52 And not only for that nation, but to bring together and unite all the children of God scattered around the world.

NRS John 11:52 and not for the nation only, but to gather into one the dispersed children of God.

NJB John 11:52 and not for the nation only, but also to gather together into one the scattered children of God.

NAB John 11:52 and not only for the nation, but also to gather into one the dispersed children of God.

YLT John 11:52 and not for the nation only, but that also the children of God, who have been scattered abroad, he may gather together into one.

MIT John 11:52 Jesus' death would not be for the nation alone, but that he might bring together God's scattered children.

- **not:** Jn 1:29 Jn 12:32 Ps 22:15,27 72:19 Isa 49:6 Lu 2:32 Ro 3:29 1Jn 2:2 Rev 5:9 7:9,10
- **gather:** Jn 10:16 Ge 49:10 Ps 102:22,23 Isa 11:10-12 49:18 55:5 56:8 60:4 Mt 25:31-34 Eph 1:9,10 2:14-22 Col 1:20-23
- **the children:** Ho 1:10 Ac 18:10 Ro 4:17 8:29,30 9:25,26 Eph 1:5 3:11 2Th 2:13,14
- **who are scattered abroad:** Eze 11:16,17 34:12 Eph 2:14-17 Jas 1:1 1Pe 1:1
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

John 1:29+ The next day he \*saw Jesus coming to him and \*said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of **the world!**"

John 12:32+ (GATHER TOGETHER INTO ONE) "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, **will draw all men to Myself.**"

John 10:16+ "I have other sheep (AKA GENTILES), which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and **they will become one flock with one shepherd.**"

Ephesians 2:11-18+ - Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "Uncircumcision" by the so-called "Circumcision," (JEWS) which is performed in the flesh by human hands— 12 remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you (GENTILES) who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, 15 by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, 16 and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. 17 AND HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR; 18 for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father.

### **JESUS' DEATH WOULD GATHER JEW AND GENTILE**

**And not for the nation ([ethnos](#)) only (Israel), but (term of contrast) in order that ([hina](#) = purpose clause - always ask "What purpose or result?") He might also gather together ([sunago](#)) into one the [children](#) ([teknon](#) from tikto = bring forth thus "born ones") [of God](#) ([theos](#)) who are scattered abroad ([diaskorpizo](#) in perfect tense - past completed action, ongoing effect/result) - The truth of this amazing prophecy is mind boggling. Indeed, it would come to pass just as Caiaphas had prophesied, but doubtless not exactly in the way he thought it could come to pass. His prophecy would be fulfilled when all believers, both Jew and Gentile would come together in one body, the body of Christ which came into existence at Pentecost. Even the Samaritans had recognized that Jesus was "indeed the Savior of the world." (Jn 4:42+).**

**John MacArthur** adds "**the children of God who are scattered abroad** referred to the [Jews of the Diaspora](#), those who lived outside of Palestine. They, too, would be gathered into the body of Christ's redeemed people (cf. Acts 2:5, 41; 11:19). But in a wider sense, it referred to the salvation of the Gentiles (cf. Acts 10:16; Acts 12:32; Isa. 42:6; 49:6; 56:6-8; Acts 9:15; Acts 10:1-11:18 esp Acts 11:17-18+; Rom. 1:16) and their union with the Jews in the church (1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:28; Eph. 2:11-18; 3:6; Col. 3:11). (See [John Commentary](#))

**Bob Utley** - "**He might also gather together into one the children of God**" This seems to be an editorial comment by John which could be parallel with John 10:16. It could refer to (1) Jews living outside Palestine (2) half-Jews like the Samaritans (3) Gentiles. Option #3 seems best (I AGREE BECAUSE CHILDREN OF GOD DESCRIBES BELIEVERS WHICH INCLUDES JEWS AND GENTILES - 1Jn 3:1+). Whichever it is, Jesus' death will bring a unity to "believing" humanity (cf. John 1:29; 3:16; 4:42; 10:16; Eph. 2:11-3:13).

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**Scattered abroad** (1287) **diaskorpizo** from **dia** = an intensifies or denotes separation + **skorpízō** = to dissipate) means to scatter abroad or disperse. It is used of chaff being scattered to the wind on the threshing floor, meaning to winnow (Mt 25:24, 26). Metaphorically it means to dissipate, squander (Luke 15:13; 16:1). Mattoon says "to winnow, like a person that separates the grain from the chaff by throwing it up high into the air and letting the wind blow away the chaff." This is the way the prodigal son handled his resources. He was throwing away his substance." ([Treasures from Luke](#))

**Diaskorpizo** - 9x in 9v - scattered(6), scattered abroad(1), squandered(1), squandering(1). Matt. 25:24; Matt. 25:26; Matt. 26:31; Mk. 14:27; Lk. 1:51; Lk. 15:13; Lk. 16:1; Jn. 11:52; Acts 5:37

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## Bob Utley - [SPECIAL TOPIC: THE CHILDREN OF GOD](#)

The NT writers often use familial imagery to describe Christianity:

1. Father
2. Son
3. children
4. born again
5. adoption

Christianity is analogous to a family, not a product (ticket to heaven, fire insurance policy). This imagery comes from the intimacy of the faithful Jewish home. Believers in Christ have become the new eschatological "people of God" (cf. Rom. 2:28-29; Gal. 3:26-29; Eph. 2:11-3:13). As children we should reflect the Father's character, as did the "unique" (cf. John 1:14; 3:16) Son (cf. Eph. 5:1; 1 John 2:29; 3:3). "Child" is such a shocking title for sinners (cf. John 11:52; Rom. 8:14,16,21; 9:8; Phil. 2:15; 1 John 3:1,2,10; 5:2; Hos. 1:10 quoted in Rom. 9:26; and 2 Cor. 6:18).

It is also interesting that of the two Greek terms for **children**, one is always used of Jesus (*huios*), while the other (*teknon*, tekna) is used for believers. Christians are [children of God](#), but they are not in the same category as the unique, divine Son of God, Jesus. His relationship with the Father is unique, but analogous. .

There are three more Special Topics that deal with different aspects of this subject.

1. [SPECIAL TOPIC: SON OF GOD](#)
2. [SPECIAL TOPIC: "Sons of God..."](#)
3. [SPECIAL TOPIC: Sons of God in Genesis 6](#)

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## Related Resources:

- [What does it mean to be a child of God? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What does it mean that we are children of God \(1 John 3:1 ...](#)
- [How can I become a child of God? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Are we all God's children, or only Christians? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What does it mean to be a born again Christian? | GotQuestions.org](#)

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## John 11:53 So from that day on they planned together to kill Him.

BGT John 11:53 π κ ε ν η ς ο ν τ ς μ ρ α ς β ο υ λ ε σ α ν τ ο ν α π ο κ τ ε ν ω σ ι ν α τ ν .

KJV John 11:53 Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death.

NET John 11:53 So from that day they planned together to kill him.

CSB John 11:53 So from that day on they plotted to kill Him.

ESV John 11:53 So from that day on they made plans to put him to death.

NIV John 11:53 So from that day on they plotted to take his life.

NLT John 11:53 So from that time on, the Jewish leaders began to plot Jesus' death.

NRS John 11:53 So from that day on they planned to put him to death.

NJB John 11:53 From that day onwards they were determined to kill him.

NAB John 11:53 So from that day on they planned to kill him.

YLT John 11:53 From that day, therefore, they took counsel together that they may kill him;

MIT John 11:53 From that day forward they were plotting to assassinate him.

- **from:** Ne 4:16 13:21 Ps 113:2 Mt 16:21 22:46
- **they:** Jn 11:47 Ps 2:2 31:13 71:10 Mk 3:6 Ac 5:33 9:23
- **put:** Jn 12:10 Ps 109:4,5 Jer 38:4,15 Mt 26:59 Mk 14:1
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Mark 14:1-2+ Now the Passover and Unleavened Bread were two days away; and the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to seize Him by stealth and kill Him; 2 for they were saying, "Not during the festival, otherwise there might be a riot of the people."

John 5:18 For this reason therefore the Jews **were seeking all the more to kill Him**, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God.

John 7:19 "Did not Moses give you the Law, and yet none of you carries out the Law?**Why do you seek to kill Me?**"

John 8:59 Therefore **they picked up stones to throw at Him**, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple.

John 10:39 Therefore **they were seeking again to seize Him**, and He eluded their grasp.

John 11:8 The disciples \*said to Him, "Rabbi,**the Jews were just now seeking to stone You**, and are You going there again?"

## JESUS' HOUR HAD COME!

So ([oun](#)) is a term of conclusion. The council heard and accepted the prophetic words of Caiaphas.

**From that day on they planned ([bouleuo](#)) together ([hina](#) - purpose = in order) to kill ([apokteino](#)) Him** - Not just arrest Him and give Him a fair trial but to kill Him! Jesus had now been judged and condemned by the Sanhedrin and the arrest and trials were a formality (or better a mockery)! Jesus' fate was sealed and He would be killed and rise again, an event that ironically had been catalyzed or precipitated by the rising of another dead man name Lazarus!

*A resurrected/resuscitated Lazarus  
would lead to a crucified/resurrected Christ!*

These godless (so called) "religious" leaders thought they had reached an intelligent solution to their problem not realizing that Jesus would be "delivered over by the predetermined ([horizo](#)) plan and foreknowledge ([prognosis](#)) of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death." (Acts 2:23+) As so often in the Bible we see the mysterious interaction of God's sovereignty and man's responsibility. The bitter irony for these Jewish leaders is that they would be fully accountable to the very One they falsely judged at His [Great White Throne judgment!](#) The other irony is the very thing they were trying to preserve, their political power, they would lose in 70 AD when Rome was destroy the Temple and Jerusalem.

[Bob Utley](#) - "**So from that day on they planned together to kill Him**" This is a recurrent theme in John (cf. John 5:18; 7:19; 8:59; 10:39; 11:8).

[Brian Bell](#) - From now on Jesus & the Sanhedrin were on a collision course! From this time on Jesus alters His course: He changes His public outreach to a private in-reach. He shifts His emphasis from signs to quiet intimate conversation w/His disciples. He reduces His travels & returns to Jerusalem & stays there. He's not out evangelizing; He's preparing to leave & preparing the disciples for His departure.

[The Apologetics Study Bible Holman Christian Standard Bible](#) - Does this contradict the claim in the other Gospels that Jesus' cleansing of the temple was the reason the authorities finally decided to take His life (Mk 12:12)? No, because both John and the other Gospels recognize a series of events that eventually sealed Jesus' fate (Mk 3:6; Jn 5:18; 7:32; 8:59; 10:31).

**Spurgeon** - One bold wicked man can often sway the counsels of men who are equally bad, but more cowardly. It had not yet come to this — that they would hurt him to the death; but now they take counsel to put him to death. (ED: THEY HAD GIVEN THEIR FINAL VERDICT WITHOUT A TRIAL).

**Lawrence Richards** - The materialist will always make this choice. Whatever the materialist witnesses, it will never dawn on him or her that the spiritual world is more significant than the physical, or that Christ is Lord of all. Whatever the evidence, the materialist will attempt to do away with Christ rather than to worship Him.

**John 11:54** Therefore Jesus no longer continued to walk publicly among the Jews, but went away from there to the country near the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim; and there He stayed with the disciples.

BGT John 11:54 ο ν ησο ς ο κ τι παρρησ περιεπ τει ν το ς ουδα οις, λλ π λθεν κε θεν ε ς τ ν χ ραν γγ ς τ ς ρ μου, ε ς φρα μ λεγομ νην π λιν, κ κε μεινεν μετ τ ν μαθητ ν.

KJV John 11:54 Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples.

NET John 11:54 Thus Jesus no longer went around publicly among the Judeans, but went away from there to the region near the wilderness, to a town called Ephraim, and stayed there with his disciples.

CSB John 11:54 Therefore Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews but departed from there to the countryside near the wilderness, to a town called Ephraim. And He stayed there with the disciples.

ESV John 11:54 Jesus therefore no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went from there to the region near the wilderness, to a town called Ephraim, and there he stayed with the disciples.

NIV John 11:54 Therefore Jesus no longer moved about publicly among the Jews. Instead he withdrew to a region near the desert, to a village called Ephraim, where he stayed with his disciples.

NLT John 11:54 As a result, Jesus stopped his public ministry among the people and left Jerusalem. He went to a place near the wilderness, to the village of Ephraim, and stayed there with his disciples.

NRS John 11:54 Jesus therefore no longer walked about openly among the Jews, but went from there to a town called Ephraim in the region near the wilderness; and he remained there with the disciples.

NJB John 11:54 So Jesus no longer went about openly among the Jews, but left the district for a town called Ephraim, in the country bordering on the desert, and stayed there with his disciples.

NAB John 11:54 So Jesus no longer walked about in public among the Jews, but he left for the region near the desert, to a town called Ephraim, and there he remained with his disciples.

YLT John 11:54 Jesus, therefore, was no more freely walking among the Jews, but went away thence to the region nigh the wilderness, to a city called Ephraim, and there he tarried with his disciples.

MIT John 11:54 So Jesus no longer moved about in plain view among the Jews, but he left there for open country near the desert, to a town called Ephraim, and he remained there with his disciples.

- **walk:** Jn 4:1-3 7:1 10:40 18:20
- **went:** Jn 7:4,10,13
- **Ephraim:** Ephraim appears to be the same city which is called Ephron, 2 Ch 13:19 and Jos 15:9, which was situated eight miles north of Jerusalem, near Bethel, and apparently between that city and Jericho. Accordingly we find that a desert, or wilderness, extended from Jericho to Bethel (Jos 16:1), called the wilderness of Bethaven (Jos 18:12), in which Joshua and the Israelites slew the inhabitants of Ai. (Jos 8:24.) 2Sa 13:23 2Ch 13:19
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## REGION AROUND JUDEA NO LONGER SAFE

**Therefore** ([oun](#)) - Term of conclusion. What is John concluding and why this conclusion?

**Brian Bell** - The timing of His laying down of His life is still in His hands. Jesus heads to Ephraim, 12-15 miles away from the city, until Passover. As Passover nears, the “Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world” begins to make his final preparations

before He lays down His life & takes it up again.

**Jesus ([lesous](#)) no longer ([ouketi](#)) continued to walk ([peripateo](#)) publicly ([parrhesia](#) - openly, boldly) among the Jews ([loudaios](#))** - Jesus was fully aware of the plan to kill Him but He was also in full control of the exact details of how this would play out. And so He withdrew for a while. **Among the Jews** speaks of the **Jews** in Judea who would be likely to report Jesus whereabouts to the religious leaders in Jerusalem.

**But went away from ([aperchomai](#)) there to the country near the wilderness ([eremos](#)), into a city called Ephraim; and there He stayed ([meno](#)) with the disciples ([mathetes](#))** - Jesus withdrew because He was in control of the events leading to His death and would die on His Father's timetable, not that of His enemies!

We do not know the exact location of this city, but the most frequent suggestion is the present town of [Et-Taiyibeh](#), which was named [Ophrah](#) (Josh 18:23) or [Ephron](#) (Josh 15:9) and is about 12–15 mi northeast of Jerusalem near where the high plateau breaks away in rugged terrain leading down to the Jordan valley. Obviously it was far enough from Jerusalem that He knew He and the disciple would be safe.

**THOUGHT** - Spurgeon has an interesting application of Jesus' retirement to Ephraim - We do not find that He wrought miracles there or preached, but in a holy and devout retirement, it may be, He prepared His mind for the last great week — the week of his passion and His death. It is generally best for us to imitate Him in this; and when we have some great work to do — something that will need all the grace that we can get, it is well to make a retreat — get into retirement, and school the heart, and seek to drink in fresh strength that we may be prepared for that which lies before us.

**Bob Utley** - "Jesus therefore no longer continued to walk publically among the Jews" John 12 is Jesus' last attempt to deal with the religious leaders. The term translated in John "publicly" (cf. John 7:26; 11:54; 18:20) usually means "boldly." **"a city called Ephraim"** This town may have been located close to Bethel in Samaria (cf. 2 Chr. 13:19).

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**Bob Utley** - [SPECIAL TOPIC: BOLDNESS \(\*parrhēsia\*\)](#)

This Greek term is a compound of "all" (*pan*) and "speech" (*rhēsis*). This freedom or boldness in speech often had the connotation of a boldness amidst opposition or rejection (cf. John 7:13; 1 Thess. 2:2).

In John's writings (used 13 times) it often denotes a public proclamation (cf. John 18:20, also in Paul's writings, Col. 2:15). However, sometimes it simply means "plainly" (cf. John 10:24; 11:14; 16:25,29).

In Acts the Apostles speak the message about Jesus in the same manner (with boldness) as Jesus spoke about the Father and His plans and promises (cf. Acts 2:29; 4:13,29,31; 9:27-28; 13:46; 14:3; 18:26; 19:8; 26:26; 28:31). Paul also asked for prayer that he might boldly preach the gospel (cf. Eph. 6:19; 1 Thess. 2:2) and live the gospel (cf. Phil. 1:20).

Paul's eschatological hope in Christ gave him boldness and confidence to preach the gospel in this current evil age (cf. 2 Cor. 3:11-12). He also had confidence that Jesus' followers would act appropriately (cf. 2 Cor. 7:4).

There is one more aspect to this term. The book of Hebrews uses it in a unique sense of the believer' boldness, in Christ, to approach God and speak to Him (cf. Heb. 3:6; 4:16; 10:19,35). Believers are fully accepted and welcomed into intimacy with the Father through the Son (cf. 2 Cor. 5:21)!

It is used in several ways in the NT.

1. a confidence, boldness, or assurance related to
  - a. men (cf. Acts 2:29; 4:13,31; 2 Cor. 3:12; Eph. 6:19)
  - b. God (cf. 1 John 2:28; 3:21; 4:12; 5:14; Heb. 3:6; 4:16; 10:19)
2. to speak openly, plainly, or unambiguously (cf. Mark 8:32; John 7:4,13; 10:24; 11:14; 16:25; Acts 28:31)
3. to speak publically (cf. John 7:26; 11:54; 18:20)
4. the related form (*parrhēsiazoma*) is used to preach boldly amidst difficult circumstances (cf. Acts 18:26; 19:8; Eph. 6:20; 1 Thess. 2:2)

**John 11:55** Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up to Jerusalem out of the country before the Passover to purify themselves.

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BGT John 11:55 ἡ δὲ γὰρ τὸ πᾶσα τὴν οὐδαῶν, καὶ ἐβήσαν πολλοὶ εἰς ἑρσλυμὰ κτὲς ἕρας πρὸ τοῦ πᾶσα νὰ γνῶσιν αὐτοὺς.

KJV John 11:55 And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves.

NET John 11:55 Now the Jewish feast of Passover was near, and many people went up to Jerusalem from the rural areas before the Passover to cleanse themselves ritually.

CSB John 11:55 The Jewish Passover was near, and many went up to Jerusalem from the country to purify themselves before the Passover.

ESV John 11:55 Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and many went up from the country to Jerusalem before the Passover to purify themselves.

NIV John 11:55 When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, many went up from the country to Jerusalem for their ceremonial cleansing before the Passover.

NLT John 11:55 It was now almost time for the Jewish Passover celebration, and many people from all over the country arrived in Jerusalem several days early so they could go through the purification ceremony before Passover began.

NRS John 11:55 Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up from the country to Jerusalem before the Passover to purify themselves.

NJB John 11:55 The Jewish Passover was drawing near, and many of the country people who had gone up to Jerusalem before the Passover to purify themselves

NAB John 11:55 Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up from the country to Jerusalem before Passover to purify themselves.

YLT John 11:55 And the passover of the Jews was nigh, and many went up to Jerusalem out of the country before the passover, that they might purify themselves;

MIT John 11:55 The Jewish Passover was near, and many from the outlying areas went up to Jerusalem before the Passover to purify themselves.

- **passover:** Jn 2:13 Jn 5:1 Jn 6:4 Ex 12:11-14
- **before:** Jn 7:8-10 12:1 Ezr 3:1-6 Ne 8:1-12
- **to purify:** Jn 2:6 Ge 35:2 Ex 19:10,14,15 Nu 9:6 1Sa 16:5 2Ch 30:17-20 Job 1:5 Ps 26:6 Ac 24:18 1Co 11:28 Heb 9:13,14 Jas 4:8
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Exodus 12:11-14+ 'Now you shall eat it in this manner: with your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste—it is the LORD'S Passover. 12 'For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments—I am the LORD. 13 'The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live; and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt. 14 'Now this day will be a memorial to you, and you shall celebrate it as a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations you are to celebrate it as a permanent ordinance.

John 2:13+ (TIME OF JESUS' FIRST MAJOR CONFRONTATION WITH JEWISH LEADERS - IN CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE) The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

John 6:4+ (SECOND PASSOVER REFERRED TO IN JOHN) Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was near.

## THE PASSOVER DRAWS NEAR

Note that John 11:55-57 links John 11 and 12 together.

Now the **Passover** (*pascha*) of the Jews (*loudaios*) was near (*eggus*), and many went up (*anabaino*) to Jerusalem out of the country before the Passover (*pascha*) to purify (*hagnizo*) themselves - Note direction is always **went up** because Jerusalem was located at a higher elevation than surrounding land. This is the third Passover in the Gospel of John (Jn 2:13+, Jn 6:4+). The feast drew near prompting many Jews to carry out their ritualistic (ceremonial) purification procedures, cleansing the outside while their insides were full of dead men's bones. John latter alludes to this need for purification in order to participate in the Passover describing the hypocritical Jews who "led Jesus from Caiaphas into the Praetorium, and it was early; and they themselves did not enter into the Praetorium **so that they would not be defiled, but might eat the Passover**" (Jn 18:28)

**Bob Utley** - "**to purify themselves**" This refers to ritual rites of cleansing in preparation for the Passover. There is still debate over how long Jesus taught, preached, and ministered in Palestine. The Synoptics are structured in such a way that one or two years is possible. However, John has several Passovers (an annual feast). There are certainly three mentioned ("the feast," cf. John 2:13; 6:4; and 11:55) with at least a fourth implied in "a feast" in John 5:1.

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#### Related Resources:

- [What is Passover? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What is the Passover Lamb? How is Jesus our Passover Lamb? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**John 11:56 So they were seeking for Jesus, and were saying to one another as they stood in the temple, "What do you think; that He will not come to the feast at all?"**

BGT John 11:56 ζ τουν ο ν τ ν η σο ν κα λεγον μετ λλ λων ν τ ερ σθηκ τες τ δοκε μ ν; τι ο μ λθ ες τ ν ορτ ν;

KJV John 11:56 Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?

NET John 11:56 Thus they were looking for Jesus, and saying to one another as they stood in the temple courts, "What do you think? That he won't come to the feast?"

CSB John 11:56 They were looking for Jesus and asking one another as they stood in the temple complex: "What do you think? He won't come to the festival, will He?"

ESV John 11:56 They were looking for Jesus and saying to one another as they stood in the temple, "What do you think? That he will not come to the feast at all?"

NIV John 11:56 They kept looking for Jesus, and as they stood in the temple area they asked one another, "What do you think? Isn't he coming to the Feast at all?"

NLT John 11:56 They kept looking for Jesus, but as they stood around in the Temple, they said to each other, "What do you think? He won't come for Passover, will he?"

NRS John 11:56 They were looking for Jesus and were asking one another as they stood in the temple, "What do you think? Surely he will not come to the festival, will he?"

NJB John 11:56 were looking out for Jesus, saying to one another as they stood about in the Temple, 'What do you think? Will he come to the festival or not?'

NAB John 11:56 They looked for Jesus and said to one another as they were in the temple area, "What do you think? That he will not come to the feast?"

YLT John 11:56 they were seeking, therefore, Jesus, and said one with another, standing in the temple, 'What doth appear to you -- that he may not come to the feast?'

MIT John 11:56 All the while, they were seeking Jesus and kept discussing the subject as they stood with one another in the temple. Conversations went like this: "What do you think? Surely he will not come to the festival?"

- Jn 11:8 Jn 7:11 Jn 11:7
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



## Related Passages:

John 7:11 So the Jews were seeking Him at the feast and were saying, "Where is He?"

## SEEKING JESUS BUT WHY?

**So they were seeking (zeteo) for Jesus (Iesous)** - Here we have another editorial comment from John. **Seeking (zeteo)** is in the imperfect tense indicating over and over, here and there trying to find Him. These were not the "bad guys," the Jewish leaders, but the Jewish laity. And they were doing a good thing in seeking for Jesus. But as the Passion week would demonstrate, many of these "seekers" would prove fickle and turn against Jesus at Pilate's judgment crying "crucify Him!" (Jn 19:14-15).

I am reminded of Jehovah's words through His prophet Jeremiah to the rebellious Jews in Judah declaring that "You will **seek** (Lxx = **ekzeteo**) Me and find Me **when you search** (Lxx = **zeteo**) for Me (THE QUALIFIER) **with all your heart.**" (Jer 29:13).

**THOUGHT** - Some today seek Jesus for what they get out of Him in a temporal sense. All of the name it/claim, prosperity preaching men and women are of this lurid ilk! If they never repent of their evil seeking, they will one day find Him as the Judge on the Great White Throne and then they will wish they had sought Him with all their heart. (cf Rev 20:11-15+).

**And were saying to one another as they stood in the temple (hieros), "What do you think (dokeo); that He will not come to the feast (heorte) at all** - The structure of the Greek sentence expects the answer "**No.**" While we cannot be too hard on these Jews, it is as if they are looking for a celebrity appearance, rather than a circumcision of their hearts!

**Spurgeon** - They had heard much of him in the country. Country people coming to town want to hear the great minister — to see the great Prophet: so that is their question, "Will he come to the feast?"

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**Robert Hawker** - IS this thy inquiry, my soul, when, at any time, thou art seeking Jesus in his word, in his ordinances, at his table? Will he not come? Will Jesus not be there? Think how he hath dealt in times past. Did not Jesus rejoice, when the hour arrived for coming into the world for salvation? Doth he not rejoice, when coming to the heart of the poor sinner for conversion? And will he not come with joy, in all the renewed visits of his love? Besides—doth not Jesus know that it is a time of need to thee? And hath he not opened a way to the throne of grace, on purpose that his poor helpless children might come boldly to a throne of grace to obtain help, and find grace, in every time of need? Oh! then, mark it down as a sure thing, thy Jesus will be there. He spreads the feast, and he will be present. He waits to be gracious; waits to be kind to thee. Love is in his heart, and salvation in his hands. Hasten then to his house, to his table, to his bosom, to his heart; and say with the Church, "Come, my Beloved, and be thou like a roe, or a young heart, upon the mountains of Bethel."

**John 11:57 Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where He was, he was to report it, so that they might seize Him.**

BGT John 11:57 δεδ κεισαν δ ο ρχιερεις κα ο Φαρισαις ντολς να ν τις γν πο στιν μην σ, πως πι σωσιν α τ ν.

KJV John 11:57 Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where he were, he should shew it, that they might take him.

NET John 11:57 (Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that anyone who knew where Jesus was should report it, so that they could arrest him.)

CSB John 11:57 The chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where He was, he should report it so they could arrest Him.

ESV John 11:57 Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where he was, he should let them know, so that they might arrest him.

NIV John 11:57 But the chief priests and Pharisees had given orders that if anyone found out where Jesus was, he should report it so that they might arrest him.

NLT John 11:57 Meanwhile, the leading priests and Pharisees had publicly ordered that anyone seeing Jesus must report it immediately so they could arrest him.

NRS John 11:57 Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that anyone who knew where Jesus was should let them know, so that they might arrest him.

NJB John 11:57 The chief priests and Pharisees had by now given their orders: anyone who knew where he was must inform them so that they could arrest him.

NAB John 11:57 For the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where he was, he should inform them, so that they might arrest him.

YLT John 11:57 and both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a command, that if any one may know where he is, he may shew it, so that they may seize him.

MIT John 11:57 The executive priests and Pharisees had issued an order that if anyone knew his whereabouts, he was to report it so they might arrest him.

- **had given orders:** Jn 5:16-18 8:59 9:22 10:39 Ps 109:4
- John 11 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **THE JEWISH LEADERS PUT OUT AN ALL POINTS BULLETIN ON JESUS!**

Now the chief priests ([archiereus](#)) and the Pharisees ([pharisaiois](#)) had given orders ([entole](#)) that if anyone knew ([ginosko](#)) where He was, he was to report ([menuo](#)) it, so that ([hina](#) - PURPOSE CLAUSE) they might seize ([piazo](#)) Him - The religious leaders were poised to spring the deadly trap, but first they had to find their Victim. And of course they could not find Him until His hour at fully come. The sovereign God was in full control of every "jot and tittle" concerning His Son's fate. Absolutely nothing was left to chance. **Seize** ([piazo](#)) is a key word in John as the leaders began to repeatedly seek to seize Jesus (Jn 7:30, 32, 44, Jn 8:20, 10:39, 11:57).

**THOUGHT** - Do you appreciate the sovereignty of God in your life? He is **always** in control, even when things in our life seem out of control. His sovereignty is a soft pillow to rest on at night even when the winds of adversity are blowing "outside our bedroom window" (so to speak).

**Spurgeon** summarizes the attitude of the religious leaders stating "They could not deny the miracle: they could arrest and punish the Miracle-Worker."

As [Wiersbe](#) says "The stage had been set for the greatest drama in history, during which man would do his worst and God would give His best."

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**Seize** (catch)([4084](#)) [piazo](#) related to **piezo** = to press) originally meant to press or squeeze, and then to take hold of with a firm grasp as here in Acts 3:7. More often **piazo** speaks of seizing someone with a hostile intent so as to overpower them or to gain control. Most often **piazo** is used to describe the hostile attempts to seize Jesus (Jn 7:30, 32, 44, Jn 8:20, 10:39, 11:57). In 2 Cor 11:32 used of the attempt "to **seize**" Paul at "the city of the Damascenes." In Acts 12:4 of Herod who **seized** him (Peter and), he put him in prison."

**Piazo** - 12v - Jn. 7:30; Jn. 7:32; Jn. 7:44; Jn. 8:20; Jn. 10:39; Jn. 11:57; Jn. 21:3; Jn. 21:10; Acts 3:7; Acts 12:4; 2 Co. 11:32; Rev. 19:20