

John 11: The Resurrection & Life

Trouble, Trust, & Timing

John 11.1-6

The Significance of John 11

“Very truly I tell you, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself.”

JOHN 5.25-26

- ❖ Chapters 11-12 form the transition from public ministry to personal ministry—the cross is near.
- ❖ In acting on behalf of his friend, Jesus will set in motion the actions that are necessary to bring about his substitutionary death for the sins of the world—the fruitfulness of his own death (12.23-28)
- ❖ The events of this chapter contain the seventh of John’s curated signs, presented to the readers of his gospel *“so that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name”* (20.31).
- ❖ Jesus will also make another of his “I AM” declarations—this one the greatest evidence of his divine nature, that he is truly God and equal with the Father.

“If you are united with Christ”

Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. (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.)

“Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit . . .”

PHILIPPIANS 2.1

- ❖ This is the first of two appearances by this family in John’s gospel; his presentation of them seems to assume that his readers are familiar with them and that they are also familiar with the incident about Mary—whose story he has not yet told since it occurs just before the death of Jesus. Luke tells us of Martha and Mary; in chapter 12, John will refer to *“Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead”* (12.1).
- ❖ This was a family who loved Jesus and who was dear to Jesus: Lazarus, *“your dear friend,”* Martha, who opened her home to Jesus and served him, and Mary, with her heart of devotion.
- ❖ At their home, many will believe in Jesus (11.48; 12.9-11) and from their home, Jesus will leave to enter Jerusalem in fulfillment of Zechariah’s prophecy.

“This, then, is how you should pray . . .”

So the sisters sent word to Jesus, “Lord, the one you love is sick.”

“And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. “This, then, is how you should pray:

*“ ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name,
Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.’ ”*

MATTHEW 6.7-10

- ❖ The simplicity of the sisters’ request, made to Jesus in an urgent crisis, as presented to us by John is a model not only for prayer, but also the posture of our hearts—
 - ▶ The need was presented simply: “Your friend is sick.”
 - ▶ The basis of their request: “The one you love.”
 - ▶ The posture of their hearts: “*You will know what to do.*”

“Your will be done on earth as in heaven”

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.”

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.”

ROMANS 8.28-29

- ❖ The reply of Jesus was meant to give Martha and Mary *his perspective* regarding their message:

Then Jesus said, “Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?” (v. 40)

- ❖ Martha and Mary saw their need; Jesus saw the glory of God—

- ▶ The human actions necessary for the substitutionary death of Jesus would be set in motion (vs. 49-52);
- ▶ The outcome of Lazarus’ sickness would cause “many Jews” to put their faith in Jesus—something that had not been accomplished by other miracles;
- ▶ Jesus would truly be revealed as the Source (P⁴) and Arbiter (5.26) of resurrection life.

“How long, O Lord, will you forget me?” PSALM 13

Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days . . .

“What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will He not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?”

ROMANS 8.31-32

- ❖ In delay, do we trust God or do we question His love and timing?
- ❖ In the original language, there is a definite article before each name, giving it this emphasis:

“Now Jesus loved this Martha, and this Mary and this Lazarus.”

- ❖ In the hands of our loving Father, difficulties always produce **greater life**—

But He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

2 CORINTHIANS 12.9-10

- ❖ In the hands of our loving Father difficulties alway produce **greater purpose**.

When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "What if Joseph holds a grudge against us and pays us back for all the wrongs we did to him?"

But Joseph said to them, "Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. So then, don't be afraid. I will provide for you and your children." And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them.

GENESIS 50.15, 19-21

- ❖ In the hands of our loving Father, difficulties alway produce **greater glory**.

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

2 CORINTHIANS 4.16-18