

THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF LAZARUS

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John 11:1-16

“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. So the sisters sent word to Jesus, “Lord, the one you love is sick.” While 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.” Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. Yet when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days. Then he said to his disciples, “Let us go back to Judea.” “But Rabbi,” they said, “A short while ago the Jews tried to stone you, and yet you are going back there?” “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. It is when he walks by night that he stumbles, for he has no light.” 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.” His disciples replied, “Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better.” Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep. So then he told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead, and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.” Then Thomas (Called Didymus) said to the rest of the disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with him.”

SUMMARY:

This is the last of the signs recorded by John as evidence that Jesus is the Christ, and as another occasion for faith on the part of those who read (20:30-31). This miracle, often called the greatest, is a fitting climax to the earthly work of Jesus. It is the example par excellence of what Jesus came to do for us – to bring us from death to life.

NOTES:

DISCUSSION POINTS:

Can you relate to the disciples frustrations and confusion when Jesus delays his departure to go to Lazarus? Would you question Jesus’ wisdom in returning to the middle of those who desired to kill him?

If you were Mary and Martha, how would you feel if Jesus would not come immediately to you when you knew that he had received word in time and could have come to Lazarus’ side and healed him? Have we not had similar questions and frustration with the slowness in which Jesus has responded to our prayers and requests?

How do you believe you would have reacted if you had been present when Lazarus came up out of the tomb?

Would seeing this great miracle have affected your expectations during the events of the coming days when Jesus was arrested, crucified, and buried? Would you have expected a resurrection miracle?

APPLICATION:

- Why do you think Jesus waited two days before he went to Lazarus side – especially when the scripture says that Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus?
- It is evident that the disciples were well aware of the deep hostility of the Jews who ‘sought to stone Jesus’. Naturally, they asked, “Why go now?” What do you think of Thomas’ statement, “Let’s also go and die with him.”? What do you think this reveals about Thomas, the one who is known as Doubting Thomas? What does it show us about Thomas’ faithfulness to Jesus?
- To raise Lazarus from the dead would be a more convincing miracle than to have just healed his illness. Did the disciples faith show growth and strength after they witnessed Lazarus’ resurrection or did the disciples falter?

ON YOUR OWN...

Matt. 9:18-26 Mark 5:22-43 Luke 8:40 –56 Luke 7:11-17,22
Matt. 11:4-5