**BCM Bible Study – April 25 & 26 2018**

**Signs of John: Raising Lazarus from the Dead (John 11:1-45)**

*This is the seventh sign in John. As we study these verses, keep in mind how this sign points to the cross and what this reveals about God’s character. This sign scares the Sanhedrin into making some drastic decisions.*

**Read John 11:1-16**

* What is the typical response of someone who learns a loved one is not doing well?
* Why do you think Jesus continues to teach instead of going back to his sick friend with the messenger?
* In v. 5-6, it says “Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus **SO,** when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place he was” (ESV). Why is this a “so” and not a “but”?

*Jesus is using this delay strategically to test the faith of Mary and Martha and to allow their family to be a part of a miraculous sign for the glory of God (summarized commentary of Matthew Henry).*

* What do you think is significant about returning to a place where the people attempted to stone Jesus before?

*It did not make Jesus hesitate because he knew what would happen before they went. It did make the disciples question Jesus’ decision to go back to a place where they were just in danger.*

* What does Jesus mean by walking in the night and the light? What does walking in light look like?
  + How can you encourage others to do the same?

Despite the disciples questioning going back to Judea, they go with him despite believing they will probably die.

*“A singular mix of faith and unbelief! Thomas so believes his Master that he is willing to die with him. He so doubts him that, although the Savior had plainly told him he was immortal till his work was done, yet he is afraid his master and all of them will be put to death. The Lord knows us better than we know ourselves, and the Lord accepts us notwithstanding our infirmities” (Charles Spurgeon).*

* What prevents you from following Jesus into hard places and how can we change our attitudes toward committing?

**Read John 11: 17-27**

*There are some first-century writings that say that the Jews believed that the Spirit might hover around the body for a few days, so I think one of the pieces of significance about it being the fourth day is that no superstition could leak its way into this story. He's "dead dead" would be a good way to see this, which is why I think it refers to him as "the dead man"(Matt Chandler).*

* What does Jesus loving Lazarus and still allowing Lazarus to die teach us about God’s love?
* How do you typically feel love from God?
* Do you think Martha’s actions and words were appropriate? Why or why not?

*Note: Martha knows the right thing to say however, she doesn’t seem to truly believe it. Since she just made the accusation that Jesus is responsible for Lazarus’ death. She says her brother would not have died if Jesus was there and then says makes the claim, but God will do whatever you ask. She knows the right thing to say in the situation, however, her other words don’t line up from verse 22.*

* What phrases do we use in the church that we tend to not reflect on the meaning or even believe ourselves?
* How should we respond in times of suffering and mourning?
* What is Martha referring to when she is talking about the last day?
* Martha is limiting God’s power by not believing that her brother will not rise in their presence, but rather in the second coming.  Have you noticed a time in your life where you were limiting God’s power and did not realize it until later?
* Can someone explain what Jesus is talking about when he says “though he die... “everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die”?

**Read John 11: 28-37**

* What is unique about Mary’s response to Jesus asking for her?
* What is important about Jesus weeping and what does it display?
* What are the differences between the mourners’ weeping and Jesus’ weeping?

*Like the others,****Jesus wept.****But the Greek verb is not klaio as in verse 33, but dakruo, a rare word used only here in the New Testament. In contrast to the loud wailing implied by klaio, dakruo has the connotation of silently bursting into tears, unlike the typical funeral mourners. Jesus’ tears were generated both by His love for Lazarus, and by His grief over the deadly and incessant effects of sin in a fallen world. Verse 35, though it is the shortest verse in the Bible, is rich with meaning. It emphasizes Jesus’ humanity; He was truly “a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief” (*[*Isa. 53:3*](https://biblia.com/bible/nasb95/Isa.%2053.3)*). But while the****Jews were****correct in seeing Jesus’ sorrow as evidence that****He loved****Lazarus, they were wrong to think that His tears reflected the same hopeless despair that they felt (John MacArthur).*

* Even when some of the Jews acknowledged that Jesus was capable of healing, they were critical of how the power was not used on someone Jesus loved. In what ways are you critical of the way God works in your life or a loved one’s life? How should we respond to the way God works? How can we get to a place of understanding?

*It is important to remember that Jesus did not heal everyone at the pool at Bethesda, God’s design is not always to heal us, but his will is whatever will bring him the most glory. We tend to confine the ways God gets glory to what we want, but we can hardly fathom the possibilities in our miniscule view of the big picture God has designed.*

**Read John 11: 38-45**

*Despite what she said in v.39, Martha is again questioning Jesus’ ability by discouraging Jesus from opening up the tomb.*

* What are some things that stick out about Jesus’ prayer?
* John does not give an account of the reaction of Lazarus or his sisters, why do you think this is?

*Remarkably, John does not record Lazarus’s reaction or any of the aftermath of his raising, except for the fact that many of the Jews . . . believed.* ***The focus is on Jesus, not Lazarus****. (ESV Student Study Bible)*

*The rest of chapter 11 goes on to talk about the Sanhedrin and the meeting they held because they were scared everyone would believe that Jesus is God’s son and therefore also God. This is what made the Sanhedrin decide Jesus had to die and when they resolved to do it (which is funny considering he just displayed that he has power over death).*

**In Conclusion**,

What does this sign teach us about Jesus and God?

How does this sign intersect with the cross?

*It is important to recognize a few things:*

*1) Jesus’ power over death*

*2) The love God has for us*

*3) The cross is where God showed his love and mercy for us while defeating death.*

**Resources**:

<https://www.gty.org/library/bibleqnas-library/QA0057/why-did-jesus-weep>

<https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/john/11.html>

<https://www.tvcresources.net/resource-library/sermons/the-resurrection-and-the-life>

ESV Student Study Bible, Spurgeon Study Bible