

# If You Had Been Here:

*Wrestling with the Power of Jesus in the Pains of Everyday Life.  
February 23, 2020*

*John 11:1-46*

**Opening Thought:** Have you ever felt as though God were absent in your life? Have you ever felt like He is just letting bad things happen to you? Have you ever had the feeling that if God really loved you, you wouldn't be struggling the way that you are?

## I. Introduction/ Review

- A. What are we building up to? What is the main point of this passage?
  - 1. **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,
  - 2. This beautiful truth serves as the answer to the main objections in this text. It addresses the deepest concerns of the people with which we will interact in this famous biblical account.
- B. What is the backstory here? vv. 1-2
  - 1. Mary was the one who washed Jesus' feet with her tears and dried them with her hair.
    - a) Luke 7:36-50
    - b) Why say this? Why is this important?
  - 2. Jesus was very close with Lazarus and his sisters. They were special to Him in some way. They seem to have been friends.

## II. Lord, behold, the one you love is sick (vv. 3-16)

- A. The Sisters sent word to Jesus
  - 1. The Declaration- Why say it this way? v. 3
  - 2. The Deflection- Does Jesus really love them? vv. 4-6
  - 3. The Delay- Why doesn't Jesus go right away? v. 7
  - 4. The Danger- What is Jesus facing in Judea? vv. 8-10
- B. Lazarus, our friend, has fallen asleep vv. 11-15
  - 1. The Motive- Why say it this way? v. 11
  - 2. The Meaning- Lazarus is dead. vv. 12-14
  - 3. The Mystery- Why is Jesus glad? v. 15
- C. Let us go and die with him! v. 16
  - 1. The Commitment- What does this tell us about the disciples?
  - 2. The Confusion- How does this prepare us for what's coming?

## III. Lord, If You had been here, my brother would not have died. (vv. 17-35)

- A. The Conundrum (vv. 20-22)
  - 1. The responses to the arrival of Jesus (v. 20)
    - a) Martha went out to meet Jesus.
    - b) Mary stayed where she was.
  - 2. The reality of the arrival of Jesus (v. 21)
  - 3. The remaining hope with the arrival of Jesus (v. 22)
- B. The Correction (vv. 23-26)
  - 1. Your brother will rise again (vv. 23-24).
  - 2. I am the resurrection and the Life (vv. 25-26).
    - a) Notice Jesus' rejoinder to her statement: I am the resurrection and the life
    - b) Notice that the attention is not on some doctrine, but a person standing right in front of her.

**Quote:** “His words about faith and life are not a philosophical dictum to be critically argued. They are a saving truth to be received in faith and acted on.” Leon Morris, NICNT, 489

- C. The Confession (v. 27)
  - 1. Yes I believe
  - 2. You are the Christ
  
- D. The Confrontation (vv. 28-32)
  - 1. Mary is summoned and responds quickly (vv. 27-29)
  - 2. Mary is summoned to where Martha already was (v. 30)
  - 3. Mary was followed by the Jews (v. 31)
  - 4. Mary expresses her grief to Jesus (v. 32)
    - a) Notice that she says the exact same thing that her sister did.
    - b) Notice that Jesus doesn't correct her like He corrected her sister.
  
- E. The Compassion (vv. 33-35)
  - 1. Jesus was genuinely affected by their pain. (v. 33)
  - 2. Jesus was demonstrably affected by their pain. (vv. 34-35)

#### **IV. See how He loved him! (vv. 36-37)**

- A. His love is real (v. 36)
- B. His Love is problematic (v. 37)

#### **V. If you believe, you will see the glory of God (vv. 38-46)**

- A. The Reality of Lazarus (vv. 38-40)
- B. The Raising of Lazarus (vv. 41-44)
- C. The Response of the witnesses (vv. 45-46)

#### **VI. Conclusions/Implications**

- A. Why do we need this?
  - 1. Because, though we often feel and experience the blessing of Jesus' grace when we are suffering and falling apart, sometimes when we suffer it seems as though Jesus is strangely absent.
  - 2. Because, if we are not careful, we may begin to expect that since we serve Him, he will shield us from pain and suffering.
  - 3. Because we need to remind ourselves that this life is not our ultimate blessing, nor is living a long earthly life our ultimate goal.
    - a) **Philippians 1:21** For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.
  
- B. God genuinely, emotionally reacts to your suffering and hardship.
  - 1. He is not some stoic, emotion-less God.
  - 2. Theologians often describe God as "impassible" meaning that He is not effected at all by His creation. This is not the case.
    - a) The Holy Spirit is grieved...and that is an emotion.
      - (1) **Ephesians 4:30** Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.
    - b) Jesus (as here) shows great emotion, and is still God.
    - c) All over the Bible, God expresses Himself in emotional ways.
  
- C. No matter how much you ponder, think, study, or pray...there are some things that must remain a mystery.
  - 1. **Deuteronomy 29:29** The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law.
  
- D. The times of our deepest doubts can (and often are) the times of greatest strengthening.
  - 1. **James 1:2** Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,

2. **1 Peter 1:6-7** In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, <sup>7</sup> so that the proof of your faith, *being* more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;