

Home Group Leader's Notes

Week of October 1, 2021

Lazarus' Death and Life

Bill Born is sharing the message from John 11

Sermon Series: *Death & Life*

WHAT'S TRUE FOR YOU?

Throughout our lives, we face many 'If only God . . .' questions.

What is true for you? When have you wished, wondered, or prayed an 'If only' question about God's work in your life?

For me, I asked "if only God would have saved my granddaughter, stopped a divorce in my family, stopped the growing dissonance at Trinity, or saved people for whom I have prayed.

LET'S LEARN FROM GOD'S WORD

Prior to this week's passage, people were ready to kill Jesus, even though He was doing amazing works. Jesus asked them why they wanted to kill Him. Their answer: "You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God." (John 10:33)

Read John 11:1-46 and consider these questions:

What kind of a relationship did Jesus have with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus?

They were dear friends that Jesus knew and loved. These were family to Him.

Why did he delay going to Lazarus?

To display the glory of God, to help people truly believe

What was the concern of the disciples?

They were concerned for their own safety. To go back toward Judea meant possibly being arrested or even killed.

How did Jesus address their concern?

He challenged them to trust in Him, the light.

What was Thomas' response?

Thomas understood the danger and was willing to die with Him (v.16)

How would you describe Martha's encounter with Jesus? (17-27) What was Martha's opening question and statement? What was Jesus' response to her?

- Direct, logical/theological, confident in Jesus' ability, confessional
- Opening statement: "If you had been here, my brother would not have died
- I am the resurrection and the life. . . .

What did Martha believe? (11:27) How does this compare with Jesus' statements in 10:25, 37-38? Martha's confession was the core of what Jesus was revealing about Himself, that He is the Christ, the Son of God, sent into the world.

How was Mary's encounter with Jesus different from Martha's? (28-35) What was her question? How was Jesus' response to Mary different from His response to Martha? Why might that be so?

- Mary's encounter was emotional, deeply felt. Same statement: "If you had . . . "
- Jesus' response was tender, emotional, deeply moved

What did the other "Jews" notice? (36-37) What was their question?

- They saw how Jesus loved Lazarus
- Same question: "Could not he ... have kept this man from dying?"

What do you notice about Jesus at the tomb? (38-44) What was Martha's concern? What is Jesus' response to Martha?

- Jesus was deeply moved, focused on helping people believe, in complete unity with the Father
- Martha was concerned about logical earthly things – odors after four days
- Jesus wanted Martha to see the glory of God, believe even more deeply/completely that He is God and can do all things and see the preview of God's plan to resurrect all who believe.

What were the different responses of "the Jews" to this miracle? (45-46)

- Many put their faith in Jesus
- Some went to the Pharisees

What did Jesus say was the purpose of all this? (see vs. 4, 14, 25-26, 40, 42)
For them to see the glory of God and believe in Him

DISCUSS TOGETHER

What makes this story one of the most significant in Jesus' life on earth? Why is it significant that it happens with Lazarus, Martha, and Mary?

Jesus proved publicly that He has the power over death and can bring about the resurrection of people.

Jesus had obvious love for his dear friend and yet allowed Him to die for the high cause of helping people see the glory of God and believe in Him.

What 'If only' questions does this story address? How does it have impact on the questions that we feel or ask in today's world?

This story addresses questions about the presence, love, and power of God and how He chooses to do what is best.

We all have questions about the above – Why doesn't God use His power to ____ . It also causes us to trust in God's judgment, to believe when we are challenged or hurting, and to be confident in God's master plans.

How might this affect our faith if we were present for this miracle? What affect did Jesus' seek? I would like to think that I would be like the Jews who put their faith in Him (v. 45). But the truth about me is that I can know or experience God's truth and still not act in faith. I think we all need to look for God's daily leading, trust in what we have already seen God do, and believe in God's master plans. In summary, know, love, and follow God with all our heart, strength, and mind.

How can we team-up to live as resurrection people today? How does being in community help us live this life?

We can encourage one another daily, remind one another, share what God is doing, and call out what is harmful.

May the glory of God strengthen your hearts and fill your every thought,
Steve