

John 11 - Raising of Lazarus; Chief Priests & Pharisees Plot Jesus' Death

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John 11

- (20) Raising Lazarus from the Dead (11:1-44)
 - (A) Sickness of Lazarus (11:1-3)
 - (a) Background (11:1-2)

1 Now a certain man was sick: Lazarus of **Bethany**, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.

1 Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.

1 Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.

1 Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.

– "...Bethany" – a bit confusing because there are two Bethany's: one located "beyond the Jordan" (Cf. 1:28) and another west of the Jordan, two miles east of Jerusalem

— The latter Bethany two miles east of Jerusalem) that is referred to here, on the western side of the Jordan River (Cf. v18)

2 And it was the Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet with her hair, whose **brother** Lazarus was sick.

2 It was the Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.

2 Mary was the woman who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair. Her brother Lazarus was the one who was ill.

2 (It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)

- "...brother" - Mary and Martha were sisters; Lazarus was their brother

(b) Beckoning (11:3)

3 So the sisters sent word to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You **love** is sick."

3 So the sisters sent word to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick."

3 So the sisters sent word to Jesus and told him, "Lord, the one whom you love is ill."

3 Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.

- Jesus was still beyond the Jordan, at the location where John the Baptist was baptizing earlier

- "...love" - *phileō*, Mary and Martha appeal to Jesus to come on the basis of His friendship with Lazarus

- By sending word of Lazarus' sickness to Jesus, their expectation was for Him to drop everything, stop what He was doing, and rush to Lazarus in order to heal him of his sickness before he died

— But these sisters had a false (human) expectation of God...they assumed that God was going to work in a specific way, according to how they saw this event play out. Their expectations put God in their box...God had to work in the way they expected or they would be disappointed.

— God is not going to work according to the sister's expectations, but instead according to His own divine blueprint, and the result will be so much greater and so much more significant than any human expectation

(B) Summary of Lazarus' condition (11:4-16)

(a) Declaration (11:4)

4 But when Jesus heard *this*, He said, "**This sickness is not meant for death, but is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it.**"

4 But when Jesus heard *this*, He said, "**This sickness is not to end in death, but for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it.**"

4 But when Jesus heard it, he said, "**This illness isn't meant to end in death. It's for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.**"

4 When Jesus heard that, he said, **This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.**

- "...This sickness is not meant for death" - Jesus immediately, through His attribute of omniscience, understood the scope of the problem and how He is going to resolve it in a way that renders multiple positive impacts on people, while at the same time bringing the highest glory to God

- "...for the glory of God" - Lazarus was sick (died) for the same reason the man was born blind (Cf. 9:2-3)
- Many Christians today have a distorted and unbiblical view of sickness, assuming that all sickness is outside of the will of God and all sickness is caused by sin
- Some instances of sin in our lives cause sickness (Cf. 5:14), but not all. There is sickness and disease that comes upon people in order for God to manifest His glory in those people.

(b) Devotion (11:5)

5 (Now Jesus **loved** Martha and her sister, and Lazarus.)

5 Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

5 Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

5 Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.

— "...loved" - *agapaō*, the sisters appealed to Jesus to come and heal Lazarus based on His friendship with him (11:3), but John gives us a parenthetical insertion here that says that Jesus loved the sisters and Lazarus with this highest form of sacrificial love imaginable

— Despite the manifestation of *agapē* love by Jesus to these three siblings, He is about to send them into the trial of their lives. They are already in difficulty, and that difficulty is about to get a whole lot worse. And this will occur in spite of the fact that Jesus loved them with the highest form of love.

— This is an important concept to pull out of this passage because many people have a false concept of the love of God. They base the love that God has for them on their present circumstances. If I get the job I want, God loves me; if I get the house I want, God loves me; if I have no health problems, God loves me.

— If this is your mindset, you're going to live a very disappointing life. Things are going to happen to you in this life that are negative from a human perspective. And if you live your life where you think God loves you only when your circumstances are favorable, you're going to come to a point in your life where you think God doesn't love you, because circumstances are not working out for you the way they used to.

— The idea that God's love for us can be measured based on our circumstances is flatly contradicted by v4-5 because the word *agapē* is used for the love of God despite the suffering that they are in, which is going to soon get a lot worse.

- So how do we measure God's love for us? We don't do it based on our circumstances; we measure God's love for us based on the tangible sacrifice that He made for us on the cross 2000 years ago (Cf. Rom 5:8).

(c) Delay (11:6)

6 So when He heard that he was sick, He then stayed two days *longer* in the place where He was.

6 So when He heard that he was sick, He then stayed two days *longer* in the place where He was.

6 Yet, when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed where he was for two more days.

6 When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.

- In His *agapē* love for these sisters and Lazarus, Jesus decides to delay another 48 hours before traveling to see them

— John has made it clear from numerous examples in his gospel that God's timing is not our timing: "My hour has not yet come" (2:4); "My time is not yet here" (7:6)

— We often expect that God is a cosmic bellhop, faithfully meeting our expectations for action on our own time schedule, and if He does not do what we expect Him to do, on our time schedule, we falsely conclude that God doesn't love us

— This becomes one of the greatest difficulties in the Christian life: when God does not operate the way we need or expect Him to operate, will we continue to trust in God when we don't understand? Will we continue to trust God when what He is doing makes no logical sense to us?

— If you've been a Christian for some time now, look back at how often God has answered a prayer of yours in the timing and manner that you expected. How many times has God done that?

— At some point in our Christian walk, we have to get comfortable that we're not in charge. We are not God's co-pilot. We are not driving the bus, but the more we try to put our hands on the steering wheel, the more frustrated we get.

— In His delay, He is demonstrating to Mary and Martha their need to begin to walk by faith, not by sight. Every major character in the Bible who God called for a significant purpose, God never gave them the roadmap ahead of time (Cf. Heb 11:8). If you don't know where God is going with your life, good...Abraham didn't know either, but he followed God in obedience, and was blessed.

— Why does God work this way? Because of Heb 11:6...without faith it is impossible to please God. Our entire relationship with God is based on faith...we are saved by faith, and the entire process of sanctification is by faith, trusting in the promises of God. If God laid out for us the blueprint ahead of time, we would not be walking by faith, but walking by sight.

Is 55:8-9:

8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD.

9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts.

In His time, in His time, He makes all things beautiful in His time, Lord please show me every day, As You're teaching me Your way, That You do just what Your say In Your time In Your time, in Your time, You make all things beautiful in Your time, Lord my life to You I bring, May each song I have to sing Be to You a lovely thing, In Your time.

(d) Decision (11:7)

- 7 Then after this He *said to the disciples, **"Let's go to Judea again."**
- 7 Then after this He *said to the disciples, **"Let us go to Judea again."**
- 7 After this, he told the disciples, **"Let's go back to Judea."**
- 7 Then after that saith he to his disciples, **Let us go into Judaea again.**
- After waiting for 48 hours, Jesus tells His disciples that they are going to Judea

(e) Dialogue (11:8-15)

(i) Concern (11:8)

- 8 The disciples *said to Him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now **seeking to stone You**, and yet You are going there again?"
- 8 The disciples *said to Him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone You, and are You going there again?"
- 8 The disciples told him, "Rabbi, the Jewish leaders were just now trying to stone you to death, and you are going back there again?"
- 8** His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?
 - Before they hit the road for Judea, Jesus has a lengthy dialogue with His disciples
 - Not only do the two sisters not understand what Jesus is doing, but now the disciples can't figure it out either
 - "...seeking to stone You" - Jesus just left Jerusalem (celebrating the Feast of Dedication) after two attempts to kill Him (Cf. 10:31,39). In both instances, Jesus miraculously escaped.
 - It's amazing how quickly they forgot about what Jesus said in 10:18: **No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it back. This commandment I received from My Father.**
 - Jesus clearly told the disciples that He would one day die, but He also clearly told them that no man would take His life from Him, but that He would lay down His life of His own volition. Had the disciples been listening and understanding, they would not have been fearful of the Pharisees stoning Jesus.

(ii) Commitment (11:9-11)

9 Jesus replied, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks during the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the **light** of this world.

9 Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world.

9 Jesus replied, "There are twelve hours in the day, aren't there? If anyone walks during the day he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world.

9 Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.

- "...light" - a metaphor for God's will

— Jesus is saying that as long as He is in the light, as long as He walks during the day in the light (He is walking in the Father's will), premature death is not a possibility

10 But if anyone walks during the **night**, he stumbles, because the light is not in him."

10 But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him."

10 But if anyone walks at night he stumbles, because the light is not in him."

10 But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.

- "...night" - a metaphor for being outside of God's will

— When we walk outside of the Father's will, we encounter dangers that we never anticipated

— As long as we are committed to the purposes of God, walking according to His revealed will in Scripture, and seeking Him moment-by-moment in faith to see what we should do for Him, nothing can happen to us unless God allows it (Cf. Job 1:8-9)

— Jesus is telling the disciples that as long as He remains in the Father's will, they didn't need to be concerned about premature death. Jesus knew the Father's will perfectly, and He remained in it perfectly.

— If something bad happens to you while you are in God's will, it is because God has sovereignly allowed it to happen. But when we move outside of God's will for our lives, we open ourselves up to all sorts of problems ("he stumbles"). The moment I walk out of God's will, out of His protective custody, I begin to experience problems, not that God sovereignly allowed me to experience, but problems that I have brought upon myself (Cf. 1 Cor 11:30).

— David is a good example...look at all the problems that came into David's life after he stepped out of the will of God and into sin. All of these problems David could have spared himself from had he not wandered out of the will of God and committed adultery, then murder.

— Jesus is telling His disciples here to not worry about premature death, either for Him or for themselves, as long as He and they are walking in the light (God's will)...but if you walk in the darkness, if you're out of His will, you'll stumble around in the darkness.

11 This He said, and after this He *said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has **fallen asleep**; but I am going so that I may awaken him from sleep."

11 This He said, and after that He *said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I go, so that I may awaken him out of sleep."

11 These were the things he said. Then after this, he told them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I'm leaving to wake him up."

11 These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.

- Jesus now begins to show His hand, to reveal His plans to the disciples. In v1-10 we are stuck at the human level, but now in v11 Jesus begins to show us His ways, not just His *deeds* (Cf. Ps 103:7)

— Jesus reveals here that He purposely allowed Lazarus to die (fall asleep) so that He could raise him from the dead

— Which is the greater miracle: healing Lazarus from sickness, or raising Lazarus from the dead? Which miracle will bring about a greater amount of faith? Which miracle will attract greater glory to God?

- "...fallen asleep" - a figure of speech called a euphemism, which is a good or polite way of saying something

— Jesus could've said that Lazarus had "dropped dead" or "kicked the bucket" but instead He chose the polite way of saying that Lazarus had died by saying he "fell asleep" (Cf. Acts 7:60; 1 Cor 11:30; 1 Thess 4:13)

— This is also an accurate description of a believer when they die...death in the Bible means "separation": the separation of the soul from the body. Thus death for the believer is a temporary condition because at the Rapture, if you have died physically, your body will be resurrected, glorified, and reunited with your soul. A resurrection is just the opposite...it is a reunion of the soul and body. Our soul is placed back into our body, but our body will be in a resurrected state.

— The idea of "soul sleep" is an unbiblical doctrine. Both the believer and unbeliever will be resurrected one day, but until that time the soul of both the believer and unbeliever are conscious, awaiting a final resurrected body (Cf. Luke 16:19-31). Paul said that he would "prefer to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord" (Cf. 2 Cor 5:8; Cf. Phil 1:21-23). Paul knew that at the moment of his death, he would be present with the Lord.

(iii) Confusion (11:12-13)

12 The disciples then said to Him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will come out of it."

12 The disciples then said to Him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover."

12 So the disciples told him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will get well."

12 Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.

- The disciples are confused by Jesus euphemism (11:11) that Lazarus had "fallen asleep" not understanding that Lazarus had died

— One Bible study method that we need to be aware of is to look for repetition...is there an event or a circumstance that continues to repeat itself over and over again. If so, it's likely something that is important to God and important for us to understand.

— One thing that has happened over and over again in John's Gospel is that Jesus will be speaking on a spiritual level, but His hearers, including the disciples, will understand His words on a physical level. Jesus is always trying to talk about spiritual things, but He is constantly misunderstood on a physical level.

— What about this is important to God? What do we need to learn from these constant miscommunications and misunderstandings? The answer is found in the Upper Room Discourse (John 13-17), where Jesus begins to progressively reveal the coming work of the Holy Spirit in the believer and the fact that the Holy Spirit allows Christ to live inside of us and illuminate our minds to spiritual truths and spiritual realities. This miscommunication and misunderstanding of spiritual things will be rectified once the Holy Spirit comes and takes up residence inside of you.

— The greatest Bible teacher ever is the Holy Spirit (Cf. 1 Cor 2:14); however, the Holy Spirit had not arrived yet, and would not arrive until Jesus ascended (Cf. 7:39).

13 Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about actual sleep.

13 Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that He was speaking of literal sleep.

13 Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was speaking about resting or sleeping.

13 Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.

(iv) Clarification (11:14-15)

14 So Jesus then said to them plainly, "**Lazarus died**,

14 So Jesus then said to them plainly, "**Lazarus is dead**,

14 Then Jesus told them plainly, "**Lazarus has died**.

14 Then said Jesus unto them plainly, **Lazarus is dead**.

- Jesus clarifies that He's not waiting for Lazarus to wake up from a nap...Lazarus was dead

15 and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, **so that you may believe**; but let's go to him."

15 and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, so that you may believe; but let us go to him."

15 For your sake I'm glad that I wasn't there, so that you may believe. But let's go to him."

15 And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him.

- Jesus sounds a bit harsh here at first glance...was Jesus "glad" that Lazarus died?
- In a way, yes! Jesus purposely delayed and allowed Lazarus' sickness to lead him to death, in order to accomplish a greater miracle...not just warding off and healing sickness before death, but raising him from the dead.
- "...so that you may believe" - to further cement the faith of the disciples; this is the purpose of all of Jesus' signs that John documents in his Gospel (Cf. 20:30-31)

(f) Despair (11:16)

16 Therefore **Thomas**, who was called Didymus, said to *his* fellow disciples, "Let's also go, so that we may die with Him!"

16 Therefore Thomas, who is called Didymus, said to *his* fellow disciples, "Let us also go, so that we may die with Him."

16 Then Thomas, who was called the Twin, told his fellow disciples, "Let's go, too, so that we may die with him!"

16 Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.

- "...Thomas" - first mention in John's Gospel
- Many people dogpile on Thomas, good ol' doubting Thomas...but although he completely forgot about Jesus words in 10:18, he makes it clear that he was willing to follow Jesus into death. That is evidence of a pretty firm commitment to who Jesus is.
- Thomas shows his courage here, but he doesn't appear to have grown much in his faith; Jesus will deal with the issue of Thomas' lack of faith with him directly, after Jesus' resurrection (Cf. 20:24-29)
- Faith is like a muscle that must be exercised...if a muscle on your body is not exercised, it will be atrophied. Without faith it is impossible to please God (Cf. Heb 11:6), so God puts us into circumstance after circumstance where we are forced to trust Him, which is how our faith is developed and strengthened.
- Did Thomas ever reach the level of faith that God wanted him to? Well, according to Foxe's Book of Martyrs, "Thomas, called Didymus, preached the gospel in Parthia and India, where exciting the rage of the pagan priests, he was martyred by being thrust through with a spear."

— So Thomas apparently reached that level of faith where he could be used by God in such a way that he would die a martyr's death

(C) Sorrow over Lazarus (11:17-37)

(a) By the Jews (11:17-19)

17 So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days.

17 So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days.

17 When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days.

17 Then when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already.

- Lazarus experienced a very real death, and with death often comes very real sorrow. That very real sorrow is what is being expressed in v17-37...by the Jews (11:17-19), by Martha (11:20-28), by Mary (11:29-32), and by Jesus Himself (11:33-37).

— What we'll learn in this passage is how to deal with our feelings when we're frustrated with God and believe that somehow God has let us down: we didn't get the healing we prayed for, we didn't get the job we really wanted, or the house we really wanted, when a relationship goes south or a ministry opportunity goes south. When these things happen, we get very disgruntled, angry or frustrated.

— What should be our response in the midst of such frustration?

- Jesus finally makes it to Bethany, but by the time He arrives, Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days

Four Days

The fact that Lazarus was dead four days is very significant. According to the teachings of Pharisaic Judaism, when a man died, the spirit of the man hovered over the body during the first three days. During those three days, there was always a possibility that resuscitation could bring him back. On the fourth day the spirit of the man descended down to *Sheol* or *Hades* and from then on resuscitation was impossible, only a miracle of resurrection could accomplish this. The fact that Jesus waited until Lazarus was dead for four days showed that they would never be able to explain away the resurrection of Lazarus by claiming mere resuscitation. Thus, when *Yeshua* raised Lazarus from the dead after four days, this again created a stir.

18 Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about **fifteen stadia** away;

18 Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off;

18 Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about fifteen stadia away,

18 Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off:

- "...fifteen stadia" - about 2 miles

Bethany

At Bethany, Mary and Martha had in the past welcomed Jesus and His disciples (Luke 10:39). Jesus performed His greatest miracle here (the raising of Lazarus); here, Mary would anoint Him for burial while Lazarus sat at the dinner table (John 12:1-8). From Bethany, Jesus made His Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem (John 12:12-13), and it was to Bethany that Jesus returned for the night during the few days before His crucifixion (Mark 11:11). It was near the village of Bethany that Jesus ascended to heaven (Luke 24:50-51).

19 and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary, to console them about *their* brother.

19 and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary, to console them concerning *their* brother.

19 and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother.

19 And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.

- We know the end of the story...Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead, and all is well

— But these people didn't know the end of the story at this point, and sometimes when we know the end of the story, we tend to marginalize the mourning and suffering that these people are going through

— These "many" Jews and the family experienced a real death and had real emotions and mourning about it

(b) By Martha (11:20-28)

(i) Meeting with Jesus outside Bethany (11:22-27)

(a) Her frustration (11:20-21)

20 So then Martha, when she heard that Jesus was coming, went to meet Him, but Mary stayed in the house.

20 Martha therefore, when she heard that Jesus was coming, went to meet Him, but Mary stayed at the house.

20 As soon as Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home.

20 Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat still in the house.

- Martha is so upset that Jesus didn't meet her expectations to come immediately and ward off Lazarus' sickness and heal him, that she can't even wait until Jesus arrives

- The Ryrie Study Bible puts this event chronologically as #113 in Jesus' ministry. There was another event in Jesus' ministry, not covered in John's Gospel, with Mary and Martha

(event #95, Luke 10:38-42).

— Martha and Mary are two very different sisters...Martha is the spiritual busy-body, always working, always serving, always on a schedule, meeting deadlines. Mary, on the other hand, is more laid back...she would prefer to sit at the feet of Jesus, listen and focus on Him.

— Now it's easy to look down on Martha for her busyness and her attitude, but if we don't have any Martha's, much work in the church would never get accomplished. But we need to remember that the moment busyness or a schedule imposes (gets in the way) of a relationship with Christ, is the moment we need to re-examine our priorities.

— Sometimes we are so busy doing Christianity that we forget about Christ. Our moment-by-moment dependence on the Lord, our faith, our prayer life, suffers because of it.

21 Martha then said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.

21 Martha then said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.

21 Martha told Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.

21 Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

- "...Lord" - an interesting oxymoron: she calls Him "Lord" but then scolds Him for not doing what she wanted Him to do; not meeting her expectations

— We know we are angry and bitter when we start blaming God for things. We put ourselves in the role of judge and jury, then charge God foolishly.

— In Job, everyone one of his friends, even his wife, charged God foolishly, but Job did not follow in that pattern of blaming God

— The idea of blaming God for things goes back all the way to the Garden of Eden (Cf. Gen 3:12)

- Martha is so upset at Jesus because she put upon Him a false expectation. Jesus never promised that He would return to Bethany and heal Lazarus before He died. But she expected Him to operate in that way, and consequently she became very upset at Christ because of a false expectation that Jesus didn't meet.

— Many Christians today live their lives in a state of being upset at God because God has not met their expectations (for a job, for a career, a relationship, a healing, a spouse, a home, etc.). So they move in their Christian walk into a perpetual frustration with God that many times lasts years, if not the rest of their lives.

— Every Christian, at some point in their life, is going to feel frustrated with God, upset that He did not come through for them in a certain way in a situation, like Martha did here

— Yet we'll often find out, like Martha will in this story, that God will use that frustration as a launching pad to bring about greater knowledge and intimacy with the Son of God. This is

how we need to view our frustrations with God. It is ok to vent our frustrations to God, but we also have to be submissive and responsive to what He wants to do with us under those circumstances.

— In Martha's case, she is going to be launched from anger and frustration that her expectations of Jesus were not met (11:20-21) into a much greater and deeper faith (11:22-27)

— But we need to make a choice: are we going to submit to the leading of Christ, or are we just going to cling to our frustrations? Mary had chosen the better way, and what we'll see in this passage is that Martha will choose the better way as well.

(b) Her faith (11:22-27)

a. In the OT (11:22-24)

22 Even **now** I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You."

22 Even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You."

22 But even now I know that whatever you ask of God, he will give it to you."

22 But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.

- "...now" - *nyn*, Martha went from frustration to faith; she had faith that Jesus could "fix" this problem right at that very moment

— Martha doesn't have in her mind Jesus' resurrecting Lazarus from the dead...but she does have the faith that He can somehow remedy this problem. She understood that Jesus was not confined by human circumstances.

— She also understood that because of Jesus' unique relationship with God the Father, Jesus had the ability to do things that mere humans could not do. But she has not yet come to the realization and knowledge that Jesus Himself *is* God. But she'll know shortly, because Jesus is using this situation to launch her into greater knowledge of Him, who He is, and at the same time rapidly increase her faith.

— When we are embittered toward God, are we willing to release that frustration and move in the direction of faith, like Martha does here? If not, your life will basically stagnate spiritually. You'll still go to heaven, but what you could be on this earth will be extremely limited because you are not operating by faith.

- Jesus does not waste things in our lives...He will use for our benefit everything that happens in our lives, if we'll submit to Him and allow Him to use it. Even things that go "wrong" or those situations that appear negative on their face (Cf. Rom 8:28).

23 Jesus *said to her, "**Your brother will rise from the dead.**"

23 Jesus *said to her, "**Your brother will rise again.**"

23 Jesus told her, "**Your brother will rise again.**"

23 Jesus saith unto her, **Thy brother shall rise again.**

- Jesus takes the minuscule faith that Martha displayed in v22, that she acknowledged that He had the type of relationship with the Father where Jesus could fix the problem now, and gives her a promise (that her faith will be vindicated): Lazarus will rise from the dead.
- Martha still has a misunderstanding of what Jesus' goal is at this point, but even in her lack of understanding she is demonstrating faith, not only in Jesus Christ, but also in the OT (11:24)

- 24 Martha *said to Him, "I know that he will rise in the resurrection on the **last** day."
- 24 Martha *said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day."
- 24 Martha told him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day."
- 24** Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.
- Martha makes an eschatological statement based on the OT: that Lazarus will rise on the last day
 - "...last" - *eschatos*, where we get the term "eschatology" or study of the "last" (end)
 - The common Jewish understanding at the time was there would be two great resurrections in the end (Cf. Dan 12:2). The NT also teaches about the two great resurrections (Cf. 5:28-29; Acts 24:15).
 - This understanding of the two resurrections is a "pre-Church Age" understanding, as revealed in Scripture. At the time Martha says this, she knows nothing of a coming Church Age or NT, or how this doctrine of two resurrections would be progressively revealed with additional detail as to timing, and how this coming Church would fit into these two general resurrections. For more information on these details, see 1 Cor 15:23-25.
 - Martha believed this OT promise from Daniel. She believed the revelation that she had at that time. She is completely misunderstanding what Jesus is saying to her, but at least she has faith in the OT promises of a future resurrection.

b. In Jesus (11:25-27)

- 25 Jesus said to her, "**I am the resurrection and the life; the one who believes in Me will live, even if he dies,**
- 25 Jesus said to her, "**I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies,**
- 25 Jesus told her, "**I am the resurrection and the life. The person who believes in me, even though he dies, will live.**
- 25** Jesus said unto her, **I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:**
- Jesus now directs Martha from not just faith in the OT, but to faith in Himself as the Messiah and Son of God

- "...I am the resurrection" - I, in and of Myself, have the power of resurrection, which, under the Father's leadership and will, I have the ability to unleash at any time
- "resurrection" - power and victory over death; because Jesus is who He claimed to be, He will fulfill Dan 12:2 and all of the details and implications on top of that that Paul will later add when the NT is written
- In addition, because Jesus is who He claimed to be, Jesus has the ability not only to do a "not yet" thing, but do a "right now" thing
- A resurrection is about to occur right before her very eyes because Jesus has that authority, thanks to the accuracy of this 5th "I am" statement
- "...the one who believes in Me will live, even if he dies" - before Jesus physically raises Lazarus from the dead, He starts to speak of a different kind of victory over death. The miracle we know about, raising Lazarus, is on the horizon, but there's another miracle that precedes it. It's not just a victory over physical death, but a victory over spiritual death.
- Now Jesus shifts the conversation from a last days physical resurrection to a type of spiritual birth, a resurrection that all human beings desperately need because we were born into the world walking dead. We are born alive physically and biologically, but we are dead spiritually. Because of the barrier of sin, we do not have the life of God in us naturally, from birth (Cf. Eph 2:1).
- Jesus is saying that a person who believes in Him, even if they die physically (like Lazarus did), they will live eternally. Martha is thinking about a future resurrection, but Jesus is saying that even before we get to that, let's talk about the spiritual alienation from God problem that is present right now.
- Jesus is referring to the doctrine called regeneration, or the impartation of divine life. You're living your life as an unbeliever without any relationship with the Holy Spirit, then you come to a point in your life where you trust in Christ by faith and the Holy Spirit indwells you, so now you are not just alive on a physical level, but you are alive on a spiritual level.
- This is the direction that Jesus is walking Martha toward. How does one receive regeneration and the impartation of divine life, and the indwelling Holy Spirit? Simply believe/trust in Jesus Christ.

Jesus' "I Am" Statements

1. "I am the bread of life" (6:35)
2. "I am the light of the world" (8:12)
3. "I am the door" (10:9)
4. "I am the good shepherd" (10:11)
5. **"I am the resurrection, and the life" (11:25)**
6. "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (14:6)

7. "I am the vine, ye are the branches" (15:5)

I AM The Resurrection and The Life

This is an amazing statement. The Lord had already said that whoever believes in Him would not perish but would have eternal life (John 3:16). Here he provided more detail, saying that even though a believer experiences physical death, he will still have life. He was referring to the resurrection of those who die in faith. And then He said there would be some who would never die, but would pass from this life directly into the next one. If we didn't already know about the rapture, we wouldn't see this, but since we do we can understand that He was talking about that one generation who will be alive when He comes for the Church, and will receive eternal life without dying first. And once again the Lord confirmed that the single qualification for eternal life is to believe that His death paid the entire price for our sins.

This statement tells us that whether we die before the Rapture or are taken alive in it, He has guaranteed our eternal life with God.

26 and **everyone** who lives and believes in Me **will never die. Do you believe this?**"

26 and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"

26 **Indeed, everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe that?**"

26 **And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?**

- "...everyone" - this offer for spiritual regeneration from death to life is an offer for every member of the human race

— Because of the death of Jesus Christ, the entire human race is savable. Every human being has the ability to come to Christ and be regenerated. It is a limitless offer, with no boundaries or exclusions. The offer is there, but whether it is accessed is an individual choice by each and every person.

- "...will never die" - even if a person dies physically, they will never die spiritually

- "...Do you believe this?" - the most important question ever asked. Notice that Jesus didn't ask Martha if her parents believed this or if her friends or husband believed this...but if she, individually, believed this.

27 She *said to Him, "Yes, Lord; I have come to believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, *and* He who comes into the world."

27 She *said to Him, "Yes, Lord; I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God, even He who comes into the world."

27 "Yes, Lord," she told him. "I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who was to come into the world."

27 She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.

- Martha confirms that she has believed in who Jesus is and placed her trust in Him, which is saving faith

- Notice the repeated references to "believe": 1x in v25, 2x in v26, 1x in v27

— Notice also what she believes: He is "Lord"; He is "the Christ"; He is the "Son of God." She even has a comprehension of His mission: "He who comes into the world."

— Faith is only as good as the object that you put your faith in...and Martha has put her faith in the right "object"

(ii) Martha's ministry for Jesus (11:28)

28 When she had said this, she left and called Mary her sister, saying secretly, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you."

28 When she had said this, she went away and called Mary her sister, saying secretly, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you."

28 When she had said this, she went away and called her sister Mary and told her privately, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you!"

28 And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee.

- In this short conversation, Martha moved from frustration to faith, not only in the OT Scriptures, but in who Jesus is

— This faith launches her into ministry to her own sister

— Of the two sisters, with Mary being the more spiritual of the two, it's interesting that Jesus reached out to Martha first. This shows that God deals with people on the basis of grace. If He dealt with people on the basis of merit, He would've reached out to Mary first. Mary would have had the revelation first, then she would've told Martha about it. But Jesus dealt with the less spiritual sister first because He deals with human beings on the basis of His grace, not our merit (what we deserve).

— This grace is what got the Pharisees so angry...the fact that Jesus was dealing with the tax collectors and lower strata of society instead of high society, the Pharisees, etc. The reason Jesus did this is that He doesn't deal with human beings on the basis of merit; the whole program of God is based on unmerited favor toward all people.

— This was a stumbling block to the Pharisees and religious leaders, but it's a beautiful thing for the rest of us because God meets us right where we are...broken, helpless, disappointed, frustrated, undeserving...and gives us promises that are incomprehensible, not just related to the last days, but the right now promise of regeneration.

— Martha applied what she learned in her short interaction with Jesus...we need to do the same: allow the faith revelations that God gives to propel us into our assignment from God.

When God blesses you, when He illuminates you, when He reveals something to you...the blessing, the illumination and the revelation are not just for you, but for someone else as well. Yes, he wants to bless me individually, but He also wants to bless others through what He has done for Me.

- The blessings are not for us to horde and clutch, but we are to openly give them away by grace, because we received them by grace in the first place
- The moment Martha understood something is the same moment she went to her sphere of influence and told them about it. She didn't keep it to herself, but shared it with others who were near or close by.

(c) By Mary (11:29-32)

- 29 And when **she** heard *this*, **she** *got up quickly and came to Him.
- 29 And when she heard it, **she** *got up quickly and was coming to Him.
- 29 As soon as Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to him.
- 29 As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto him.
- "...she" [2x] - Mary

- 30** Now Jesus had not yet come into **thevillage**, but was still at the place where Martha met Him.
- 30** Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha met Him.
- 30 Now Jesus had not yet arrived at the village but was still at the place where Martha had met him.
- 30 Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him.
- "...the village" - Bethany (two miles east of Jerusalem)

- 31 Then the Jews who were with her in the house and were consoling her, when they saw that Mary had gotten up quickly and left, they followed her, thinking that she was going to the tomb to weep there.
- 31 Then the Jews who were with her in the house, and consoling her, when they saw that Mary got up quickly and went out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there.
- 31 When the Jewish leaders who had been with her, consoling her in the house, saw Mary get up quickly and go out, they followed her, thinking that she had gone to the tomb to cry there.
- 31 The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave

to weep there.

- Mary left the house to go meet Jesus, per Martha's instruction; "the Jews" (Cf. v19), who were at the house mourning, followed Mary, thinking that she was going to the tomb to continue mourning

32 So when Mary came to the place where Jesus was, she saw Him and fell at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died."

32 Therefore, when Mary came where Jesus was, she saw Him, and fell at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died."

32 As soon as Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell down at his feet and told him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother wouldn't have died."

32 Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

- When Martha came out to meet Jesus, she said the exact same words to Him (11:21)

- One of the things we learn from this passage, and throughout the entire Bible, is that God works in human history to glorify Himself (Cf. v4,40). God does not work to meet human expectations, but rather He works to glorify Himself. And because He is God, the Creator and Sustainer of all things, He has the right to do that.

— Martha, and now Mary, want Jesus to operate on their timetable, but Jesus doesn't operate on the schedule of mankind. His overarching purpose is to bring glory to God (Cf. Eph 1:6,12,14).

— Many times we think that we are the focus of God's plan. This belief is disputed by Creation...God created the heavens and the earth, which means to infinity, without limits, and everything included in them. God did not create man until Day 6, the last day of creation. God did His greatest work prior to man even coming into existence. And to think, He didn't even consult our opinion or our thoughts on the matter.

— Go back to the book of Job...Job and his three friends are so sure of themselves as to why Job is suffering, and many times Job's three friends charge God unfairly. Yet as the reader, we can see that these three friends have no idea why Job is suffering because we know about the heavenly conversation between God and Satan, which Job and his friends knew nothing about.

— We can only laugh at Job's three friends because they are so certain in their theories and pontifications. But after everyone has spoken for 37 chapters, finally God speaks in Job 38-39 and reduces human wisdom to rubble. So God begins to ask Job a series of questions, starting with creation (Job 38:4-7). Throughout two chapters, God makes one thing clear: God's purposes are not anthropocentric (man-centered) but theocentric (God-centered).

— God does not work in history to fulfill the whims or expectations of human beings; God works in history to glorify Himself. His ultimate purpose for the ages is to glorify Himself. **Scripture is not human-centered, as though salvation was the principle point, but God-centered because His glory is at the center.**

— God's ultimate, highest purpose in human history is not to save souls. The salvation of souls ranks under the doxological purpose of God to glorify Himself because when souls are saved, He is glorified. His purposes are not soteriological, they are doxological. The glory of God is the primary principle that unifies all dispensations, the program of salvation being just one of the means by which God glorifies Himself. Each successive revelation of God's plan for the ages, as well as His dealing with the elect and non-elect and the nations, all manifest His glory.

- This is the frustration of Martha and Mary in this situation, and this is the frustration for many believers today because we come to God thinking that He is anthropocentric, when in reality God is theocentric. When we come to Him believing that everything revolves around us and God should be moving on our timetable, we're opening ourselves up to frustration and disappointment, just like Martha and Mary. God doesn't work that way...God works in every situation to bring glory to Himself.

— If we begin to think this way, it will alter the way we pray. Instead of God, give me a new job, give me a relationship, give me healing, give me financial freedom, etc. God looks at those prayer requests and says, I'm not interested. But if we come to God with a different prayer request: God, glorify Yourself through my life however You see fit. That is no longer an anthropocentric request, but a theocentric request, and God says Now we're in business.

— Why are we so frustrated with God sometimes? Because we are thinking on an anthropocentric level and He is thinking on a theocentric level (Cf. Is 55:8-9). When need to come to God in humility, understanding that His purposes are much higher (and better) than ours.

— We are now being forced to rest in God by way of faith, not understanding what He is up to, but trusting in Him (Cf. Heb 11:6). We need to submit our understanding to Him. This is how we become disciples. This is how we grow spiritually, into adulthood.

— This is exactly what happened to Martha...she came to Jesus frustrated that He didn't meet her needs and expectations by warding off Lazarus' sickness like He should have, when in fact Jesus has a much higher purpose in mind. Martha was transformed from frustration to faith, she learned to start thinking not anthropocentrically, but theocentrically.

(d) By Jesus (11:33-37)

(i) The weeping (11:33-35)

33 Therefore when Jesus saw her **weeping**, and the Jews who came with her *also weeping*, He was **deeply moved in spirit** and was **troubled**,

33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her *also weeping*, He was deeply moved in spirit and was troubled,

33 When Jesus saw her crying, and the Jews who had come with her crying, he was greatly troubled in spirit and deeply moved.

33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled,

- "...weeping" [2x] - *klaiō*, we tend to minimize the weeping here because we know what happens a few verses away. But Martha, Mary, and the Jews who loved Lazarus experienced a real death and real mourning and real grief.

— John is trying to not minimize the human suffering going on here, so he repeats the fact that they are all mourning and grieving over and over again

- "...deeply moved in spirit" - *embrimaomai*, has the idea of feeling something strongly at your absolute core; at the core of His being, Jesus felt something very strong emotionally

- "...troubled" - *tarassō*, to trouble oneself; to take away calmness of mind, to strike one's spirit with fear and dread

— The same word (*tarassō*) is used in 12:20 to describe Jesus' anguish knowing that His crucifixion was at hand. Think of the anguish and trouble in Jesus' spirit as He knew the cross was just a few hours away. This is the same type of anguish He is in as He sees Martha, Mary and the Jews mourning and weeping for Lazarus.

— The word is also used to describe Jesus' feelings when He announced in the Upper Room that one of His disciples would betray Him (Cf. 13:21). Judas was a good friend of Jesus', so you can imaging the pain and anguish that Jesus felt knowing that one of His friends would desert Him and betray Him.

Why is it important to understand the real mourning and anguish of Martha, Mary, the Jews, and Jesus Himself? Because it is a counter balance to the doxological purpose of God (see notes on v32). Yes, the purposes of God in human history are doxological. Yes, they are theocentric. Yes, God works in history not according to man's schedule but according to God's schedule. But here we have a counter-balancing idea: the doxological purpose of God does not negate the compassion and mercy that Jesus Christ feels for humanity. His purpose is to glorify Himself, but at the same time we should not minimize the compassion that Christ has for the suffering of man.

Paul in his epistles uses a number of different metaphors for our relationship with Christ. One such metaphor is that of the head & body...Jesus is the Head, and we are His body. Now think of this on a purely physical level...if you have one part of your body that hurts, the whole body suffers. If you have so much as an ingrown toenail, your whole body

suffers. This is how Jesus identifies with His people who are suffering. If one part of the body of Christ is suffering, He feels that pain as well.

In Matt 25:42-45, the Sheep & Goat judgment, Jesus says that I was hungry and you gave Me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave Me nothing to drink. I was a stranger and you did not invite Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me. Then those He was speaking to will say, Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or naked or a stranger or sick or in prison and not take care of you? Then Jesus will answer, Truly, truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to the least of these, you did not do it to Me. Jesus is saying that if you bless My people, you are blessing Me, and if you do not bless My people, you are not blessing Me. This demonstrates the intimacy and care that Jesus has for His people...when they hurt, He hurts, when they suffer, He suffers. When Jesus confronted Saul on the Damascus Road (Acts 9:4), He asked him, Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me? Saul is going around persecuting God's people, so Jesus confronts him and asks Saul why he is persecuting Jesus. When you hurt or touch the people of God, you hurt or touch God Himself.

Jesus seeing these sisters, whom He loved, in a state of travail, fully understanding that the doxological purpose of God is about to be executed, still felt anguish to the innermost core of His being and He was still very troubled by what had happened.

Col 1:24: Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh **I am supplementing what is lacking in Christ's afflictions** in behalf of His body, which is the church.

- Now this is a verse that could unravel your entire Protestant theology if you aren't careful with it...something is lacking in Christ's afflictions?
 - To interpret this verse properly, you must look at the context. Paul is saying that because he is suffering, Jesus is suffering. He is not adding to the substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ, his point is that I am hurting therefore Jesus is hurting.

So Jesus sees these sisters in tremendous grief, fully knowing what He is about to do, but He still feels anguish and hurt for them. This is what makes Jesus a great High Priest (Cf. Heb 4:15)...because He can identify with the sufferings of His people. He walked in our shoes, He felt the same frustrations that we feel. He can identify with human suffering because He went through suffering Himself, He lived it, and because He identifies so closely and so intimately with those who believe. Thus, as He right now sits at the right hand of the Father, He can sympathize with our feelings and identify with us in our moment of need because He is not just God, He is the God-Man.

34 and He said, "**Where have you laid him?**" They *said to Him, "Lord, come and see."

34 and said, "**Where have you laid him?**" They *said to Him, "Lord, come and see."

34 He asked, "**Where have you put him?**" They told him, "Lord, come and see."

34 And said, **Where have ye laid him?** They said unto him, Lord, come and see.

35 Jesus wept.

35 Jesus wept.

35 Jesus burst into tears.

35 Jesus wept.

- This is the shortest verse in the English Bible; the shortest word in the Greek NT is 1 Thess 5:16

— Because it's such a short verse, we're tempted to read over it quickly, but it is so profound...

- Think about this...God Himself, the Creator of the universe, who spoke and everything that is came into being...is the same God who identifies so closely and intimately with humanity that He weeps at their anguish and mourning.

— God, in human flesh, executing the doxological purposes of God, not in anthropocentric way but in a theocentric way, and yet at the same time identifying so closely with what He knows is only the temporal pain of Martha and Mary, that He Himself breaks down and cries (Cf. Is 53:3).

— Another time Jesus showed emotion and wept was at His Triumphal Entry (Cf. Luke 19:41), when He saw Jerusalem and wept over it. Paul admonished each one in Ephesus over a period of three years, with tears (Acts 20:31).

- After Martha's beautiful statement and declaration of the deity of Jesus Christ (11:27), believing that He is God, just a few verses later we see the human side of Christ, weeping and mourning with His people

— John masterfully weaves these stories together into a narrative that shows us that Jesus is God, but just a few verses later, that He was also fully Man by showing us His emotional side

- There is another reason why Jesus weeps here...because of the reality of death. He is reflecting upon the fact that deaths of this nature was never the plan from the beginning (Cf. Gen 2:16-17). The command that God gave to Adam makes no sense if death was already a reality in the Edenic world that God created.

— When man ate from that forbidden fruit, he began to die (Gen 3:19). This is what Jesus is weeping over. But He'll only weep over it a short time because what He will do in the next couple weeks will remove the sting of death and provide victory over it for those who trust in Him (Cf. Rev 21:4).

(ii) The wondering (11:36-37)

36 So the Jews were saying, "See how He **loved** him!"

36 So the Jews were saying, "See how He loved him!"

36 So the Jewish leaders said, "See how much he loved him!"

36 Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!

- "...loved" - *phileō*, brotherly love; the Jews did not comprehend the level of love that Jesus had for Martha, Mary and Lazarus, and for humanity as a whole

— Martha and Mary made the same underestimation of Jesus' love for Lazarus (Cf. v3), but the Apostle John summarizes Jesus' true emotions in v5 by saying that Jesus' *agapaō* Mary, Martha, and Lazarus

— Man thinks that God *phileō*'s him, not at the deepest level but at a brotherly level (God is rad, He's my Dad); yet the Bible tells us that when God looks at man, at me, I have no concept about how much God loves me. He loves me at the *agapē* level, not the more simplistic *phileō* level.

— We have no ability to recognize or comprehend the love that God has for people. You're life may not be working out the way you expected, you may have taken the wrong fork in the road with bad choices, or you may have had something serious thrust upon you without your doing...but either way, you should know that God loves us with *agapē* love.

37 But some of them said, "Could this man, who opened the eyes of the man who was blind, not have also kept this man from dying?"

37 But some of them said, "Could not this man, who opened the eyes of the blind man, have kept this man also from dying?"

37 But some of them said, "Surely the one who opened the eyes of the blind man could have kept this man from dying, couldn't he?"

37 And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?

- First Martha came to Christ to offer Him her human viewpoint (11:21), then Mary came to Jesus to give Him her human viewpoint (11:32), and now the Jews, who had come with Mary, are offering up their own human viewpoint.

— God's purposes in history are doxological, although He fully loves and identifies with the needs of individuals, is working in human history (and your life) to glorify Himself

— We have our simplistic, manmade time schedule, but God's plan is so much better. So much better that I'm actually going to delay and allow a man that I *agapē* love, to die, so that the glory given to God is greater.

— That miracle, raising him from the dead, will cause more people to believe and glorify God so much more than simply healing a man, plus strengthen the faith of those who already believe. But your silly little short-sighted, anthropocentric plan will accomplish none of these things to the extent that I want to accomplish them.

One thing we need to understand is that it's always darkest before the dawn. Up to this point, it's been all negative and weeping for Martha, Mary, and the Jews. But soon, that weeping will be turned to joy. Sometimes the worst times in our lives from a human perspective indicate that something is about to change. Job, in the midst of his horrific suffering, never saw Job 42 where he was restored many times over what he had before. Joseph, when he was hated by his brothers, thrown in a pit, then sold into slavery, could not see where God would take him in the later chapters of Genesis.

Ps 30:5: For His anger is but for a moment, His favor is for a lifetime; Weeping may last for the night, But a shout of joy comes in the morning.

When we go through trials, deep waters in life, Satan is always whispering in our ears that our situation is terminal, it's never going to change and it's never going to get better. Satan whispered that in Job's ear; no doubt he whispered that in Joesph's ear. No doubt that's what Satan was whispering in the ears of Mary and Martha, and no doubt that he is whispering that in your ear now, or will do so when you are going through your next trial. Satan will seek to convince you that it's never going to change. We can't see tomorrow, or next week or next month, and we don't know what God is going to do, but you are tempted to give up on God, give up praying, and succumb to our meager human understanding. Mary and Martha are in the pit of frustration, missed expectations, and Satan is telling them that it's over...you'll see Lazarus again in the final resurrection. But they didn't know what was going to happen just a few short minutes later.

Larry Bird, the famous NBA player for the Boston Celtics in the 1980s and won 3 NBA titles. When he was growing up, their family was poor, and Larry's dad was often unemployed. Larry worked a full-time job at 13. Larry's mom often had to borrow money to buy groceries. But Larry was a promising basketball player. When Larry was 18 years old, his parents divorced and his father, who couldn't make his child support payments, one night drank too much and committed suicide. Larry was devastated. But Larry's dad did not know what was just around the corner. He believed the lie of Satan that nothing's going to change, and things are never going to get better. Just a few short years later (1978), Larry was drafted by the Boston Celtics, and in 1980, he won the NBA MVP award. During his NBA career, he made \$26M. In 2023, he had a net worth of \$80M.

(D) Summoning of Lazarus (11:38-45)

(a) Preparation of Christ (11:38-40)

(i) The request (11:38-39a)

38 So Jesus, **again** being **deeply moved within**, *came to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone was lying against it.

38 So Jesus, again being deeply moved within, *came to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone was lying against it.

38 Groaning deeply again, Jesus came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying in front of it.

38 Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.

- Jesus works according to the Father's schedule, not the schedule of Mary or Martha (or us), but at the same time He remains compassionate on them and their present suffering, as we agonize in our weaknesses, not fully comprehending the mind of God

— It is very difficult for us as finite human beings to understand the mind of God. It's hard for us to understand what He is up to because our perspective is so limited. Yet this is what God has us doing on a daily basis. There are things that happen in our lives that are disappointing, and the reason they are disappointing is because our schedule is not executed according to our timetable.

- "...again" - Cf. v33-35, where Jesus came to tears as He agonized with Mary and Martha

- "...deeply moved within" - *embrimaomai*, feeling something strongly at your absolute core (Cf. v33)

— Jesus, although He will not bow to our schedule, still sympathizes with us in our weakness and is deeply moved in our suffering because at the end of the day, our God is a God of compassion

— Even though we don't always know or understand what He is up to or how He is working, it is no way a subtraction from His compassion and His love for us (Cf. Lam 3:22-23). Our lack of understanding in no way diminishes His compassion toward us.

(ii) The reluctance (11:39b)

39 Jesus *said, "**Remove the stone.**" Martha, the sister of the deceased, *said to Him, "Lord, by this time there will be a stench, for he has been *dead* four days."

39 Jesus *said, "**Remove the stone.**" Martha, the sister of the deceased, *said to Him, "Lord, by this time there will be a stench, for he has been *dead* four days."

39 Jesus said, "**Remove the stone.**" Martha, the dead man's sister, told him, "Lord, there must be a stench by now, because he's been dead for four days."

39 Jesus said, **Take ye away the stone.** Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.

- "...Remove" - *airō*, second person plural, meaning that it took multiple people to remove the stone (Cf. "they" v41)

- Lazarus was dead...there are no two ways about it. He was dead four days, everyone knew where he was buried, and it took multiple people to roll away the stone.

(iii) The reminder (11:40)

40 Jesus *said to her, **"Did I not say to you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?"**

40 Jesus *said to her, **"Did I not say to you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?"**

40 Jesus told her, **"I told you that if you believed you would see God's glory, didn't I?"**

40 Jesus saith unto her, **Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?**

– "...if you believe" – some people see the glory of God, others do not. Some people see the miracles of God, others do not. Those who do not throw in the towel, they get frustrated that God is not working according to their plan or schedule. They throw up their hands and ask, Where is God?

— They quit on God, and when they quit on God, they fail to see His plan coming to pass on His timetable

— Mary and Martha were definitely tempted to quit on God. When Jesus didn't get to Bethany right away and they watched their brother die, they could've easily given up on God and shut their minds and eyes to divine truth. And had they done that, the great blessing that is about to happen in their very midst *would've never happened*.

— Many times in our lives we make the same mistake. We quit, we shutdown, we become too frustrated in our pride that God needs to work on my timetable, and what I've been praying about should've already happened. If we do this, if we don't have the faith that He will come through for us, we will never see God working in our lives.

— If you believe, if you hang in there by faith, you will see the glory of God. That is the message of this passage...keep trusting in Him, keep believing in Him, even when the circumstances of your life don't make sense, and you will, on His schedule, see the glory of God. The time that we are most tempted to quit is the time that God is just about to act. It's almost if Satan knows this, and he tries to get our eyes off of God, to deprive me of the blessing of seeing God work and being blessed.

– "...glory of God" – the glory (*doxa*) of God brackets this miracle (Cf. v4)

- What are we to learn from this event (Lazarus' death)? The doxological purpose of God, that God works in human history to glorify Himself.

— What causes God to act? What moves God's hand in human history? What moves His hand in your life? The over-arching purpose of God: His glory. God doesn't act to fulfill our personal agendas, He acts to manifest His divine glory.

— God is much less interested in pursuing a human point of view or following the opinions of man, and much more interested in fulfilling His doxological purpose to bring glory to Himself

— Once you become sensitive to this over-arching theme in the Bible, you will begin to see it everywhere. One example is Ezek 36:22-23: God will regather Israel in the end times,

not because of their inherent worth and certainly not based on anything good that they have done, but because His name is on the covenant. He will do it because an all-powerful God does all-powerful God things. He will do it to vindicate His promise to Abraham in 2000 BC. If God allows His Word/promise to fail, He cannot bring glory to Himself.

(b) Prayer of Christ (11:41-42)

41 So they removed the stone. And Jesus raised His eyes, and said, **"Father, I thank You that You have heard Me."**

41 So they removed the stone. Then Jesus raised His eyes, and said, **"Father, I thank You that You have heard Me."**

41 So they removed the stone. Then Jesus looked upward and said, **"Father, I thank you for hearing me."**

41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, **Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.**

- Before power comes prayer. Prayer always precedes power in the Bible. I don't know if I can come up with too many examples in the Bible where the hand of God moves without prayer first. Prayer is the most significant thing that moves the hand of God.

— For whatever reason, God has obligated Himself to listen to our prayers. Here, Jesus Himself prays to the Father before he demonstrates divine power.

- "...I thank you" - interestingly, Jesus thanks the Father for hearing Him; Daniel also thanked God for hearing him (Cf. Dan 2:23). Both Jesus and Daniel thanked God in their prayers *in advance*, for what they were praying for. Paul instructs us to pray with thanksgiving (Phil 4:6).

42 **But I knew that You always hear Me;** nevertheless, because of the people standing around I said *it*, so that they may believe that You sent Me."

42 I knew that You always hear Me; but because of the people standing around I said it, so that they may believe that You sent Me."

42 I know that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me."

42 And I know that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

- "...I knew that You always hear Me" - Jesus knew that the Father always heard Him because there was a perfect relationship between God the Father and God the Son. There was no sin barrier between the Two.

— God the Son was always heard by God the Father because the Son's prayer requests always perfectly match the will of God the Father

- Here, Jesus is praying to the Father for the execution of the purpose of John's Gospel...for the power for Jesus to raise Lazarus from the dead, so that the people around might believe that He was the Son of God
- This prayer is answered because it's in perfect harmony with God's will...it's God's will to glorify Himself, then as that glory begins to manifest itself, people believe and receive the gift of life, which again glorifies God. These are the things that Jesus prayed for...things that would glorify God.
- The prayers of many Christians never get higher than the ceiling because we are always praying for ourselves...for our comfort, our own status, our own success, our own health. These prayer requests are not bad, they just aren't the type of prayer requests that God is interested in. He is interested in prayer requests where His glory can be manifested in our lives (Cf. James 4:3; 1 John 5:14).
- Jesus was also always heard by the Father because He stood sinless; there was absolutely no shred of sin in Jesus' life. That, unfortunately, is not the case for us.
- Unconfessed sin in the life of the believer cannot change our position...that can never be altered. But it will affect our moment-by-moment fellowship with God, our fellowship and relationship with God. It can also damage our prayer life (Ps 66:18; 1 Peter 3:7).

(c) Power of Christ (11:43-44)

43 And when **He had said these things, He cried out** with a loud voice, "**Lazarus, come out!**"

43 When He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, "**Lazarus, come forth.**"

43 After saying this, he shouted with a loud voice, "**Lazarus, come out!**"

43 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, **Lazarus, come forth.**

- "...He had said these things, He cried out" - notice the emphasis on the Word of God.

There is tremendous authority and power in the Word of God (Cf. Gen 1:3,6,9,14,20,24,26; 2 Peter 3:5-7). When God speaks, things happen (Is 55:11).

— When we commit ourselves to teaching, reading and studying the Word of God, that's when power begins to manifest itself in our lives. This is when changed lives and changed attitudes begin to take place.

44 Out came the man who had died, bound hand and foot with wrappings, and his face was wrapped around with a cloth. Jesus *said to them, "**Unbind him, and let him go.**"

44 The man who had died came forth, bound hand and foot with wrappings, and his face was wrapped around with a cloth. Jesus *said to them, "**Unbind him, and let him go.**"

44 The man who had died came out, his hands and feet tied with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a handkerchief. Jesus told them, "**Untie him, and let him go.**"

44 And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, **Loose him, and let him go.**

- The 7th sign highlighted in John's Gospel, and the greatest miracle that Jesus has done to date, has just taken place...

(d) Point of Christ's miracle (11:45)

45 Therefore many of the Jews who came to Mary, and saw what He had done, believed in Him.

45 Therefore many of the Jews who came to Mary, and saw what He had done, believed in Him.

45 Many of the Jews who had come with Mary and who had observed what Jesus did believed in him.

45 Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.

- Many of the Jews who were at the house mourning and came with Mary to see Jesus (11:31) ended up believing in Jesus

— Jesus did not perform miracles to entertain, to tantalize curiosity or to wow the crowds...Jesus performed these miracles to testify to who He is, for the purpose of giving evidence of His identity, so that all would come to believe and put their trust in Him

(21) Religious Leaders Plot to Kill Jesus (11:46-57)

(A) Wickedness against Jesus (11:46-53)

(a) Problem (11:46-48)

(i) Council (11:46-47)

46 But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them the things which Jesus had done.

46 But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them the things which Jesus had done.

46 Some of them, however, went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done.

46 But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done.

- Some of the Jews (11:31) who did not believe (11:45) went to the Pharisees to tell that what had happened

47 Therefore the chief priests and the Pharisees convened a **council** meeting, and they were saying, "What are we doing in regard to the fact that **this man is performing many signs?**

47 Therefore the chief priests and the Pharisees convened a council, and were saying, "What are we doing? For this man is performing many signs.

47 So the high priests and the Pharisees assembled the Council and said, "What are we going to do? This man is performing many signs.

47 Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles.

- "Therefore" - ties this paragraph to the preceding passage, in a cause and effect relationship

- "...council" - most believe this was a gathering of the Sanhedrin, composed a 70 men (made up of chief priests, scribes, elders) plus the high priest. During the Roman occupation, they only had jurisdiction over Judea, and had their own police force.

— The Sanhedrin felt that they had to take some decisive action against Jesus, because with every miracle He performed, the greater His popularity grew. More and more Jews were concluding that He was the Messiah. Their present tactics against Him were not working and needed to be adjusted or He might destroy them (their position and power) (Cf. v48).

— They could hold trials and impose the death penalty, but they did not have the authority to carry out the death penalty

— They also needed to get rid of Lazarus, because his raising caused many Jews to come to Christ (12:10-11)

— The two parallel lines of belief and unbelief that John highlights throughout his Gospel are building. Now the nation, nationally, is moving in the direction of a decision against Jesus Christ. The unbelief that has been building alongside belief is now getting closer to a decision (11:53) to reject, then kill, Jesus.

- "...this man is performing many signs" - interesting that they admitted privately that Jesus had performed "many miracles" but publicly they had earlier asked Him to produce some signs to prove His claims (Cf. 2:18; 6:30)

— It is always the case that those whose minds are made up to oppose what Christ stands for will not be convinced by any amount of evidence

(ii) Concern (11:48)

48 If we let Him go on like this, all *the people* will **believe in Him**, and the Romans will come and take over both **our** place and **our** nation."

48 If we let Him go on like this, all men will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation."

48 If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and destroy both our Temple and our nation."

48 If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.

- "...believe in Him" - the Sanhedrin fully understood not only the reality of His miracles, but they also understood the single condition for salvation. The message of faith alone in Christ alone is so simple and so clear that even Jesus' sworn enemies understood it.

- Jesus, through His ministry, miracles, and His message, was taking away the spotlight and the authority from the Pharisees and their vast maze of complex regulations, which they loved because of how it enabled them to control the masses.

- The Sanhedrin knew that they had a very tenuous relationship with Rome; Israel was a vassal state of Rome at the time, and Rome held them in check through heavy taxation. The Sanhedrin knew full well that if there was some sort of disturbance in Israel, and Rome got wind of it, Rome would simply "cancel their lease" and kick the Jews out of the Land. This is exactly what happened in 70 AD.

— So the Sanhedrin knew that they had to take care of their Jesus problem because if they didn't, it was going to look like an insurrection. And if Rome got wind of that, they would bring their military wrath against Israel.

- "...our" [2x] - that's funny, Ex 4:22 calls Israel God's firstborn son

— It's interesting that as we function within the institutions that God has given us, we think those institutions are ours: *my* ministry, *my* spiritual gifts, *my* church. When these thought patterns seep into our minds, we begin to make things all about us rather than us serving humbly in an institution that God has ordained and is building.

— Their focus on their own political position...our place, our position, our power, and these were the things that blinded them to their need for Jesus Christ. Their focus was not on their spiritual need, but on their place of privilege in the physical world.

— This is the reason many today don't come to Christ...because they instinctively know that submitting to Jesus Christ will reshuffle their lives, it will affect my revenue stream, affect my status, affect my career path...it's always some temporal thing that they are clinging to that is preventing them from coming to Christ. People all over this world are just like this. This is a very good definition of unbelief.

— And they aren't wrong....Jesus, if you trust in Him, will reshuffle your file drawers. He will change the way you think, and He will start changing the way you live. And when we submit to the Holy Spirit, He begins to reshuffle and reprioritize our lives. And during this process, what they will discover, undoubtedly, is that whatever God takes away, He always replaces it with something better.

— The Son of Man did not come to wreck the lives of men and women, but to redeem them, to liberate them, allow their lives to be lived untarnished by sin the way God originally intended it. Yet it remains so easy to resist Jesus because we see Him as a threat to our domain and our authority.

(b) Prophecy (11:49-52)

49 But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all,

49 But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all,

49 But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, told them, "You don't know anything!

49 And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all,

- Caiaphas, as high priest, presided as the "president" over the Sanhedrin; he was appointed by Rome

— He moved into this office in 18 AD; his father-in-law Annas was his predecessor

— From this verse alone, we learn that Caiaphas was not the most humble man, due to the way he speaks to the leaders of Israel

50 nor are you taking into account that it is in your best interest that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation not perish *instead*."

50 nor do you take into account that it is expedient for you that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation not perish."

50 You don't realize that it is better for you to have one man die for the people than to have the whole nation destroyed."

50 Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

- It is interesting that God used this reprobate man to announce His master plan, showing that God is so sovereign that He can even use the mouth of His enemies to speak His truth, whether Caiaphas intended to do so or not

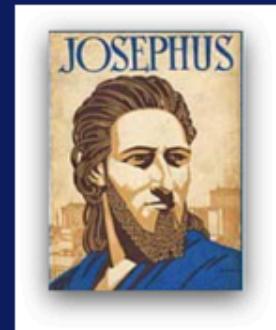
— What Caiaphas said was a very accurate account of the doctrine of the substitutionary atonement: one Man, Jesus, will die in place of many

- Caiaphas' "master plan" to keep Rome in check, to keep Rome off their backs, and to ward off a future insurrection should Jesus' popularity continue to increase, was to kill Jesus. In this way, one Person would die, the person responsible for all of this commotion, and it would avoid a protracted military intervention by Rome, where there would be many deaths.

- The Sanhedrin has a serious dilemma...they are faced with a Person who has shown up and done signs and works that cannot be denied (see quote from Josephus, a secular historian, below). This creates a problem for the individual who has already decided in their mind that they will not trust Christ.

- This is how unbelief works: Unbelief reaches its conclusion ahead of time, then it goes backward and it tries to take the evidence that clearly leads to faith and rewrites the evidence. All of us, as human beings, have this frightening capability. We can do this with the things of God: we can take things that are clearly true, reach a conclusion that we don't want it, then intellectually work backwards from that evidence to rewrite the record.
- This is exactly what the Sanhedrin and religious leaders are about to do. If this is their position, they only have two options. They can't deny the miracles because the miracles are undeniable.
 1. One option they tried already was to attribute the power of Jesus' miracles to Satan. The miracle is real, it's just God didn't do it (Matt 12:24). Jesus cast a demon out of a man, another of His undeniable miracles, so the unsaved, unbelieving, darkened mind goes to work generating naturalistic philosophies trying to explain away the obvious.
 2. The second option is to kill Him. If Jesus is dead, no more miracles we can't explain, no more followers, and no more potential for Roman insurrection. Everything will just go back to normal and the people will follow us again.
- Do miracles produce faith? Sometimes they do. Jesus did miracles to confirm and authenticate His identity, and because of them, many believed on Him. However the error comes in when we think that miracles always produce faith.
- This passage is a great example...Jesus does an undeniable miracle, some come to faith because of it (11:45), others reject it in their unbelief (11:46-48; Cf. Luke 16:31).
- Some people wonder why God doesn't do more miracles today like He did during Jesus' ministry. First off, God is doing plenty of miracles today all over the world. Second, maybe these miracles are not as evident to everyone because of what Jesus says in Luke 12:48 ("to whom much is given, much is expected"). Once a person's knowledge of who God is becomes something that cannot be denied, God expects a response. And God knows ahead of time that many will not respond, so He does not perform the miracle because the miracle only makes them more accountable on the day of judgment.
- This power of unbelief is prevalent in our world today...most notably in this country, in the teaching of evolution

Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man, for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews, and many of the Gentiles. He was the Christ, and when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men among us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him; for he appeared to them alive again the third day; as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him. And the tribe of Christians so named from him are not extinct at this day.



Josephus, Antiquities, 18.3.3.

Quote from Richard Lewontin, "Billions and Billions of Demons," New York Review, January 9, 1997: "We are forced by our *a priori* adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counter-intuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. Moreover, that materialism is an absolute, for we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door."

The evolutionary view of man alleviates from man the need to have a personal Creator outside of himself that he is accountable to. [Ryrie]

Why is this silly idea clung to like life and death, in spite of it's intellectual holes and sloppiness? It's not the product of science nor is it a product of an objective inquiry into the evidence, but it is the product of an unbelieving heart that has already concluded what it wants to do. Now they just need the evidence to catch up with their theory, which unfortunately for them, it will never do.

Leon Morris, in his commentary on John's Gospel, says: "*It has always been the case that those whose minds are made up to oppose what Christ stands for will not be convinced by any amount of evidence.*" If your mind is made up, no amount of miracles, even bringing someone back from the dead, will convince you.

51 Now he did not say this on his own, but as he was high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation;

51 Now he did not say this on his own initiative, but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation,

51 Now he did not say this on his own initiative. As high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation,

51 And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation;

- Even in the Sanhedrin's state of rebellion, God is so sovereign that He uses them to disclose accurate theology and to announce His plan of what is going to happen to Jesus

52 and not for the nation only, but in order that He might also gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad.

52 and not for the nation only, but in order that He might also gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad.

52 and not only for the nation, but that he would also gather into one the children of God who were scattered abroad.

52 And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.

- And the more Caiaphas speaks, the clearer his prophecy and theology become...

— What Caiaphas just said is a perfect prophecy of the coming Church...that believing Jews within the nation of Israel will be gathered together into one new man (the Church) along with Gentile believers who are scattered abroad.

— What Caiaphas thought he was saying is that if Christ died, we would remain in Rome's good graces, which would be good for those living in Israel as well as those Jews who were living outside of the Land of Israel

The Theology of Caiaphas

- One (Jesus) dies in place of the many (substitutionary atonement)
- His death would benefit people around the world (unlimited atonement)
- His death would unite those in the land and those outside of the land into one (the Church, Cf. 10:16; Eph 2:14-16; 3:6)

c) Plot (11:53)

53 So from **thatday** on they planned together to kill Him.

53 So from that day on they planned together to kill Him.

53 So from that day on they resolved to put him to death.

53 Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death.

- The prophecy of Caiaphas (11:50-52) now turns into a plot to kill Jesus...

— The plot to kill the Son of God is now put into motion with an official formal declaration of the Sanhedrin

— The unbelief of the religious leaders in Israel has reached its climax...up until now, we have seen individuals or individual groups rejecting Jesus Christ, but now the rejection has reached the highest echelons of Israel's religious and political leadership, who are united in their agreement to kill Him.

— The six trials that Jesus will endure just prior to His crucifixion are mere formalities...mere window dressing, to give the appearance of justice to the ignorant masses. The decision to kill Christ has already been made, the verdict is in.

— This is why they break procedural safeguard after procedural safeguard within their own Law and their own extra-biblical tradition and rush Him through the justice system

— This may be the reason why John doesn't record the trial of Jesus before Caiaphas...because he believed that the "trial" already happened

- "...that day" - the day Lazarus walked out of the grave

What happened next is recorded in Luke 17:11-19. This time, not one but ten lepers came to Jesus asking Him to heal them. The way He responded is recorded in v14: *And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go and show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, as they went, they were cleansed.*

Jesus sent these ten lepers directly to the very priesthood that, under the leadership of Caiaphas, had just decreed a sentence of death against Him. This meant that instead of one messianic miracle, there were now ten messianic miracles performed: the first messianic miracle was performed ten times over. Ten times over Caiaphas and the priesthood had to spend seven days investigating the whole situation. Ten times over, they had to decree that all ten of these lepers had been cleansed and healed of their leprosy. Ten times over, they had to decree that Jesus performed the miracle. It is really showing some Jewish humor, if you will, on the part of Jesus that He chose to send to the leadership of Israel ten healed lepers right after they decreed His rejection by sentencing Him to death.

His Messiahship was proclaimed, not merely by the mouth of two or three witnesses, but by the mouth of ten witnesses. Again, He proved to the leadership that they had no basis, no ground, for the rejection of His messianic claims.

(B) Withdrawal by Jesus (11:54)

54 Therefore Jesus no longer *continued to walk* publicly among the Jews, but went away from there to the region near the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim; and there He stayed with the disciples.

54 Therefore Jesus no longer continued to walk publicly among the Jews, but went away from there to the country near the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim; and there He stayed with the disciples.

54 As a result, Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews. Instead, he went from there to a town called Ephraim in the region near the wilderness. There he remained with his disciples.

54 Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples.

- You reject Jesus, He'll leave you alone. He's a gentleman. If you don't want Jesus in your life, He's not going to bother you.

— God does not come by force to get someone to believe. If you don't want to believe, God will respect your decision (Cf. Gen 6:3).

— The reason is that we are made in the image of God, and one of the attributes of God is free will. We are not forced to love and submit to God...we make the free will choice to do so. This is why there was a Tree of Knowledge of Good & Evil in the Garden...because there had to be an avenue of rebellion for Adam & Eve, otherwise they would not have been able to exercise their free will, which would go against how God created us.

- All four gospels document Jesus' change from public ministry to private ministry. For example, Matt 1-12: public ministry; Matt 13-28: private ministry.

— The public ministry was focused on the nation of Israel; the focus of private ministry is the believing remnant. His miracles in public ministry are proof to the nation; the miracles in private ministry are to train the remnant, who would become the foundation of the church.

— Teaching on the kingdom is prominent in His public ministry, but disappears in His private ministry. Jesus teaches openly in discourse form in His public ministry, but in His private ministry He speaks in parables in order to conceal truth from the nation who has already rejected Him, but reveal truth to the disciples/believers.

(C) Watch for Jesus (11:55-57)

55 Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up to Jerusalem from the country prior to the Passover, in order to purify themselves.

55 Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up to Jerusalem out of the country before the Passover to purify themselves.

55 Now the Jewish Passover was approaching, and before the Passover many people from the countryside went up to Jerusalem to purify themselves.

55 And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves.

- One would expect Jesus, being a good Jew, to show up at the Passover (one of the three compulsory feasts of Israel), but He doesn't show up

56 So they were looking for Jesus, and saying to one another as they stood in the temple area, "What do you think; that He will not come to the feast at all?"

56 So they were seeking for Jesus, and were saying to one another as they stood in the temple, "What do you think; that He will not come to the feast at all?"

56 They kept looking for Jesus and saying to one another as they stood in the Temple, "What do you think? Surely he won't come to the festival, will he?"

56 Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?

57 Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where He was, he was to report it, so that they might arrest Him.

57 Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where He was, he was to report it, so that they might seize Him.

57 Now the high priests and the Pharisees had given orders that whoever knew where he was should tell them so that they could arrest him.

57 Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where he were, he should shew it, that they might take him.

- The Sanhedrin sent out an arrest warrant for Jesus Christ

— It is interesting that they could not find any sin or wrongdoing in His life in order to justify His arrest, let alone His murder, except for His duty and obligation to the Mosaic Law

— It is very similar to Daniel when the commissioners and satraps tried to find grounds for an accusation against Daniel, in order to throw him into the lion's den, but they could not find one except for his dedication to the Law of God (Dan 6:5-6).

— Both Daniel and Jesus were so dedicated to the things of God that their enemies knew that there was no wrongdoing in their lives by which they could justify killing them. They had to find some trickery or loophole, some way to exploit the law in order to justify before men what they already made up their minds to do.

Dan 6:5: Then these men said, "We will not find any ground of accusation against this Daniel unless we find *it* against him regarding the law of his God."