

## THE GOSPEL OF JOHN SESSION 13

**Review:** Last week we went through chapter 10 where Jesus put forth a parable about a sheepfold and a shepherd. He then drew the parallels to himself and his sheep. He said that he was “the door” meaning he is the way into eternal life. Then he said that he was the good shepherd of the sheep because he will lay his life down for them. He also revealed that he had power to take his life back up again. He then explained to the religious leaders their part in the parable, they were the thieves and robbers that tried to climb over the wall into the sheepfold, but the sheep did not hear their voice. His sheep know his voice and follow him, and he gives unto them eternal life. The chapter ends in a dispute and they try to stone him once again but to no avail.

**John 11:1-4** Now a certain *man* was sick, *named* Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. (It was *that* Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.) Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. 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. *These are the same people that receive the Lord into their house in Luke 10:38-42. The scriptures distinguish this Mary from many others in that it tells us she’s the one that anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair. In Luke 10 we only read of Mary and Martha, but this passage reveals their brother Lazarus, who is dangerously sick. They immediately sent for Jesus, and when he heard of his illness reveals the reason for this whole experience. “This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified” means that the intent of this happening is not for Lazarus to permanently die. The phrase “but for the glory of God” means that God wants to put something about himself that is invisible, on display. Jesus will be glorified as the Son of God, meaning he will demonstrate who he is.*

**John 11:5-7** Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was. Then after that saith he to *his* disciples, Let us go into Judaea again. *Verse 5 is very important because without it, we might misunderstand verse 6. Jesus remaining in the same place for 2 days is not because he doesn’t love or care for them, it’s about being aligned with the perfect will of his Father.*

**John 11:8-10** *His* disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again? 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. But if a man

walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him. *The disciples bring up that they just left Judaea because the Jews wanted to stone him. This is their way of saying “I don’t think this is a good idea”. Jesus teaches them the safety of walking in obedience. Spiritually, walking in the “daylight” means faithfully obeying God’s will. He showed them that as long as he walked in the light, he was securely protected. “Walking at night” is a metaphor for living in disobedience which leads to stumbling.*

**John 11:11-16** 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. Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him. Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellowdisciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him. *The Lord refers to his own in death as “sleeping” because they still live even though the body sleeps. The disciples didn’t understand that so Jesus had to speak more plainly for them. He tells them that he is glad for this opportunity to build their faith through the miracle of raising Lazarus as well as teach them not to be controlled by fear. Thomas calls this a suicide mission but also shows his loyalty to the Lord to follow him anyway.*

**John 11:17-22** Then when Jesus came, he found that he had *lain* in the grave four days already. Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off: And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat *still* in the house. Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give *it* thee. *In Mary and Martha’s mind, he was late! He had failed them. Did he not care? They were like us: when we pray, we sometimes have it fixed in our minds how that the Lord should respond to our request. The problem with that is: the Lord rarely does anything like we think he should and it sets us up for disappointment if he doesn’t. It’s important to know that Bethany is so close to Jerusalem – just under two miles, because many Jews had come from Jerusalem to their house to comfort them. Jerusalem, the place where the Lord has the hardest time ministering in because of their unbelief and spiritual blindness. Even though Martha is upset with the Lord, she says she still has faith in who he is!*

**John 11:23-27** Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith

unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world. *This is “the glory of God and glorifying the Son” that Jesus spoke about in verse 4. God is going to reveal His power over death and corruption while glorifying the Son as the Messiah he claimed to be. The resurrection is not just an event or a date, but a person! Jesus is showing that true belief in him grants eternal life and victory over death.*

**John 11:28-34** 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. As soon as she heard *that*, she arose quickly, and came unto him. Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him. 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. 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 Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. *Jesus remains where he is while Martha runs home and informs Mary that the Lord has called for her. She quickly goes out to meet him and says the same thing her sister says but in a different way. Martha is a “type A” personality and she was probably more direct in her statement while Mary was more tender, and she made the same statement weeping at his feet. These verses show us the emotional side of the Lord, he is moved by the sorrow he sees around him.*

**John 11:35-38** Jesus wept. Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him! 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? Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. *The sorrow around him and people that he loved weeping before him, moved him to weep. The Lord must have cried hard because of the how the Jews respond to it “Behold how he loved him!”. Then they say something interesting about him opening the eyes of the blind (reference to chapter 9) which means they were either there when it happened or they heard about it. That happened in Jerusalem where all these people came from. They question his ability causing him to inwardly groan showing the pain unbelief causes the Lord. They all travel to the cave where Lazarus was laid.*

**John 11:39-40** 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. Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? *Asking them to take away the stone was for their faith to be displayed. Many times the Lord asked people to do something simple but was contrary to logic for their faith in him to*

*be shown. Lazarus being in the grave for 4 days meant that his body had started to decay. Jesus said if they believed (obeyed) they would see the glory of God. God's way always requires you to believe before you see.*

**John 11:41-44** 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. And I knew 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. And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. 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. *Taking the stone away was the faith invested to see the impossible. Jesus prayed to the Father for the sake of the people standing by. The same people asking where his father was? He was definitively showing them that he and the Father truly are one. He called for Lazarus and he came forth – this was the glory of God and his glory. He put his power and deity on display for the crowd to see.*

**John 11:45** Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him. *This is why Jesus didn't come when they sent for him. It wasn't just about them but about bringing many to faith through this experience. Jesus love for them was not the issue, it was about using their calamity to reach a much larger group of people.*

**John 11:46-48** But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done. Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. 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. *Of course there were some rotten apples in the barrel and they ran off to tell the Pharisees about what had happened. This shows how great unbelief is, to witness this miracle and still not believe on Christ. The Pharisees get the council together to discuss what should be done. They plainly said "this man doeth many miracles"...then why not believe in him? Because of what they say in verse 48 – If we leave him alone, all men will believe on him and lead to a rebellion. The Romans will come in here and take away OUR PLACE (meaning they will strip us of our authority and political power over our nation). They desired position and power over eternal life!*

**John 11:49-53** And one of them, *named* Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the

children of God that were scattered abroad. Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death. *Caiaphas was not a good or godly man but he was the high priest that year so the Holy Spirit spoke through him because of his office. He prophesied that it was better for one man to die than for a nation to perish. Now he meant that it would be better to get rid of Jesus than for the nation to perish, but the Holy Spirit meant that it was better for the Son of God to take the wrath of God on himself than for the people who really deserved it. Jesus raised Lazarus even though it was a giant step towards Calvary because it was this even that led the council to relentlessly plot his death.*

**John 11:54-57** 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. And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves. 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? 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. *Jesus withdraws again because of the plotting of the council, but the Passover is about to commence. This feast will bring Jesus to Jerusalem again and it will be precisely on the Passover that he dies on the cross fulfilling the Old Testament pattern.*

**The mystery of the 4<sup>th</sup> day** – It is of spiritual significance that Jesus appears to raise Lazarus on the 4<sup>th</sup> day. The sun was created on the 4<sup>th</sup> day of creation. Even though there was light for 3 days, there was no direct visible source. The sun was created “to rule the day” and Jesus has repeatedly said in this gospel that he is “the light of the world” meaning that he rules the day. There had been light before Christ but no direct visible source. Jesus came into the world approximately 4,000 years after the creation of Adam. **2 Peter 3:8** But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. *Jesus Christ appeared on the 4<sup>th</sup> day from Adam to give life back to people that had died from sin sickness!*

**Tonight's application:** Sometimes in a tragedy, we do the right things, but the outcome isn't what we expected. Martha and Mary did exactly what they were supposed to, they immediately sent for Jesus. There will be times when a catastrophe will arise and you will immediately go to the Lord in prayer to help you. We just need to give him space to be God and realize His point of view is much higher than ours. We see how it affects us, the Lord sees how it can be used to affect many. Jesus did not do what Martha and Mary wanted him to because what he did, was so much better! Jesus displayed his power and his person but he also displayed his great love for three of his personal friends.