

The Most Important Day for Lazarus' Family

JOHN 11: 1-7, 11-27,38-45

Most important day ...

- the day Jesus brought Lazarus back to life

On this day, pay attention to ...

- Jesus' ministry of TRUTH to Martha (Jn 11: 20-28)
- Jesus' ministry of TEARS to Mary (Jn 11: 28-35)
- Jesus' ministry of POWER to Lazarus (Jn 11: 36-44)

The events of this day in Bethany will ...

- demonstrate our Lord's love and care for each member of this family – specific to their uniqueness
- demonstrate our Lord Jesus' humanity and deity in perfect balance

The events of this day will ...

- demonstrate our Lord Jesus' power over death and sin
- strengthen the faith of those who already believe in Jesus – the disciples, Martha and Mary ... (and Lazarus?)
- bring many to faith in Jesus as the Messiah
- provoke the most intense opposition to Jesus by the Sanhedrin – “It’s time to kill Jesus!”
- pave the way for Judas to betray Jesus

God's sovereignty in the timing of 7th sign

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Jesus' deliberate delay → apparent tragedy

³ ... the sisters sent word to Jesus, "Lord, the one you love is sick."

⁴ When he heard this, Jesus said, "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it."

⁵ Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. ⁶ So when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days, ... (John 11: 3-6)

7th sign

- Jesus raised 3 people from the dead (see Lk. 7:15 and Lk. 8:55); Lazarus the “most dead” – dead for 4 days
- “How will the dead be raised? What kind of bodies will they have?” (1 Cor. 15: 35; NLT)
- Raising the dead (not resuscitating the clinically dead) - most amazing miracle of God, next to creation of the world
- Resurrection: essential part of the gospel of Jesus Christ – He was resurrected, never to die again

Christ wants to set us free from the fear of death

Because God's children are human beings—made of flesh and blood—the Son also became flesh and blood. For only as a human being could he die, and only by dying could he break the power of the devil, who had the power of death. Only in this way could he set free all who have lived their lives as slaves to the fear of dying.

(Hebrews 2: 14-15; NLT)

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¹⁴ ... then [Jesus] told [his disciples] plainly, "Lazarus is dead, ¹⁵ and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." (Jn 11: 14-15)

The most important day for Lazarus' Family

¹⁷ On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. ¹⁸ Now Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁹ and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother.

²⁰ When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home. (Jn 11: 17-20)

Martha's honest greeting

²⁰ When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, ... ²¹ “Lord,” Martha said to Jesus, “if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²² But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.” (Jn 11: 20-22)

- Notice Martha's confidence and disappointment in Jesus

Martha's limited faith (and expectation)

²⁰ When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, ... ²¹ “Lord,” Martha said to Jesus, “if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²² But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.” (Jn 11: 20-22)

- “Jesus, You could have healed him and prevented him from dying!”

Jesus' ministry of TRUTH to Martha

“Your brother will rise again.” (v. 23)

Don't be so surprised! Indeed, the time is coming when all the dead in their graves will hear the voice of God's Son, and they will rise again. Those who have done good will rise to experience eternal life, and those who have continued in evil will rise to experience judgment. (Jn 5: 28-29; NLT)

“Your brother will rise again.” (v. 23)

For we must all stand before Christ to be judged. We will each receive whatever we deserve for the good or evil we have done in this earthly body. (2 Cor. 5: 10; NLT)

Martha knew her doctrine well

Jesus: “Your brother will rise again.” (v.23)

Martha: “Yes, he will rise when everyone else rises, at the last day.” (v. 24)

- Correct head knowledge isn't enough; knowing the facts didn't seem to comfort Martha at this moment
- Knowing and saying right things without trusting with the heart won't cut it

Jesus brings the “future” into the “present”

“I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this, Martha?” (vv. 25-26; NLT)

- “Jesus has not just come ... ‘from heaven to earth’; ... he has come from God’s future into the present, into the mess and muddle of the world we know.” – N.T. Wright

Jesus directs her thoughts from this world to heaven

- “Heaven is not a theological abstract place, it’s my Father’s home; it’s my home, ... and it’s yours too!”

“Don’t let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. There is more than enough room in my Father’s home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am.”

(Jn 14: 1-3; NLT)

“I am the resurrection”

- Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying
- A person who believes in Jesus will continue to be alive, even after dying
- “I will wake him/her up from the sleep called death” – Jesus

Dying in Christ = Sleeping

Then he said, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but now I will go and wake him up.”

¹² The disciples said, “Lord, if he is sleeping, he will soon get better!” ¹³ They thought Jesus meant Lazarus was simply sleeping, but Jesus meant Lazarus had died.

¹⁴ So he told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead. ¹⁵ And for your sakes, I’m glad I wasn’t there, for now you will really believe. Come, let’s go see him.” (John 11: 11-15; NLT)

Widow's son in Nain

When the Lord saw her, his heart overflowed with compassion. “Don’t cry!” he said. ¹⁴ Then he walked over to the coffin and touched it, and the bearers stopped. “**Young man,**” he said, “I tell you, **get up.**” ¹⁵ Then the dead boy sat up and began to talk! And Jesus gave him back to his mother.

(Lk 7: 13-15; NLT)

Jairus' daughter

⁵¹ When they arrived at the house, ... ⁵² The house was filled with people weeping and wailing, but he said, “**Stop the weeping! She isn't dead; she's only asleep.**”

⁵³ But the crowd laughed at him because they all knew she had died. ⁵⁴ Then Jesus took her by the hand and said in a loud voice, **“My child, get up!”** ⁵⁵ And at that moment her life returned, and she immediately stood up! Then Jesus told them to give her something to eat. (Lk 8: 51-55)

Dying in Christ = Sleeping

For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.

(1 Thess. 4: 14; NIV)

For since we believe that Jesus died and was raised to life again, we also believe that when Jesus returns, God will bring back with him the believers who have died.

(1 Thess. 4: 14; NLT)

“I am the life”

²⁵ Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die;

²⁶ and whoever lives by believing in me will never die.

Do you believe this?”

(John 11: 25-26)

- Jesus is the source and giver of all life
- A believer will never experience death – upon death, immediately transported/transferred to heaven

When a believer is woken up from sleep ...

- he/she will be with Christ in heaven
 - Heaven: the “home” where God and angelic beings live; the spiritual “home” believers move into when they die
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Jesus answered him, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.” (Lk 23: 43)

I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; (Philippians 1: 23)

Death can't interrupt our life with the Lord

⁶ So we are always confident, even though we know that as long as we live in these bodies we are not at home with the Lord. ⁷ For we live by believing and not by seeing. ⁸ Yes, we are fully confident, and we would rather be away from these earthly bodies, for then we will be at home with the Lord.

(2 Cor. 5: 6-8; NLT)

Jesus made a personal promise; a promise with a condition attached

Jesus said to [Martha], “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?” (Jn 11: 25-26)

The condition?

Jesus said to [Martha], “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who **believes in me** will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by **believing in me** will never die. Do you **believe** this?” (Jn 11: 25-26)

Martha's response

Jesus said to [Martha], “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?”

“Yes, Lord,” she replied, “I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.”

(Jn 11: 25-27)

Jesus loves us with unconditional love ...

- but He never forces His love on anyone

Jesus wants to give us eternal life

- We can't earn it, but we have to ask Him for it by believing in Him

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (Jn 3: 16)

But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. (Jn 20: 31)

Martha's most important day

“Yes, Lord,” she replied, “I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.”

(John 11: 27)

How about you? Do you believe that ...

- Jesus is the Christ – your Savior who takes personal responsibility for you, now and forever?
- Jesus is the Son of God – the only One who can personally guarantee your destiny?
- God sent His Son into our world for one main reason – to rescue you from sin and death because of His great love for you?

Let this be your most important day
