



## Unit .25

### Session .04

# Jesus Raises Lazarus

## Scripture



## John 11:20-27, 32-37,41-44

**20** As soon as Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him, but Mary remained seated in the house. **21** Then Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother wouldn’t have died. **22** Yet even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you.” **23** “Your brother will rise again,” Jesus told her. **24** Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.” **25** Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me, even if he dies, will live. **26** Everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” **27** “Yes, Lord,” she told him, “I believe you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who comes into the world.” ... **32** As soon as Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and told him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died!”

**33** When Jesus saw her crying, and the Jews who had come with her crying, he was deeply moved in his spirit and troubled. **34** “Where have you put him?” he asked. “Lord,” they told him, “come and see.” **35** Jesus wept. **36** So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!” **37** But some of them said, “Couldn’t he who opened the blind man’s eyes also have kept this man from dying?” ... **41** So they removed the stone. Then Jesus raised his eyes and said, “Father, I thank you that you heard me. **42** I know that you always hear me, but because of the crowd standing here I said this, so that they may believe you sent me.” **43** After he said this, he shouted with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” **44** The dead man came out bound hand and foot with linen strips and with his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unwrap him and let him go.”

What's so surprising about Jesus' delay?

Why should we be mindful of God's perfect timing when it comes to difficult circumstances?



## 99 Essential Doctrines

### Resurrection

Both the Old and New Testaments teach that one day believers will experience a resurrection of the body from the dead (Isa. 26:19; Ezek. 37:12-14; John 11). The promise of the resurrection is found in the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and it will take place at the future return of Christ. Because Christ was the firstfruits of the resurrection, Christians can be assured that their resurrection will be similar in nature, meaning it will be both bodily and glorious (Phil. 3:20-21; Rom. 8:22-23). The hope of the future resurrection gives Christians confidence that death has been defeated in the death and resurrection of Christ.

## Main Point

**Jesus grieves over death and foreshadows His own resurrection.**

**What does the fact that Jesus wept communicate about His character?**

**In what ways does it comfort you to know that Jesus grieves death?**

## Christ Connection

When Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, He showed that He has power over death. Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life.” Because Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead, we have full assurance that Jesus will one day defeat death forever and resurrect us from the dead.

**How will the truth of Jesus' love for you and His gift of salvation affect the way you respond to difficulties in your life today?**

## In Defense



“Jesus identifies with us in our pain and loss. He comes to us in our weakness and brokenness. Though he knew he was about to raise Lazarus from the dead, Jesus wept when he saw the tears of Mary and her companions. This is Jesus being truly human. As God incarnate, Jesus shows us what he, as God, created man to be—a whole-hearted lover of God and a compassionate lover of fellow image-bearers—summarized in the two great commandments (Matt. 22:34-40). But as the incarnate God, Jesus’ tears in front of Lazarus’s tomb are of a different order. This is Jesus feeling the weight of the fall—the violation and disintegration of the way things were meant to be. His holy tears are those of the Creator grieving over the forfeiture of beauty through the intrusion of sin and death. Once again, in the incarnate Lord, we see the heart of the Lamb who would offer his life to overcome our sin and death.”—Scotty Smith, “John,” *Gospel Transformation Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013), 1429.



## Head

**How does the story of Lazarus' resurrection challenge us to think about God's timing in our lives?**

**How does our trust in God's timing and goodness during tragic moments bring Him glory?**



## Heart

**In what ways does "resurrection" language apply to us spiritually when we are saved?**

**How can we see the promise of both spiritual and physical resurrection in this passage?**



## Hands

**How does this account serve as an example of how we should respond to those around us who are hurting?**

**What are some practical ways we can serve people in our lives today who are grieving?**

# Daily Devotions



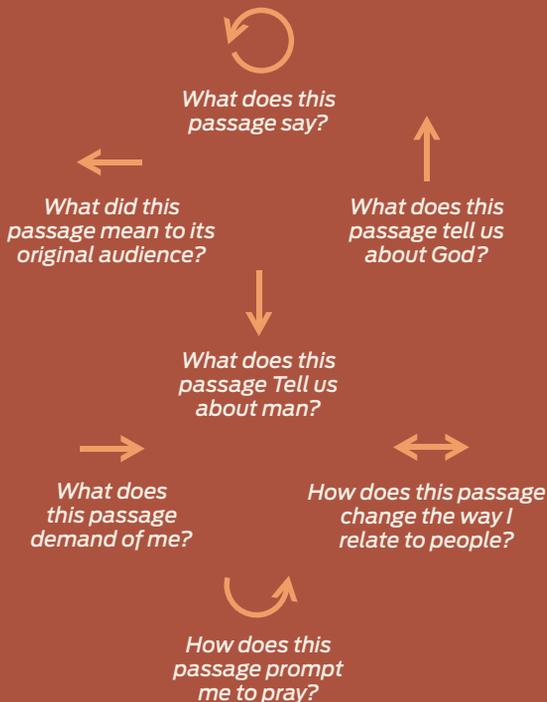
Day 1

## John 11:1-27

Now, we know that all illnesses and afflictions—and even death itself—is in the world because of sin. But there isn't a neat mathematical equation between a particular sin and a particular affliction. In other words, someone born blind is not a direct consequence of a specific sin in their lives, but simply the consequence of living in a fallen world. For the Christian especially, we see that the Lord ordains difficulty in our lives so that we might draw closer to Him and rely on His strength in our weakness more fully.

Jesus waited for Lazarus to die because He knew that a miraculous raising would bring more glory to Himself than a miraculous healing. And you can reasonably (and biblically!) assume that Jesus allows difficult things to come into your life because He will get more glory—and you will become more like Him—than if those difficulties didn't come.

## The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



**As painful as many of the difficulties we face in life often are, how do they lead us closer to Jesus than do times of ease and comfort?**

# John 11:28-37

“Jesus wept,” John tells us in verse 35 of this passage. It may be the shortest verse in the Bible, but these two words contain depths of wisdom and insight.

To begin with, we see the real humanity of Jesus. He has tear ducts that cry. He has a heart that can be broken by the brokenness of humanity. This certainly adds a profound resonance to our understanding of the incarnation. The Son of God wasn't just willing to put on flesh; He was willing to feel the weight of the human experience. We see the full humanity of Jesus in John 11:35. Jesus, as the ideal image-bearer, presents to us the right human response to death: He wept.

Jesus wasn't just grieving the passing of His friend Lazarus in this moment. He was also grieving the reality of death. This is not the world as He made it to be. Death is a grievous distortion in the creation He called “good.”

**How does Jesus' weeping over Lazarus' death reveal about His character and compassion over our lives?**

# John 11:38-44

The Lord specializes in “hopeless” causes.

When Jesus got to Lazarus' grave, there was already a stench. The Lord was four days late. Lazarus was dead. He was “deader” than dead. In the hands of anyone else, this case would have been hopeless, impossible. But our God is the God of the impossible. He holds the keys to life and death. He can make life out of nothing! Nothing is too difficult for Him (Jer. 32:17).

He has this power over your life too. No matter what you are facing right now, the Lord is sovereign over it. No, He may not directly deliver you from your present trouble, but He will secure you to Himself in the midst of it, and He will never let you go. As the saying goes, “Sometimes He calms the storm; sometimes He calms the sailor.”

**What is the most significant lesson the Lord has taught you in the midst of suffering or other difficulties?**

# John 11:44-57

Once again we see how polarizing the teaching and ministry of Jesus Christ was in His own day. For one thing, notice how the most offended at Christ's raising of Lazarus happened to be the religious elite. Why do you think that was? Shouldn't they be celebrating that the Messiah had come? It turns out that their passion was not exactly channeled for messianic expectation—at least, not for this kind of Messiah.

Rather, from a gospel perspective, Jesus was actually turning them right-side up by overthrowing the expectations and standards of the religious elite of His day. Jesus does the same thing today with our self-righteousness. We, as did the Jewish religious leaders of this era, often use religion to make ourselves look good, to exalt ourselves in the eyes of others, and even to wield a kind of leverage over others who are not as theologically rigorous or spiritually athletic as we are. Thankfully, for our sake, Jesus comes along with His radical grace for sinners and tears down the whole scaffolding of our pride.

**Why is self-righteousness such an offense to God?**

# John 12:9-11

Assuming that Lazarus had passed into paradise when he died, he was enjoying the comforts of heaven in the presence of glory for a time. And then Jesus “yanked” him right back out of there. His resurrection was not like Jesus' resurrection, or like ours will be at the second coming of Christ. We will put on immortality, like Christ did at His rising. But Lazarus was resurrected back into his mortal body. He was going to have to die again!

And in John 12:9-11 we see that this is exactly what his enemies have in mind. You and I may not face the same kind of threat that Lazarus did (nor even the same kind of threat that our brothers and sisters in the persecuted church around the world do). But to align with Christ—to receive His death and His life as our own—is to make yourself a target of those who hate God. Christ promised this kind of trouble to His followers. But He also promised the victory over the trouble. And we cannot have the latter without the former.

**Have you ever suffered for being a follower of Jesus? If so, how did you find encouragement in the midst of your trouble?**