

6 John 11

The Plan

- A. The Death of Lazarus
- B. Jesus, the Resurrection and the Life
- C. The Plot Against Jesus

The Goals

1. State why Jesus did not respond to Lazarus' sisters' plea immediately.
2. Explain the meaning of Jesus' self-description as the resurrection and the life.
3. Describe the Jewish leaders' response to Lazarus' resurrection.

A. THE DEATH OF LAZARUS

Goal 1. State why Jesus did not respond to Lazarus' sisters' plea immediately.

Read John 11:1–16. We have learned that Jesus had power over sickness. Now we see that He had power over death also. We know that doctors are trained to help sick people by giving them medicine, but no one has ever learned how to bring a dead person back to life. Jesus has this power because He is God, the giver of all life.

Mary, Martha, and Lazarus lived in Bethany, about two miles from Jerusalem. When Lazarus became sick, his sisters sent a message to Jesus. Jesus did not go as soon as He received the message. This was not because He did not love Lazarus, but because He was going to bring Lazarus back to life. This tremendous miracle would persuade people of Jesus divinity.

When Jesus said He would go to Bethany, His disciples tried to stop Him. Jesus' life had been in danger many times in Jerusalem, and the disciples were afraid for the Master.

Jesus again spoke of himself as the “light of the world,” saying that those who followed Him would not stumble in the darkness.

Application

- 1 When Lazarus' sisters sent for Jesus, why did He not go at once to heal His friend?
 - a) Jesus was too busy to worry about one sick man.
 - b) Jesus was afraid to go to Jerusalem because His life was in danger.
 - c) Jesus knew that Lazarus would die, but this would be a chance to show the power of God.

2 Have you ever wondered why your prayers were not answered right away?

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B. JESUS, THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE

Goal 2. Explain the meaning of Jesus' self-description as the resurrection and the life.

Read John 11:17–27. By the time Jesus got to Bethany, Lazarus had been dead and buried in a cave for four days. Martha ran to meet the Lord, saying, “If you had been here, my brother would not have died” (v. 21). She said also that she knew God would give Jesus whatever He asked.

We see how Jesus led this woman to a greater belief in Him. He first told her that her brother would rise again. Martha knew this, but she thought it would be in the resurrection of all the dead at the Judgment Day.

Jesus responded, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies” (v. 25). Those who believe in Jesus will never die spiritually. And when their bodies do die, they will live again when the time comes for their resurrection. Spiritual death means eternal separation from God. It does not mean that the human spirit ceases to exist.

Martha said she believed that Jesus was the Son of God. Then Jesus went with Martha and others to Lazarus' grave. In those days the dead were buried in caves or in holes in the

side of rocky hills. The dead body was placed inside, and the opening to the cave was covered by a big rock.

Application

- 3** What did Jesus tell Martha?
a) That He was the resurrection and the life
b) That Lazarus would rise at the last resurrection
c) That there was no such thing as a resurrection
- 4** How long had Lazarus been buried?
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- 5** Memorize John 11:25.
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Jesus Weeps

Read John 11:28–37. Jesus is a real friend who cares when we have problems and sorrows. He wept with Martha and Mary and their friends, but later He turned their sorrow to joy. We can take our grief to Him and find comfort.

Does Jesus Care?

Does Jesus care when my heart is pained
 Too deeply for mirth and song,
 As the burdens press, and the cares distress,
 And the way grows weary and long?
 Does Jesus care when I've said "good-by"
 To the dearest on earth to me,
 And my sad heart aches till it nearly breaks—
 Is it aught to Him? Does He see?
 O yes, He cares; I know He cares;
 His heart is touched with my grief;
 When the days are weary,
 The long nights dreary,
 I know my Savior cares.

—Frank E. Graeff

Application

6 Pray for anyone you know who needs Jesus' comfort.

Lazarus Brought to Life

Read John 11:38–44. What would Jesus do? All those standing near must have wondered. First Jesus prayed, thanking God for hearing Him. Then He commanded, “Lazarus, come out!” (v. 43). The dead man heard the voice of Jesus and came back from death to life.

Lazarus' resurrection foreshadows the resurrection of all believers of Jesus Christ at the time of the church's rapture, when Jesus will return to take His church. The resurrection will be in two events. Those who are saved will rise first. Much later the unsaved will come back to life and be judged for their sins. John 5:28–29 records Jesus' promise of the resurrection,

“The time is coming when all the dead will hear his voice and come out of their graves: those who have done good will rise and live, and those who have done evil will rise and be condemned.”

Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 15:22–23, “For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him.”

Application

- 7** What did Jesus do about Lazarus?
- a)** He wept for Lazarus' death, and that was all He could do.
 - b)** He called for Lazarus to come out of the grave, and Lazarus came back to life.
 - c)** He comforted Mary and Martha by telling them that their brother would be raised at the last resurrection.

- 8** Will all people who have died be raised from the dead?
- a)** No, not all people will be raised from the dead—only good people.
 - b)** No, not all people will be raised from the dead—only sinners who will go to hell.
 - c)** Yes, all people will be raised from the dead: the saved will be raised to life, and the unsaved will be condemned.
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C. THE PLOT AGAINST JESUS

Goal 3. Describe the Jewish leaders' response to Lazarus' resurrection.

Read John 11:45–57. The miracle of Lazarus' being raised from the dead was reported to the religious leaders—some of whom who did not believe. All the leaders feared that trouble would come to them from the Roman government, so they agreed to have Jesus put to death. Caiaphas, the high priest, said it would be better for one man to die than for the whole nation to be destroyed.

When we consider the miracle of Lazarus' resurrection, it is difficult to imagine such blindness and hardness of heart by the religious leaders. They chose to defend the political impact and not the mighty demonstration of God's power in their midst. Putting this in perspective, it had been centuries since a prophet had performed a miracle of this magnitude.

Application

- 9** What did the leaders think about Lazarus' resurrection?
- a)** They praised God.
 - b)** They decided that Jesus must die.
 - c)** They did not believe that Lazarus had been dead.
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Check Your Answers

- 1 c)** Jesus knew that Lazarus would die, but this would be a chance to show the power of God.
- 7 b)** He called for Lazarus to come out of the grave, and Lazarus came back to life.
- 3 a)** That He was the resurrection and the life
- 8 c)** Yes, all people will be raised from the dead: the saved will be raised to life, and the unsaved will be condemned.
- 4** Four days
- 9 b)** They decided that Jesus must die.

