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*“Open Church – Open Bible”*

*Clabon Bogan Jr. – Interim Pastor*



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# *Sunday Church School*

*February 14, 2021*

“Jesus’ Response to Dire Need”—John 11:1-16

Golden Text: John 11:11

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<sup>1</sup> Now a certain *man* was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.

<sup>2</sup> It was *that* Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.

<sup>3</sup> Therefore the sisters sent to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick."

<sup>4</sup> When Jesus heard *that*, He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it."

<sup>5</sup> Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

<sup>6</sup> So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was.

<sup>7</sup> Then after this He said to *the* disciples, "Let us go to Judea again."

<sup>8</sup> *The* disciples said to Him, "Rabbi, lately the Jews sought to stone You, and are You going there again?"

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<sup>9</sup> 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.

<sup>10</sup> But if one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him."

<sup>11</sup> These things He said, and after that He said to them, "Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up."

<sup>12</sup> Then His disciples said, "Lord, if he sleeps he will get well."

<sup>13</sup> However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep.

<sup>14</sup> Then Jesus said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead.

<sup>15</sup> And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him."

<sup>16</sup> Then Thomas, who is called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with Him."

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## **TODAY’S AIM**

**Facts:** to observe Jesus’ compassion and ready willingness to serve others.

**Principle:** to understand Jesus’ response to the dire need of His friends.

**Application:** to emulate Jesus’ deeds of love and compassion for the glory of God.

The longer we live, the more we realize that life is filled with many unexpected twists and turns.

- Why does a good God allow His children to get sick and die?
- How can a loving God allow grief and tragedy in the lives of His followers?

The four Gospels offer us significantly different divinely inspired perspectives on the life and works of Jesus Christ.

As John concludes his Gospel, he states his purpose: “These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God....”

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## **LESSON OUTLINE**

- I. JESUS SUMMONED** —John 11:1-4
- II. JESUS DELAYED** —John 11:5-14
- III. JESUS DETERMINED** —John 11:15-16

### **I. JESUS SUMMONED** —John 11:1-4

- John records seven miracles in his Gospel that proclaim the deity of Jesus
  - (1) changing water into wine in 2:1-11 (5) waking on the water 6:16-21
  - (2) healing a sick boy from afar 4:46-54 (6) healing boy blind from birth 9:1-7
  - (3) healing an invalid at Bethesda pool 5:1-18 (7) Resurrection of Lazarus 11:43
  - (4) Feeding 5,000 with meager affair 6:5-14
- Jesus had demonstrated His power and authority over the laws of nature, diseases, and hunger.
- Here He demonstrates His authority over our greatest enemy -- **death**.
- John’s purpose statement in John 20:32 helps us understand that Jesus’ miraculous works were provided for our salvation.

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- Today’s lesson is considered by many to be Jesus’ greatest miracle: the raising of Lazarus from the dead.
- The lesson centers around God by showing compassion (John 11:1-4).

Throughout history, there are many people who have served others; some have even gained great renown for their acts of benevolence.

Yet no one in history has performed greater acts of love, compassion, and benevolent service than Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

Although Jesus could have healed Lazarus at the very moment that his sickness was reported to Him, He takes a profoundly surprising course.

He tells His disciples that “this sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby” (vs. 4).

All of this goes to help us understand that Jesus’ care was more than mere philanthropy. Jesus’ works were always intended to bring glory to God the Father.

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## **II. JESUS DELAYED**

**—John 11:5-14**

- Verse 5 explicitly states that “Jesus delayed despite love for friends
- He loved Martha, and her sister Mary and their brother Lazarus.”
- John clearly establishes Jesus’ love for these people so there would be no misunderstanding of His motives for choosing to delay in going to Lazarus’s aid.
- It was not for any lack of love or compassion that Jesus lingered where He was for two days before He responded to Lazarus’s need.
- Why did Jesus linger when He had the power to heal Lazarus immediately?
- The lies in the fact that His Jesus’ first priority is always the greater glory of God the Father.
- As we read further, we will learn that Lazarus eventually succumbed to his illness and died.
- Why Jesus allowed Lazarus’s illness to result in his physical death is a mystery at this point to those who have not read the end of the account.
- After two days go by, Jesus announces His intent to go to Judea without saying why.

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- This surprises the disciples because they know the area is crawling with enemies who are trying to kill Jesus.
- Why would He want to go there of all places?
- It was undoubtedly when the sisters saw Lazarus’s sickness getting worse that they thought of Jesus and how He might intervene.
- Jesus does not answer directly but gives them a principle to think about. “Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walketh in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world” (V. 9).
- He is telling them of the necessity of taking all possible opportunities to serve God while they are available.
- The light will not always be there, as His statement in verse 10 makes clear.
- Underneath the day-to-day realities of light and darkness is the implication that the Light is present in the world in Jesus.
- It will not always be, so the **time to work** is now. -- it is not a **time to worry**

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## **III. JESUS DETERMINED —John 11:15-16**

- The text then takes up the task of revealing the true nature of death (John 11:11-16).
- At first, Jesus uses the word “sleep” as a euphemism for death to describe Lazarus’s condition to His disciples.
- He tells them that they are going to wake Lazarus up and completely missing His intended meaning, the disciples think that Lazarus is literally sleeping.
- Accordingly, they wonder why they should wake him, since sleep can only be beneficial to his condition.
- Finally, Jesus plainly tells them that Lazarus has died and He then tells them He is glad for the sake of their faith that He was not there in time to heal Lazarus.
- In this statement, Jesus is calling the disciples to believe in Him despite how hopeless the situation now looks.
- He is directing their focus away from the current tragedy involving Lazarus toward God’s glorious purpose for this event.

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- Jesus said He was glad for the disciples’ sake that He had not been there in time to save Lazarus because this would now be an opportunity for them to strengthen their faith in Him.
- If Jesus had been with Lazarus during the final moments of Lazarus’s sickness, He might have healed him rather than let him die.
- But Lazarus died so that Jesus’ power over death could be shown to His disciples and others
- And here we notice doubt (V 16) in Thomas’s response, showing that his fears had devolved into resignation and apathy.
- The name Thomas in Aramaic means “twin,” as does the Greek equivalent “Didymus,” but we do not know anything about his twin.
- Thomas’s propensity for pessimism is evident when he makes the sarcastic comment that they should all go along so that they might all die along with Jesus.
- But we should give him credit for remaining loyal and willing to follow Jesus, no matter the cost.

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## ILLUSTRATING THE LESSON

As we continue to follow Jesus as His disciples, we realize that He does not intend to spare us from the difficulties and dangers of this life.

Clinging to Jesus is much like clinging to a lifesaver in the middle of a treacherous sea.

- If we hold on tightly to that lifesaver, it has the power to keep us from drowning.
- The lifesaver is the only thing keeping us alive. Similarly, if we hold on to Jesus, no matter how difficult our life gets, He will save us through it all.



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## **“ADVANCE YOUR KNOWLEDGE”**



1. In what town did this incident take place, and where was it located relative to Jerusalem?
2. Why had Jesus left Jerusalem, and what happened while He was away?
3. If Jesus loved Lazarus and his sisters, why did He delay two days before going to help them?
4. How did the disciples react when Jesus said they were going to Judea?
5. What was the real meaning in His explanation, and what does this mean to us?
6. What did the disciples not understand about what Jesus said, and how did He clarify?
7. Why did Jesus let Lazarus die?

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**Saturday - March 13, 2021 - 8:00 AM**

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AND ONE MAN  
SHARPENS ANOTHER

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Password: 172091

**FACILITATORS**  
Rev. Guy Bowens  
Min. Nate Cheers

**PROVERBS 27:17**

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