

**Sermon: The Resurrection and the Life**  
**Text: John 11**

**Discussion Questions:**

We all experience pain and difficult times in our life. There is no escaping it. Struggles and trials and difficulties come with being a human who lives on planet earth. We live in bodies that are aging and susceptible to disease and illness and decay. We live on a planet that has wind, and storms, and volcanos, and earthquakes, and floods, and fires, and whirlwinds—and there is absolutely nothing we can do about it. We live in nations that rise up against other nations, waging war and threatening destruction. We live in societies where hatred and jealousy and division and violence simply seem to be the norm.

- What is the most painful or difficult thing that you have experienced? Did you question God's love for you during that time? Why or why not?
- Do good things ever come as a result of living through difficult or painful situations? Read **Romans 8:28**. Is there sometimes a higher purpose or bigger picture to the pain and suffering we experience?
- How has God used your difficult situations to bring about good in your life or in the lives of others?
- Have you ever thanked God for a difficult or painful time in your life because of the good that came as a result of the pain?

**Examination:**

- Read **John 11:1-6**
  - Look at verses 1-3. Can you see how verse 3 can be viewed as a prayer?
  - What precipitated this “prayer” that the sisters “prayed” (v. 1)? Isn't this a circumstance that motivates each of us to pray—perhaps more than any other life circumstance?
  - What was Jesus' main concern upon hearing the news of Lazarus' illness (v. 4)?
  - Talk about verse 5. Does this verse give you comfort? Is this a verse that we can keep in mind when we approach Jesus with our prayers?
  - Wait, what? What was Jesus' initial “answer” to the sister's “prayer”? Why did Jesus delay (look for your answer back in verse 4)?
  - Might Jesus sometimes delay in answering our prayers to bring God glory?
- Read **John 11:7-16**.
  - The disciples are clearly not thrilled by the thought of going back to Judea and the area surrounding Jerusalem. Look back at John 10:31 and 39 for the reason they probably felt this way. Put yourself in their sandals—how would you have felt?
  - Jesus tries to calm or ease the disciples fears by telling a short little proverb about walking in the daytime (vv. 9-10). What do you think Jesus was trying to say to them? Do you think it helped calm their fears?
  - Verse 11 isn't the only time that the Bible refers to someone who is physically dead as being “asleep” (*ie: 1 Cor. 11:30*). Why do you think we see this?

- What is Jesus' ultimate purpose in delaying the trip to see Lazarus, Martha and Mary (v. 15)?
- The disciples already believe that Jesus is the Messiah—the Son of God. Might it be that Jesus wants the disciples to believe that physical death...although a great enemy...DOESN'T have the final word (even though Thomas thinks this is exactly what will happen to them by stepping foot back in Judea)?
- Read **John 11:17-27**.
  - Think about someone who has been in the casket, and in a hole in the ground for four days. The funeral has come and gone. Distant relatives have already gone back to their previous lives. How dead would you say that person is? Is there ANY WAY that someone might think that the dead person wasn't actually fully and completely dead? Might this be why Jesus waited those extra two days?
  - Why do you think Martha went to meet Jesus, and Mary stayed back (v. 20)? Does this match what we know of Martha & Mary in Luke 10:38-42?
  - In verses 21-22, Martha models genuine faith in the face of great disappointment. She proclaims: "Lord, I wish you had...but EVEN NOW!" Talk about how this prayer can encourage us. Discuss the power of two simple words: Even now!
- Read **John 11:28-37**.
  - Someone once said that Jesus' statement in v. 28 could be carved in every pew, table and pulpit in the sanctuary of every congregation: "The Teacher is here, and He is asking for you!" How might this change how we think about church?
  - The same Greek word used to describe Jesus' resurrection from the dead (*egerthe*) is used when Mary "got up quickly." What is Mary raised from (v. 29)?
  - Mary says the same thing to Jesus that Martha had said (v. 32), but she seems to say it with a completely different spirit. What's the difference?
- Read **John 11:38-44**.
  - John 11:38 is known as the shortest verse in the Bible. In spite of it being "tiny", what makes it "mighty"?
  - Lazarus comes out of the grave still bound up by the grave clothes that wrapped him when he was dead (v. 44). How might this be a picture of what happens in our lives when we come to Christ? (see Hebrews 12:1-2)
- Read **John 11:45-54**.
  - How ironic is it that the Pharisees want to kill the man that just displayed complete power over death (v. 53)? What are they missing? What is the motivation that blinds them to WHO Jesus truly is (v. 48)?
  - Connect Caiaphas' statement in verse 50 with the principle of substitutionary atonement (*and if you don't know what that means—look it up!*). How do verses 51 and 52 explain this prophecy that Caiaphas unknowingly utters?

### Application:

Meditate on two words this coming week: **Even Now!** Know that whatever struggle you face today, Jesus is the resurrection and the life. Have faith. Turn to Jesus with an "**Even now!**" faith.