

Good day, fellow disciples. As someone well said, “The most important theme in the universe is the glory of God.” We read of the Father of glory in **Eph. 1:17** and **2 Pet. 1:17**; of Jesus the Lord of glory in **1 Cor. 2:8**; and the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of glory in **1 Pet. 4:14**. Revealing ‘the essence of who God is’ is the underlying reason for all of God’s works. God’s work of creation is one such display case (**Ps. 19:1, Rom. 1:20**). “Yet the most gracious and complete manifestation of God’s glory came in the person of Jesus.” “Everything God created gives Him glory, except fallen angels and fallen men,” but it’s possible for us to give Him glory, and we will as we believe in the Person and work of Jesus, present ourselves to Him, and walk by faith!

John 10:40-11:44 records the last and most powerful of the 7 miraculous signs in the gospel of John (**2:1-11, 4:46-54, 5:1-17; 6:1-14, 15-21; 9:1-7**): the raising from the dead of Lazarus. “This ‘work’ exemplified Jesus’ power over the last and most irresistible enemy of humanity—death.”

In **John 11** we see the sign pointing to Jesus as the Resurrection and the Life (**11:25**). **Chapters 11-12** form a bridge between the end of Jesus’ public ministry and His death & resurrection (recorded in **13-21**). At the beginning of **chapter 11**, His death on the cross was only a few days away.

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:42 Many believed in Jesus in that countryside. What a contrast between Jerusalem and Perea, between stoning and believing. Keep in mind the purpose of the apostle John’s writings (**20:30-31 read**). John will portray the raising of Lazarus from the dead as “the decisive cause of offense which precipitated the decision to kill Jesus.” We have two previous examples of the raising of the dead by Jesus—that of the widow’s son of Nain (**Lk. 7:11-17**) & that of the daughter of Jairus (**Mk. 5:21-43**); also **read Mt. 11:5** and **Lk. 7:22**, but Lazarus being raised from the dead was the clincher to get rid of Jesus.

Read 11:1-16. :1 Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Lazarus is mentioned only in **chapters**

11-12 of John’s Gospel. The two sisters are mentioned in **Lk. 10:38-42 (read)**. Jesus was apparently a frequent guest in their Bethany home when He visited Jerusalem (**Mk. 11:11**). But Jesus was currently ministering in the Bethany in Perea, not the one about two miles from Jerusalem (**11:18**). And which Mary was this? This Mary was Martha’s and Lazarus’ sister. **:2 It was the Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.** When John wrote about A.D. 90, people knew about this Mary. See **Mt. 26:6-13, Mk. 14:3-9, Jn. 12:1-8**.

:3 So the sisters sent word to Him, saying, “Lord, behold, he whom You love (like, phileō) is sick (without strength, 5:5,7).” Knowing Jesus’ friendship with them and the power of God to heal the sick, the sisters let Jesus know His friend was without strength. “The family lived in the area where a price had been set on His head.” They did not tell Jesus what to do. “They trusted that He would do the best thing, and He did, though not what they had expected.”

It would have taken a day to reach Jesus from the Bethany near Jerusalem. And we learn in **:14** that Lazarus was actually already dead when the sisters’ message reached Him. In fact, Lazarus had already been dead 4 days before Jesus arrived in the Bethany near Jerusalem (**:17,39**).

:4 But when Jesus heard this, He said, “This sickness is not to end in death, but for the glory of God so that the Son of God may be glorified by it.” As we’ll see, from now on the theme of glory will move more and more into the forefront (**12:16,23,28,41**). Sickness is not a sign that God does not love or like you! Sickness and death may sometimes be God’s will for His people (**21:19, Ex. 4:11, Job 1-2**). Jesus’ words on this day meant that death was not the final word. This sickness was not a sign of some sin on Lazarus’ part or lack of faith on the part of Mary and Martha or Lazarus. The resurrection of Lazarus from the dead would demonstrate the glory of God even more than restoration from a sick bed. This being ‘without strength’ was for the glory of God and so that the Son of God may be glorified by it! Glory in this gospel is connected to God’s self-disclosure (**1:14**), the revealing of ‘the essence of who He is’. God in His love and wisdom will do what will result in His glory. In the end He will be glorified and it will be for our good. If God loved us while we were enemies and sinners, how much more will He love us through our suffering and trials. In **17:1-5**, God will be glorified by the death of His Son!

:5-7 Now Jesus loved (agapaō) Martha and her sister and Lazarus. :6 So when He heard that he was sick, He then stayed two days longer in the place where He was! This delay does not arise from indifference or not liking. He loves this family! Jesus loves (agapao **:5**) and likes (phileō **:3**) us when we’re well and when we’re sick! He agapēs us all the time! You can’t stop Him!!

:6 One day for the journey of the messengers, the two days when Jesus remained where He was, and a day for Jesus’ journey to Bethany. Here we see what to do when God does not do what we expect Him to do: Trust Him, wait! As always, Jesus operated according to God’s timetable, not man’s. Jesus is moved by no external forces but solely by the will of God. It’s still true today. Lazarus was dead long enough that no one could misinterpret the

miracle as a fraud or mere resuscitation. His action may have appeared to the disciples and certainly to the sisters as unfeeling and selfish. Yet our Lord always does what is best! Follow Jesus' example of seeking the Father's will.

Jesus' love is for the best of the individual and for the glory of God. We must let Him deal with others and ourselves in His own way. It's tough to believe that Jesus deliberately waited. Remember, Mary's and Martha's hearts were breaking. A delay in answer like this is not an indication of God's indifference or failure to hear. At times we ask and God delays. Our understanding of God has to be large enough to include weakness and death. He can and will use even weakness and death to bring glory to Himself.

"The purpose of the delay was to underscore Jesus' ability to overcome death, to bring honor to God, and to gain honor for Jesus (:4)." Remember, the delay was after Lazarus was already dead.

:7 **Then after this He said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again."** Jesus, with open eyes, went back into the danger zone to help His friends.

:8 **The disciples said to Him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone You, and are You going there again?" 8:59, 10:31.** They remembered the previous conflicts with the rulers and feared for Jesus' (and their own) lives. The disciples can't believe He would go back to Judea. "Why would You leave a fruitful ministry? (10:41-42). If You want to heal Lazarus, why not do it from a distance like You did before?" (4:46-53). There are a variety of responses and emotions to death or the laying down of our lives. Some get angry with God. Some experience numbness, darkness, & depression. Others fill their lives with activity so they don't have to face reality. How do you respond when Jesus doesn't act as '*quickly or in the way*' you think He should?

:9-10 **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.**

:10 **"But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him." (9:4-5)** The themes of light & darkness, day & night, echo the concern about life & death in this chapter. As long as we walk in the light of Jesus we will be all right. However, if any walks in the night (apart from Jesus), he stumbles; why? Because of the absence of light. Jesus understands that He is carrying out the life of the Father. "I am walking in light and not in darkness." It is not fear that makes His decisions; it is a question of the Father's will.

:11-15 :11 **This He said, and after that He said to them, "Our friend (philos, related to 'like' in :3) Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I go, so that I may awaken him out of sleep."** The term 'friend' described intense loyalty; it's a deep liking, an affection. "Our friend has fallen asleep." Jesus said of Jairus' daughter that she was asleep (Mt. 9:24); at the end of Stephen's martyrdom, we are told he fell asleep (Acts 7:60). Paul speaks about those who sleep in Jesus (1 Th. 4:13-15) and of those witnesses of the resurrection who have not fallen asleep (1 Cor. 15:6). Sleep is often used throughout the Bible as another way of saying someone has died. "But I'm going so I can awaken him!" :12 **The disciples then said to Him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover. Why not just let him rest? He'll wake up. You (and we!) don't need to be there."**

:13 **Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that He was speaking of literal sleep.** They still believed that Lazarus' condition was improving.

:14 **So Jesus then said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead (aorist). Lazarus has died."** Who can handle 'death'! Science is certainly helpless in the presence of death. We realize only God can raise the dead! :15 **and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, so that you may believe; but let us go to him."** This miracle would strengthen His disciples' faith in Him as the Messiah and Son of God (20:31). Had the disciples already forgotten the great events that are recorded in Lk. 7:11-17 or Jn. 4:46-54 or Mk. 5:21-24,35-43? This same thought is in Abraham's declaration of who God is: "God, who gives life to the dead." (Rom. 4:17)

"For us, every crisis should be equally an opportunity. There are dimensions of the problems which He sees that we do not remotely imagine. So we must wait and follow and quietly trust, knowing that He is working out something."

Lazarus' resurrection from the dead would do far more to strengthen the disciples' faith than a healing alone would have done. "Let us go to him."

:16 **Therefore Thomas, who is called Didymus (in the Greek means twin) said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, so that we may die with Him."** Thomas appears 4 times in John's Gospel: 11:16; in the discourse in the upper room (14:5); once after the Resurrection (20:24-29), and finally the group described in 21:2. "Thomas was sincere in his intentions. Real courage means being perfectly aware of the worst that can happen, being sickeningly afraid of it, and yet doing the right thing." Yet at the crucial moment in Gethsemane (just a short time away), his faith, like that of the rest of the disciples, would be found wanting.

As I reflect on the Lord we have and the truths of this passage, no matter what situation I find myself in, everywhere Scripture drives me back to this: believe in Jesus, trust His words, and follow Him. The Scriptures are full of such encouragements to sustain us (Dt. 31:8, Lam. 3:21-23,31-32; Ps. 27:13-14; 130:5-8). How patient our Lord Jesus is, to take me where I am and lead me on to discover new dimensions about Him, that He's the God who gives life to the dead, and, He's the resurrection and the life! Wow!

Also, "This is for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified by it (:4) and, so you may believe (:15)." How has this passage impacted you?

Until next time, friends (whom I love and like!), Joel

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Good day, fellow disciples. As someone well said, “The most important theme in the universe is the glory of God.” We read of the Father of glory in **Eph. 1:17** and **2 Pet. 1:17**; of Jesus the Lord of glory in **1 Cor. 2:8**; and the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of glory in **1 Pet. 4:14**. Revealing ‘the essence of who God is’ is the underlying reason for all of God’s works. God’s work of creation is one such display case (**Ps. 19:1, Rom. 1:20**). “Yet the most gracious and complete manifestation of God’s glory came in the person of Jesus.” “Everything God created gives Him glory, except fallen angels and fallen men,” but it’s possible for us to give Him glory, and we will as we believe in the Person and work of Jesus, present ourselves to Him, and walk by faith!

John 10:40-11:44 records the last and most powerful of the 7 miraculous signs in the gospel of John (**2:1-11, 4:46-54, 5:1-17; 6:1-14, 15-21; 9:1-7**): the raising from the dead of Lazarus. “This ‘work’ exemplified Jesus’ power over the last and most irresistible enemy of humanity—death.”

In **John 11** we see the sign pointing to Jesus as the Resurrection and the Life (**11:25**). **Chapters 11-12** form a bridge between the end of Jesus’ public ministry and His death & resurrection (recorded in **13-21**). At the beginning of **chapter 11**, His death on the cross was only a few days away.

At the end of **chapter 10**, the religious leaders in Jerusalem were trying to stone Him (**10:31**) and seize Him (**10:39**), yet they were unsuccessful because “His hour had not come.” Jesus retreats across the Jordan River to Perea.

Read 10:40-42. :40 And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was first baptizing, and He was staying there. :41 Many came to Him and were saying, “While John performed no sign, yet everything John said about this man was true.” :42 Many believed in Him there.

:40 Jesus went from the region of Judea into the relatively unpopulated area across the Jordan to Perea (Bethany across the Jordan **1:28**), the place where He had been baptized. What is recorded in **Lk. 13:22-17:10** is assigned by many to this time of ministry. Jesus retreated to this area, the domain of Herod Antipas, where the rulers in Jerusalem had no authority. “The Perea Ministry begins: **10:40-11:16** (December of the year 29 to April of the year 30 A.D.)”

:41 Many came to Him as they had earlier flocked to John the Baptist. They recalled what the Baptist had said about Jesus (**1:19-36, 3:25-30**).

:42 Many believed in Jesus in that countryside. What a contrast between Jerusalem and Perea, between stoning and believing. Keep in mind the purpose of the apostle John’s writings (**20:30-31 read**). John will portray the raising of Lazarus from the dead as “the decisive cause of offense which precipitated the decision to kill Jesus.” We have two previous examples of the raising of the dead by Jesus—that of the widow’s son of Nain (**Lk. 7:11-17**) & that of the daughter of Jairus (**Mk. 5:21-43**); also **read Mt. 11:5** and **Lk. 7:22**, but Lazarus being raised from the dead was the clincher to get rid of Jesus.

Read 11:1-16. :1 Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Lazarus is mentioned only in **chapters**

11-12 of John's Gospel. The two sisters are mentioned in **Lk. 10:38-42 (read)**. Jesus was apparently a frequent guest in their Bethany home when He visited Jerusalem (**Mk. 11:11**). But Jesus was currently ministering in the Bethany in Perea, not the one about two miles from Jerusalem (**11:18**). And which Mary was this? This Mary was Martha's and Lazarus' sister. **:2 It was the Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.** When John wrote about A.D. 90, people knew about this Mary. See **Mt. 26:6-13, Mk. 14:3-9, Jn. 12:1-8**.

:3 So the sisters sent word to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love (like, phileō) is sick (without strength, 5:5,7)." Knowing Jesus' friendship with them and the power of God to heal the sick, the sisters let Jesus know His friend was without strength. "The family lived in the area where a price had been set on His head." They did not tell Jesus what to do. "They trusted that He would do the best thing, and He did, though not what they had expected."

It would have taken a day to reach Jesus from the Bethany near Jerusalem. And we learn in **:14** that Lazarus was actually already dead when the sisters' message reached Him. In fact, Lazarus had already been dead 4 days before Jesus arrived in the Bethany near Jerusalem (**:17,39**).

:4 But when Jesus heard this, He said, "This sickness is not to end in death, but for the glory of God so that the Son of God may be glorified by it." As we'll see, from now on the theme of glory will move more and more into the forefront (**12:16,23,28,41**). Sickness is not a sign that God does not love or like you! Sickness and death may sometimes be God's will for His people (**21:19, Ex. 4:11, Job 1-2**). Jesus' words on this day meant that death was not the final word. This sickness was not a sign of some sin on Lazarus' part or lack of faith on the part of Mary and Martha or Lazarus. The resurrection of Lazarus from the dead would demonstrate the glory of God even more than restoration from a sick bed. This being 'without strength' was for the glory of God and so that the Son of God may be glorified by it! Glory in this gospel is connected to God's self-disclosure (**1:14**), the revealing of 'the essence of who He is'. God in His love and wisdom will do what will result in His glory. In the end He will be glorified and it will be for our good. If God loved us while we were enemies and sinners, how much more will He love us through our suffering and trials. In **17:1-5**, God will be glorified by the death of His Son!

:5-7 Now Jesus loved (agapaō) Martha and her sister and Lazarus. :6 So when He heard that he was sick, He then stayed two days longer in the place where He was! This delay does not arise from indifference or not liking. He loves this family! Jesus loves (agapao :5) and likes (phileō :3) us when we're well and when we're sick! He agapēs us all the time! You can't stop Him!!

:6 One day for the journey of the messengers, the two days when Jesus remained where He was, and a day for Jesus' journey to Bethany. Here we see what to do when God does not do what we expect Him to do: Trust Him, wait! As always, Jesus operated according to God's timetable, not man's. Jesus is moved by no external forces but solely by the will of God. It's still true today. Lazarus was dead long enough that no one could misinterpret the

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miracle as a fraud or mere resuscitation. His action may have appeared to the disciples and certainly to the sisters as unfeeling and selfish. Yet our Lord always does what is best! Follow Jesus' example of seeking the Father's will.

Jesus' love is for the best of the individual and for the glory of God. We must let Him deal with others and ourselves in His own way. It's tough to believe that Jesus deliberately waited. Remember, Mary's and Martha's hearts were breaking. A delay in answer like this is not an indication of God's indifference or failure to hear. At times we ask and God delays. Our understanding of God has to be large enough to include weakness and death. He can and will use even weakness and death to bring glory to Himself.

"The purpose of the delay was to underscore Jesus' ability to overcome death, to bring honor to God, and to gain honor for Jesus (:4)." Remember, the delay was after Lazarus was already dead.

:7 Then after this He said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." Jesus, with open eyes, went back into the danger zone to help His friends.

:8 The disciples said to Him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone You, and are You going there again?" 8:59, 10:31. They remembered the previous conflicts with the rulers and feared for Jesus' (and their own) lives. The disciples can't believe He would go back to Judea. "Why would You leave a fruitful ministry? (10:41-42). If You want to heal Lazarus, why not do it from a distance like You did before?" (4:46-53). There are a variety of responses and emotions to death or the laying down of our lives. Some get angry with God. Some experience numbness, darkness, & depression. Others fill their lives with activity so they don't have to face reality. How do you respond when Jesus doesn't act as '*quickly or in the way*' you think He should?

:9-10 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.

:10 "But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him." (9:4-5) The themes of light & darkness, day & night, echo the concern about life & death in this chapter. As long as we walk in the light of Jesus we will be all right. However, if any walks in the night (apart from Jesus), he stumbles; why? Because of the absence of light. Jesus understands that He is carrying out the life of the Father. "I am walking in light and not in darkness." It is not fear that makes His decisions; it is a question of the Father's will.

:11-15 :11 This He said, and after that He said to them, "Our friend (philos, related to 'like' in :3) Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I go, so that I may awaken him out of sleep." The term 'friend' described intense loyalty; it's a deep liking, an affection. "Our friend has fallen **asleep**." Jesus said of Jairus' daughter that she was asleep (Mt. 9:24); at the end of Stephen's martyrdom, we are told he fell asleep (Acts 7:60). Paul speaks about those who sleep in Jesus (1 Th. 4:13-15) and of those witnesses of the resurrection who have not fallen asleep (1 Cor. 15:6). Sleep is often used throughout the Bible as another way of saying someone has died. "But I'm going so I can awaken him!" **:12 The disciples then said to Him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover. Why not just let him rest? He'll wake up. You (and we!) don't need to be there."**

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"For us, every crisis should be equally an opportunity. There are dimensions of the problems which He sees that we do not remotely imagine. So we must wait and follow and quietly trust, knowing that He is working out something."

Lazarus' resurrection from the dead would do far more to strengthen the disciples' faith than a healing alone would have done. "Let us go to him."

:16 Therefore Thomas, who is called Didymus (in the Greek means twin) said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, so that we may die with Him." Thomas appears 4 times in John's Gospel: 11:16; in the discourse in the upper room (14:5); once after the Resurrection (20:24-29), and finally the group described in 21:2. "Thomas was sincere in his intentions. Real courage means being perfectly aware of the worst that can happen, being sickeningly afraid of it, and yet doing the right thing." Yet at the crucial moment in Gethsemane (just a short time away), his faith, like that of the rest of the disciples, would be found wanting.

As I reflect on the Lord we have and the truths of this passage, no matter what situation I find myself in, everywhere Scripture drives me back to this: believe in Jesus, trust His words, and follow Him. The Scriptures are full of such encouragements to sustain us (Dt. 31:8, Lam. 3:21-23,31-32; Ps. 27:13-14; 130:5-8). How patient our Lord Jesus is, to take me where I am and lead me on to discover new dimensions about Him, that He's the God who gives life to the dead, and, He's the resurrection and the life! Wow!

Also, "This is for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified by it (:4) and, so you may believe (:15)." How has this passage impacted you?

Until next time, friends (whom I love and like!), Joel

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25 Love, agapaō, Jn. 3:16,19,35, 8:42, 10:17, 11:5, 12:43, 13:1(2X),23,34 (3X), 14:15,21(4X),23(2X),24,28,31, 15:9(2X),12(2X),17, 17:23(2X),24,26, 19:26, 21:7,15,16,20.

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