



Guest Preacher: Cody Vasut

Jesus Sympathizes and Saves

John 11:1-44

How to Prepare

Begin preparing by reading the full passage a few times. Then answer the questions for yourself. Then think about how your Small Group might answer them. Try re-wording the questions to fit you and your Small Group. Don't feel tied down to the discussion guide, just be sure to discuss the main point of the text in your conversations.

Sermon Outline:

John 11:1-44

1. Jesus Christ is Fully Man and Fully God
2. Christ's Humanity Allows Him to Sympathize With Our Temptations and Weaknesses
3. The Union of Christ's Humanity and Deity Allows Him to Save Our Souls

John 11:1-44

The Death and Resurrection of Lazarus

- 1 Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.
- 2 It was the Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.
- 3 So the sisters sent word to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick."
- 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."
- 5 Now Jesus loved 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.
- 7 Then after this He said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again."
- 8 The disciples said to Him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone You, and are

You going there again?"

- 9 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."
- 11 This He said, and after that He said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I go, so that I may awaken him out of sleep."
- 12 The disciples then said to Him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover."
- 13 Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that He was speaking of literal sleep.
- 14 So Jesus then said to them plainly, "Lazarus is 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."
- 16 Therefore Thomas, who is called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, so that we may die with Him."

Scripture (New American Standard Bible 1995)

- 17 So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days.
- 18 Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off;
- 19 and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary, to console them concerning their brother.
- 20 Martha therefore, when she heard that Jesus was coming, went to meet Him, but Mary stayed at the house.
- 21 Martha then said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.
- 22 Even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You."
- 23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."
- 24 Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day."
- 25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies,
- 26 and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"
- 27 She said to Him, "Yes, Lord; I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God, even He who comes into the world."
- 28 When she had said this, she went away and called Mary her sister, saying secretly, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you."
- 29 And when she heard it, she got up quickly and was coming to Him.
- 30 Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha met Him.
- 31 Then the Jews who were with her in the house, and consoling her, when they saw that Mary got up quickly and went out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there.
- 32 Therefore, when Mary came where Jesus was, she saw Him, and fell at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died."
- 33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, He was deeply moved in spirit and was troubled,

Scripture (New American Standard Bible 1995)

- 34 and said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see."
- 35 Jesus wept.
- 36 So the Jews were saying, "See how He loved him!"
- 37 But some of them said, "Could not this man, who opened the eyes of the blind man, have kept this man also from dying?"
- 38 So Jesus, again being deeply moved within, came to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone was lying against it.
- 39 Jesus said, "Remove the stone." Martha, the sister of the deceased, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there will be a stench, for he has been dead four days."
- 40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?"
- 41 So they removed the stone. Then Jesus raised His eyes, and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me.
- 42 I knew that You always hear Me; but because of the people standing around I said it, so that they may believe that You sent Me."
- 43 When He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth."
- 44 The man who had died came forth, bound hand and foot with wrappings, and his face was wrapped around with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

Discussion Questions

Ask a volunteer to read John 11:1-44.

INTRODUCTION

Here is a question or two to help introduce the topic and jump-start discussion.

- 1. What was one thing that stood out to you from the sermon?**

- 2. What do you think was the main point or central message of the sermon/text?**

UNDERSTANDING AND APPLICATION

These questions should help your Small Group dig deeper into the text and then apply it to your lives today.

- 3. What did this sermon teach you about God, about the gospel, or about yourself?**

- 4. Were there any particular scriptures, stories, or illustrations that resonated with you? Why?**

- 5. Were there any parts of the sermon that you found challenging, confusing, or that you'd like to understand better?**

6. How was the biblical text connected to our lives today? Were those connections clear and helpful?

7. What are some of the key theological concepts or principles that were discussed in the sermon?

8. What was the most encouraging aspect of the sermon/text for you?

9. What was the most convicting aspect of the sermon/text for you?

10. What is one thing you feel prompted to do or learn more about as a result of this sermon/text?

John 1:19–12:50 The Signs of the Messiah. The first half of John's Gospel features Jesus' demonstration of his messianic identity by way of several selected "signs" (cf. 20:30–31), such as the changing of water into wine (2:1–11), many signs in Jerusalem (2:23; cf. 7:31; 9:16; 11:47), the healing of the official's son (4:46–54), the healing of the invalid (5:1–15), the feeding of the multitude (6:1–15), the healing of the man born blind (9:1–41), and the raising of Lazarus (11:1–44; cf. 12:18). (Regarding John's use of the word "signs," see Introduction: Literary Features.) This section ends with a reference to the Jewish nation's rejection of the Messiah (12:36b–37).

John 11:1–12:19 The Final Passover: The Ultimate Sign and the Aftermath. The raising of Lazarus constitutes the final and ultimate messianic "sign" of Jesus in this Gospel (see note on 2:11). This spectacular miracle (recorded only by John) anticipates Jesus' own resurrection and reveals Jesus as "the resurrection and the life" (11:25). The raising of Lazarus also serves as a final event triggering the Jewish leaders' resolve to have Jesus arrested and tried for blasphemy (11:45–57).

John 11:1 Bethany. Identified in v. 18 as being 2 miles (3.2 km) from Jerusalem, this village is the Bethany most commonly mentioned in the Gospels (see Mark 11:1; 14:3 par.; also Luke 24:50), but it is different from the Bethany mentioned in John 1:28. This is almost certainly the modern village of El-Azariyeh (an Arabic place-name which likely recalls the name of Lazarus) on the eastern slopes of the Mount of Olives. A fourth-century chapel was built over a rock-cut tomb traditionally thought to have been the tomb of Lazarus. Other first-century tombs are found in the hillside around this chapel.

John 11:4 Jesus could say that Lazarus's illness does not lead to death in the sense that it did not lead ultimately to death, but it did lead through death to being raised from the dead a few days later. Jesus makes a similar statement in Mark 5:39. Jesus knew what was going to happen, and in John 11:11–14 he tells his disciples clearly that Lazarus has already died.

John 11:5–6 So (Gk. *oun*, "so, therefore") shows the reason why Jesus stayed two days longer: he allowed his friends to go through the sorrow and hardship of the death and mourning of Lazarus because he loved them and wanted them to witness an amazing demonstration of Jesus' power over death, thus seeing "his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father" (1:14). The Lord does not always answer prayers as expected.

John 11:9–10 If Jesus is the "light of the world" (8:12), then to walk in the day means to walk in the light that Jesus gives; that is, to walk in fellowship with him, believing and obeying his words. In contrast, walks in the night means to walk apart from Jesus, not believing him and not obeying him. This

Commentary (from ESV Study Bible)

is an indication that the person has no spiritual life, for the light is not in him. Most people at this time worked as long as there was daylight; once it was dark, it was time to stop working. Jesus is divinely called to go to Judea; it is part of what constituted walking "in the day" for him, even though he is heading toward the cross (11:7–8).

John 11:11 Fallen asleep means "died," as the following conversation (vv. 12–14) makes clear. The OT equivalent is "slept with his fathers" (see, e.g., 1 Kings 2:10 and throughout 1–2 Kings and 1–2 Chronicles). Occasionally, death is compared to a deep sleep from which people will one day be awakened (e.g., Dan. 12:2).

John 11:15 So that you may believe indicates that Jesus knows raising Lazarus from the dead will lead to deeper faith on the part of the disciples who witness this miracle.

John 11:16 The Aramaic name Thomas means the Twin (cf. note on 1:38).

John 11:17 four days. Though burial usually followed soon after death (see Acts 5:6, 10), some later Jewish sources indicate a belief that the soul hovered over the body for three days, hoping to reenter it, but then gave up and departed.

John 11:18 Bethany. See note on v. 1.

John 11:24 Martha's affirmation of end-time resurrection was in keeping with the beliefs of the Pharisees (Acts 23:8) and the majority of first-century Jews, as well as the teaching of Jesus (John 5:21, 25–29; 6:39–44, 54). Martha misunderstood the full import of Jesus' promise (11:23), thinking he was merely speaking of the final resurrection, while Jesus meant much more.

John 11:25 Jesus does not merely say that he will bring about the resurrection or that he will be the cause of the resurrection (both of which are true), but something much stronger: I am the resurrection and the life. Resurrection from the dead and genuine eternal life in fellowship with God are so closely tied to Jesus that they are embodied in him and can be found only in relationship to him. Therefore believes in me implies personal trust in Christ. The preposition translated "in" (Gk. eis) is striking, for eis ordinarily means "into," giving the sense that genuine faith in Christ in a sense brings people "into" Christ, so that they rest in and become united with Christ. (This same expression is found in 3:16, 18, 36; 6:35; 7:38; 12:44, 46; 14:12; 1 John 5:10.) The "I am" statement here represents a claim to deity.

Commentary (from ESV Study Bible)

John 11:26 Lives refers to those who have spiritual life now (see note on 3:36). Those who believe shall never die, in that they will ultimately triumph over death.

John 11:27 Martha's reference to the one who is coming into the world takes up the messianic expression derived from Ps. 118:26 (cf. John 12:13 par.).

John 11:28 The Teacher was a natural way of referring to Jesus for any disciple prior to his resurrection (1:38, 49; 3:2; 4:31; 6:25; 9:2; 11:8; cf. 20:16).

John 11:33 The Greek word underlying deeply moved, *embrimaomai* (elsewhere in the NT only in v. 38; Matt. 9:30 ["sternly warned"]; Mark 1:43 ["sternly charged"]; and Mark 14:5 ["scolded"]), means to feel something deeply and strongly. Jesus was moved with profound sorrow at the death of his friend and at the grief that his other friends had suffered. In addition, this sorrow was intermixed with anger (see ESV footnote) at the evil of death (the final enemy; see 1 Cor. 15:26; Rev. 21:4), and also with a deep sense of awe at the power of God that was about to flow through him to triumph over death (in anticipation of his voice summoning the whole world to the resurrection on the last day). In his spirit does not refer to the Holy Spirit but to Jesus' own human spirit.

John 11:35 Jesus wept. Jesus joins his friends' sadness with heartfelt sorrow, yet underlying it is the knowledge that resurrection and joy will soon follow (cf. 1 Thess. 4:13). Jesus' example shows that heartfelt mourning in the face of death does not indicate lack of faith but honest sorrow at the reality of suffering and death.

John 11:38 deeply moved. See note on v. 33.

John 11:43 come out. The voice of the omnipotent Creator (1:3, 10) speaks, and even Lazarus's dead body obeys (cf. 4:50; 5:8).

John 11:44 Remarkably, John does not record Lazarus's reaction or any of the aftermath of his raising (cf. Luke 8:55–56), except for the fact that "many of the Jews . . . believed in him" (i.e., Jesus) as a result of seeing this miracle (John 11:45; see also 12:9–11). The focus is on Jesus, not Lazarus.