

John 11:11-27 (Teaching)

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[0 : 0 0] Morning. The Gospel of John this morning. We began John chapter 11 last week and made it through about the first 10 verses or so of John chapter 11.

And in those verses we read about this man named Lazarus. We read about how word had gotten to Jesus. Remember Jesus had retired just beyond Jordan at the end of John chapter 10.

And so that's where he would have been at this time and word had gotten to Jesus that his friend Lazarus was sick. And so Jesus says, well, let us go. Let us go to Judea.

And of course the disciples said, Lord, that's where we just came from. They wanted to stone you.

And they remind Jesus of this. It's not that Jesus needed any reminding of it, but Jesus is set on going to Judea, going to this town of Bethany where Lazarus and Mary and Martha dwelled.

And Jesus speaks a little parable, if you would like to call it that, there at the end of that section that we covered last week talking about how there's 12 hours in the day and how we needed to walk during the day.

[1 : 2 6] If we walk during the day and in the light that we don't stumble. And then of course he contrasts that with walking in the dark. And that basically was Jesus Christ telling his disciples, those that were against going back to Judea. And the way the Scripture reads, it was that they were in fear of Christ's life, but truth be known, they were in fear for their own lives as well.

And Jesus spoke that little parable, telling them as long as they're with him, as long as they're with the lie, they will be fine. And that's where we ended it last week. So we'll pick up in John chapter 11 and verse 11. It says, these things said he. And after that, he saith unto them, our friend Lazarus sleepeth.

But I go that I may awaken out of sleep. Now, remember what we just talked and recapping last week? These disciples didn't want to go to Judea. They didn't want to go to Bethany.

Remember, I explained last week that Bethany was just under two miles from Jerusalem, which was walking distance to the capital city. And this is where the Jews, the leadership in the Jews, all of them wanted to stone Jesus. They wanted Jesus out of the picture.

Well, Jesus here says, our friend Lazarus, I believe this was a soft rebuke from Jesus Christ, referring to him as our friend. Remember, word had gotten to Jesus that Lazarus was sick. And these disciples of Jesus are bound to have known Lazarus and Mary and Martha, because they follow Christ around everywhere. So every time that Christ went to Mary and Martha's house and Lazarus, these disciples would have been with them.

[3 : 1 7] So they would have been well familiar with Lazarus. And here Jesus says, our friend Lazarus says, our friend Lazarus, Lazarus sleepeth. I believe this was a very soft rebuke from Jesus, reminding the disciples, this is a man whom you have fellowshiped with.

This is a man who has a common faith such as you do. This is a man who loves me. You all say that you love me and so on. So he says, our friend Lazarus sleepeth, but notice in the last part of that verse, he says, but I go.

Not we go, he says, but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. Y'all can stay back here if you want to, but I'm going to go. And remember, he referred to Lazarus as our friend, meaning him and the disciples that didn't want to go.

But he says, I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. Verse 12, then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. How be it Jesus spake of his death, but they thought that he had spoken of taking up, taking of rest and sleep.

So then says his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. And the Bible explains to us, John explains to us, the Holy Spirit explains to us through John, what the thought of the disciples were.

[4 : 39] How be it Jesus spake of his death, but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest and sleep. And folks, that's the best thing for us when we're sick, is it not? It's just rest.

Sometimes we'll fight a cold, we'll fight the flu, we'll fight all kinds of things, and we'll fight it with all of these medicines, we'll fight it with knuckle, we'll fight it with daikul, we'll fight it with homemade remedies and all these other things.

Then we lay down, we sleep for 12 or 15 or 18 hours, and we wake up feeling like a new person, do we not? This is what the disciples thought that Jesus Christ was speaking of. They said, if he's just sleeping, he'll be well.

But in the back of these disciples' mind, don't you think that they were telling Jesus, we need not go if he's just asleep? Because when he wakes up, he'll be doing better. Once again, I believe the disciples were in fear of their own lives as well as Christ.

Verse 14, then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. How many of y'all have seen the movie Forrest Gump? You remember a little line in Forrest Gump where Forrest says, mama always had a way of explaining things to me the way I could understand them.

[5 : 50] That's what this reminds me of. Jesus would have known what these disciples were thinking. So he said it plainly as the scripture says, Lazarus is dead.

Now folks, he referred to Lazarus being asleep, Cross did. He says, I must go wake him out of this sleep. And the disciples referred to him being asleep.

Two different types of sleep though. But this sleep, this sleep of death that we're talking about, in the Old Testament, this sleep was referred to on behalf of what we would call saved and lost people alike.

You read in the book of Daniel that people were going to awake from asleep some of them unto eternal life and some of them unto damnation. So this sleep of death is referred to toward saved people and lost people, those that believe and those that didn't believe.

Heathen and those that were God's people in the Old Testament. But in the New Testament, save only one time in the account of Jeres's daughter.

[6 : 57] But in the New Testament, every time this sleep is referred to, it's only speaking about saved people in the New Testament. We don't know what kind of spiritual shape Jeres's daughter was in. That's why I say save in that case.

But either way, in 1 Corinthians, Paul refers to Jesus Christ being the first fruits of them that sleep. In the letters to the Thessalonians, it's talking about those that sleep and will rise when Christ, to eternal life.

So it's talking about this sleep is only referring to saved people, those that believe in Christ. But Jesus here in verse 14 says, then Jesus said unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

Folks, I've read nothing in this account, nothing in this account about a second messenger or about a second note or a sign in the sky or anything else that says Lazarus is no longer just sick.

Lazarus is dead. Jesus Christ knew. Jesus knew that Lazarus was dead. Speaking of all knowingness of his omniscience of Christ.

[8 : 05] And this speaks of his deity as God manifests in the flesh. Verse 15, and I'm glad for your sakes that I was not there. Well, that seems like a mean thing to say.

I'm glad for your sakes that I was not there to the intent you may believe. Nevertheless, let us go unto him. I'm glad for your sakes, but not only for their sakes.

We read a little bit later in this chapter. It was also for the sake of Martha and it was also for the sake of Marius for the sake of all the Jews that had come from Jerusalem to Bethany to comfort Mary and Martha in the loss of their brother.

It was for all these people sakes, but Jesus here addressing his disciples and I'm glad for your sakes that I was not there. He says Lazarus is dead and I'm glad that I wasn't there.

And we learn a little bit later why he's glad. But he tells them to the intent that you may believe.

Folks, when we believe the gospel of Jesus Christ and we have repented of our ways, we receive salvation.

[9 : 13] I will go to scripture and I will go to my grave preaching that message. That we believe and we repent. That is found all throughout the Bible. We believe and we repent.

It's Old Testament and it's New Testament. Believe and repent. Believe and repent. And he tells them, I'm glad for your sakes that I wasn't there to the intent that you may believe.

Folks, our faith in Jesus Christ grows over time. It grows over time. You can go all the way back to John chapter 2 when it's talking about the marriage there. Canaan, Jesus turns the water into wine and it says this is the first of the miracles that Jesus done.

But his disciples believed him. They believed. And all these other miracles that we've read about, we read about the woman at the well. We read in John chapter 4 and John chapter 5.

We read about the man at the pool of Bethesda. We read about the feeding of the thousands in John chapter 6. We read about the blind man just a couple of chapters ago. The blind man that had been blind since birth.

[10:13] They had seen all these miracles and each one of those should have been growing their faith. Folks, everything that God does in our life, every day of our lives, everything that he does should grow our faith.

Everything that he does. Every time he opens our eyelids in the morning. Every time he lets us go to sleep peacefully at night. Every time he clothes us. Every time we eat food.

Every time anything happens in our life. Folks, the Bible makes it plain. James makes it plain.

James chapter 1 says, every good and every perfect gift come down from the Father of life. Every one of those things should grow our faith in God.

But do we allow it to grow our faith in God? These disciples were still having a hard time with it.

They were still having a hard time. It's not that they didn't believe Christ.

It's not that they didn't believe the miracles that they'd seen. It's not that they didn't believe that he was a Messiah or anything along those lines. But they were struggling with their faith. How many of us struggle with their faith, especially when sickness comes?

[11:14] We'll hit our knees or we'll lay in the bed or on the couch or whatever the case is and say, God take this pain away. God take this misery away. God take this bad feeling away from me.

Whatever the case is, take this cough away from me.

And if it's not gone in five minutes, we wonder where God's at. When we know how many times he's cured us of similar ailments in the past, folks, God will do things in his own time and in his own way and his own manner to the intent that you may believe.

Sometimes God delays things, but he's always got his own intentions. His way are higher than our ways. His thoughts are higher than our thoughts. Folks, he is God and he will handle things as he wishes, when he wishes.

And he will not ask our permission to do it. He is God. Nevertheless, let us go unto him. Now again, back in verse 11, it says our friend Lazarus sleepeth, but I go, that I may awake him.

But here in verse 14, he says, nevertheless, let us go to him. Verse 16, then said Thomas, which is called Didimus, unto his fellow disciples, let us also go that we may die with him.

[12:28] This shows the lack of faith in Thomas. But it also shows, in my opinion, a sarcastic attitude in Thomas. He says, let us go that we may die with him.

Jesus has just told them, we just covered it last week, the last two verses of the section that we covered last week, verses nine and verses 10, Jesus has just spoke to them and said, as long as you're in the light, as long as you're with me, in other words, remember in John chapters nine and ten, I am the light of the world.

As long as you're in the light, you'll be fine. You'll be fine. But here's Thomas. Here's Thomas. He says, and I ain't going to concentrate too much on this whole Didimus thing. It's just another translation of the word Thomas, both translations of that name just mean twin or a twin.

But he said, but he sent it unto his fellow disciples, let us also go that we may die with him. So he says that we may die with him. In other words, Thomas thinks Jesus is going to die.

And if he's going to die, then we might as well die too. So, and like I said, I believe Thomas was being somewhat sarcastic in saying this to his fellow disciples, verse 17.

[13:47] Then when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already. Then when Jesus came, when he came to Bethany, he found that he, Lazarus, had lain in the grave four days already.

Arthur Pink has a very interesting take on this four days here.

He says, the day to the Lord is as a thousand years and a thousand years is as a day.

And he said it had been probably about 4000 years since the fall of Adam in the garden that man had been in his sinful state. And I don't know if he was correct in saying that or not, but he says he had been laying in the grave four days, four days.

So this would have been what Pink was getting at was this was a picture of Jesus Christ. Over 4000 years man had been in his sin. Jew and Gentile alike, there's no distinction in that.

[15:05] It was all the descendants from Adam and Eve, all through those 4000 years is what they, pink was getting at, which would include everyone, Jew and Gentile.

They lain in the grave for four days. The Jews had a belief that after the third day is when corruption started to set in to the body. And there was absolutely no hope for that person being resuscitated, being brought back to life.

What they thought could happen in that first three days, I'm not real positive. I've seen all kinds of different Jewish thoughts on that. But after the third day on the fourth day, corruption had done start to set in.

Rot had already started to decompose that body. So he found that he had lain in the grave four days already. Now Bethany was nine Jerusalem, about 15 furlongs off.

Once again, this was just under two miles from Jerusalem, which was nothing for these people back then to walk. They'd walk that every day, several times a day sometimes, that two miles.

[16:11] The furlong is about 660 feet, which is about an eighth of a mile. So it says about 15 furlongs off. And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary to cover them concerning their brother.

Many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary from where? Well, the verse before this is talking about how far Bethany was from Jerusalem. So we can assume that these Jews would have been from, or many of these Jews, I should say, would have been from Jerusalem.

Right there at the capital of the Jewish people. Right there where the Sanhedrin's sat. Right there where the bad teaching was coming from. Right there where all the empty religion was at and all the empty rituals that we've been talking about pretty much since going through the Gospel of John. Right there where all those are at. And these people are coming to Mary and to Martha to comfort them. Folks, do you think that these folks believed in Jesus? We learn a little bit later in this chapter. They really didn't. And I'll tell you now, it is impossible for an unsaved person, for an unbeliever to comfort a believer the way that God can.

[17:26] It's impossible for a believer to comfort a believer the way that God can. But it's impossible for an unbeliever to help a believer in these times.

It's an impossibility for that to happen. And I'll tell you now, Martha is coming to me in verse 20. Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him.

But Mary sat still on the house and Martha said unto Jesus, Lord, if thou had been here, my brother had not died. So Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming.

In other words, Jesus hadn't quite made it to Bethany yet. Martha goes running out the house. She's consistent throughout the Gospels. Y'all will remember the account where Jesus and his disciples, they're eating meat inside the house.

And Martha winds to Jesus Christ because Mary sat in there at his feet. And it says that Martha was covered with much serving. So she's always a busybody.

[18:29] She's always doing what she thinks needs to be done. And she's always on top of things, per se. But in that particular account, Jesus had to set her straight. There he said, Mary's getting the good stuff.

Mary's doing what she should be. Mary's at my feet learning. But then Mary, as soon as she heard Jesus was coming, went and met him. But Mary sat still in the house. And again, this shows Mary's consistency of her personality throughout the Scriptures, which really harmonizes the Gospels as a whole.

Verse 21, then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou had been here, my brother had not died. Verse 22, but I know that even now whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.

So verse 21 again, then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou had been here, my brother had not died. It sounds like a statement that is just full of faith.

And it is. It shows the confidence that Martha had in Jesus Christ. If you had been here, Lazarus would still be here. If you had just been here, Lazarus wouldn't have died.

[19:37] But in the very next verse, but I know that even now whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. This shows her intentions of the previous verse. How so?

Whatsoever thou wilt ask, God will give it thee. This Greek term for whatsoever you will ask, this Greek term for will ask, is ateo.

There's another Greek term for will ask or asking, which is erotelo. Aetelo is made for the creature asking the creator for a favor.

Aetelo is much more intimate. And erotelo is what is always used with Christ asking something of God except in this account.

This account right here, Martha said ateo. She has dragged Jesus down to the same level of the prophets, not recognizing him as God, not recognizing him as Messiah.

[20 : 43] Remember, ateo is creature asking the creator. Christ was fully man, yes, but Christ was fully God. And Martha here dragged him down to a level in her mind, not literally, but in her mind.

This is what she thought of the situation. But I know that even now whatsoever that will ask of God, God will give it thee. This was true. It was true, but that was the horrible way for her to phrase it.

But folks, this raises the question. This raises the question. And I will get to that question in just a second. Verse 23, Jesus saith unto her thy brother shall rise again.

Praise God. And verse 24, Martha said unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. So Martha obviously has some knowledge of the Old Testament scriptures.

She says, I know that he'll rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Right after Jesus says thy brother will rise again. The question is, and it goes for us.

[21 : 52] It goes for me and it goes for you. It goes for everyone that claims to believe the Bible and claims to believe in Jesus Christ. Where is our hope? Because the very next line is verse 25.

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life. And Martha should have known this. If Martha was as intimate with Christ as she thought that she was, she should have known that he was the resurrection.

Don't you think for a moment that she hadn't heard of Jesus Christ healing Jeres' daughter? Don't you think for a moment that she hadn't heard of him healing the nobleman's son that we read about just a few chapters ago here in the Gospel of John from afar?

Don't think for a moment that she hadn't heard those accounts that she didn't know about them.

She should have known that Christ was the resurrection and the life.

The question is, where is our hope? What, again, what did Martha say verse 21? If thou had been here, my brother had not died verse 22.

[23 : 01] But I know that even now whatsoever that will ask of God, God will give it thee. Verse 23, Jesus said, thy brother will rise again. Verse 24, Martha said unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

Her hope was in an event of the resurrection at the last day. Folks, our hope is not in an event. Our hope is in a person. It is in the person of Jesus Christ.

Just like Martha's hope here, it was in a person, not the event of the resurrection. Folks, we can go all throughout Scripture and we can see key events that go on.

We can go to the book of Revelation and we can see all kinds of events that have yet to happen.

And we can see all these things. The folks, that is not where our hope needs to be. Our hope is in Jesus Christ.

It is in the gospel of Almighty God, which is the power of him, of God unto salvation. And that gospel is all about Jesus Christ. Don't put your hope in an event.

[24 : 01] Put it in the person Jesus Christ. Amen, brother. Hallelujah. Now, some people could say, well, what about the crucifixion? That was an event. Yes. But it was an event all surrounding Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ was crucified. He was dead. He was buried. And hallelujah. He was resurrected. He has since ascended to the Father, where he has forever since at the right hand of all majesty and all power, making intercession to all those who have believed in the gospel of Jesus Christ and have repented of their ways.

Yes. Verse 25, Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life. And folks, let me tell you, he is the resurrection because he is the life. And he is the life because he is the resurrection. He that believed in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.

Though he were dead, yet shall he live. And folks, this is forever the doctrinal order of this entire thing here that we're reading. I am the resurrection and the life. This is doctrine. He is the resurrection.

Folks, we are all, according to Ephesians chapter 2, we are all dead in trespasses and sin. And it took God to look down upon us and see that we were dead. It took God to reach at the bottom of

that cesspool and to revive us, to resuscitate us, to resurrect us.

[25 : 25] And when we are resurrected, we are imparted eternal life, which is Jesus Christ. We read in John 14, he is the way, the truth, and the life. Folks, there's nowhere else to get life.

If he is life, there is nowhere else that we can obtain that life. It is through Jesus Christ. I am the resurrection and the life.

Yes, and the resurrection that Martha spoke of, that's a wonderful event that she was referring to. But folks, that's where her hope was.

But the reason for that hope was right before her. Put your hope in Jesus Christ. All your hope needs to be in Christ. I am the resurrection and the life. And he that believeth in me, he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.

Again, we are back to belief. Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness. He believed God. He believed what God said. He believed the Word of God. He believed everything that God had told him about multiplying his seed as the sand of the sea shore and as the stars of the heaven.

[26 : 39] He believed what God said. And that was counted to him for righteousness. Not his righteous deeds. Folks, we can do righteousness deeds all day long. It ain't going to get us to heaven. It ain't going to get us saved. It ain't going to get us any closer to God.

We believe in Jesus Christ for salvation. Verse 26, And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never, hallelujah, shall never die.

He that believeth in me and he that liveth, how do we live by the resurrection and the life? Jesus Christ, he just made this statement. I am the resurrection and I am the life. Then he says, he who liveth and believeth in me shall never die.

Folks, I'm alive right now because of Jesus Christ. I was alive physically before Jesus Christ, but now spiritually I am alive because of Jesus Christ.

And he said, I believe this thou this. So he's asking Martha the question, believe this thou this. After she just described the event that we were talking about. And Jesus corrects her. But notice, he doesn't, I don't believe he yelled at Martha when he said that and said this. I don't believe he was mean about it.

[27 : 58] But it was a rebuke from what she said because she was putting her faith in something that she, putting her hope I should say, in something that it shouldn't have been in.

And he just simply corrected her. I am the resurrection and I am the life. Believe this thou this. Verse 27, She saith unto him, Yea Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God. Hallelujah.

What a statement. What a testimony that Martha gives here. Yea Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.

Which should come into the world. Folks, he wasn't the world at this time. He wasn't the world at this time. Now, this is as far as we're going to get today. I don't want to go any further than verse 27. Actually, I want to but I'm not going to.

Because we're getting up, getting into the 11 o'clock hour. But Martha's faith in all of this, I want you to really take hold on this.

[29 : 10] Compare her with the woman at the well in John chapter 4. Compare this whole account with the woman at the well. What did the woman at the well say when, or what did Jesus tell her first?

Jesus was revealing himself to her in pieces and bits. But she said, I know when Messiah comes, I know when He comes.

He's going to make all things right. He'll give us all of our answers. Messiah was right there in front of her. Just as in this case, the resurrection in the life was right before Martha.

And Jesus had to correct that woman at the well too. Not only when He said, He told her, He's speaking with you. I'm He. I am that Messiah.

But not only in that, but Jesus also told her that the hour cometh and now is. Presently, presently, folks, Martha was speaking of a future event that she was putting her hope in.

[30 : 23] But Jesus says presently, I am. That's present tense. I am the resurrection in the life. Jesus says the hour cometh and now is to the woman at the well.

That those that worship God will worship Him in spirit and truth. And He says, and the Father is seeking such as this. The Father is seeking people to do that presently right now.

So again, Martha, she was just like this woman. Remember, she was a Samaritan and she was looking for Messiah. She knew about Messiah, but she did not realize Messiah was right there before her. And Martha, while she believed in Jesus Christ, while she had communed with Jesus Christ, shared meals with Him, fixed meals for Him, she had spent truth be known countless hours with this man, Jesus Christ.

But yet, she was not getting it. And folks, we are guilty of the exact same thing. 2000 years later, we were guilty of the exact same thing, even though we know that Christ saved our soul, even though we know that He performed the greatest miracle on us by saving our souls from hell.

We still doubt sometimes. And we still want to go to something else. Why? Because a lot of times something else is easier to believe. Something else is easier for us to sink our teeth into.

[31 : 49] Anyway, that brings us to the end of that. Anybody got any questions or comments on any of that? Yes, sir. God bless you all. I appreciate you.