

That You May Believe – The Gospel of John
Lesson Seven – John 11-12

Chapter 11:

I. The Death of Lazarus.

- A. Jesus was a good friend of Lazarus and his sisters, Mary and Martha.
1. Jesus most likely stayed in their home on occasion.
 2. The story of Mary's anointing of Jesus was well known. This is why John uses it to identify Mary even before he relates the story.
 3. The request to heal Lazarus is not stated but implied because of the love between Jesus and his family.
- B. Jesus makes a delayed response.
1. Jesus does not say that Lazarus would not die but that death would not be the end.
 2. Jesus waits for two days before going to see Lazarus.
 - a. It is likely that Lazarus died the day Jesus got the message.
 - b. Jesus had a plan for what he was going to do.
 3. The disciples thought that Jesus did not go because of the plot to kill him.
 - a. While Jesus' light was in the world there was not need to fear, but they must realize the "night" was coming.
 - b. The disciples misunderstand or do not want to understand Jesus comment about Lazarus "falling asleep."
 - c. Jesus is grateful for this chance to shows God's power in such a way.
 4. Thomas makes a courageous statement.
 - a. Thomas was most likely called "the Twin," because he looked like Jesus. This put him at special risk.
 - b. Though often known for his doubting, this statement shows deep faith and loyalty in Thomas.

II. Jesus comforts Mary and Martha

- A. There was a belief at the time that the spirit stayed with the body for three days.
1. Jesus' waiting insured that everyone knew that Lazarus was truly dead.
 2. The fact that many people were there mourning with the family shows just how much they were loved.
- B. Martha, the more confrontational of the two sisters, comes out to meet Jesus to plainly explain her disappointment that Jesus was late.
1. Even though she is disappointed in Jesus, Martha still has faith in him.
 2. She wants Jesus to raise her brother but realizes it is far too much to ask. (*When you ask the king, might as well ask big*)
 3. Jesus gives Martha a claim, a promise, and a question.
 - a. Claim – "I am the resurrection and the life." – He tells her He is the life source.
 - b. Promise – "He who believes in me will live even though he dies." Jesus had power over death.
 - c. Statement – Do you believe this? – As she confronted him, he now confronts her with a direct question about her faith.

4. Martha confesses her faith. She knows Jesus is the Only One who can save.
 - a. "You are the Christ" – the anointed one from God.
 - b. "The Son of God" – more than just a prophet or a good man.
 - c. "Who was to come" – the Savior they had been waiting for.
 - d. *Can you make the same statement?*
- C. Martha sends for her sister Mary.
1. Mary had stayed at the house when Martha went out to meet Jesus.
 - a. Perhaps she was angry with Jesus.
 - b. Maybe she was just staying with friends who had come to mourn.
 2. Mary asks Jesus the same question her sister asks. They probably had talked to each other about this.
 3. Jesus displays human emotion – he weeps.
 - a. Jesus knew he was going to raise Lazarus. He was moved by the emotion of the mourners.
 - b. The Greek language indicates that Mary and those with her were wailing loudly, as was the custom at funerals in this culture.
 - c. The word indicating Jesus' emotion means a quiet weeping.
 - d. The common belief of God at the time was that God was a passionless, unemotional being. John shows a contrast to that idea, pointing out that Jesus truly loved Lazarus.

III. Jesus raises Lazarus.

- A. Martha protests the removing of the stone because of the smell.
 1. This shows that Lazarus was truly dead.
 2. Jesus reminds her to trust in him.
- B. Jesus calls Lazarus from the tomb.
 1. First Jesus makes sure that everyone knows that what he is about to do comes from God.
 2. Jesus calls to Lazarus as if he were already living.
 3. Lazarus' resurrection was temporary. Jesus' resurrection was permanent.
 4. *How did Lazarus feel after having been dead?*
- C. Different reactions to the healing.
 1. The reaction of faith. Many saw the miracle and believed in Jesus.
 2. The reaction of unbelief. They were so concerned with what others thought they could not believe even after having seen this miracle.
 3. The Pharisees are afraid the Romans would come in and take over.

IV. The Pharisees plot to kill Jesus

- A. Caiaphus makes a prediction.
 1. Jesus would die to bring all of God's scattered children together again.
 2. Did this prediction come from Caiaphus or from God? – Yes.
 - a. Caiaphus may have intended this prediction for the purpose of convincing the council to have Jesus killed.
 - b. God was using Caiaphus' evil intent for his own purpose.
- B. The Pharisees begin organizing a plan to kill Jesus.
 1. They believe this is for the good of Israel.
 2. Jesus lays low until the time is right for his entry into Jerusalem.

Chapter 12:

I. Jesus is anointed by Mary in Bethany.

- A. Jesus comes to Bethany to the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus
 - 1. It is less than a week before Passover – about a week before Jesus' death.
 - 2. Lazarus – the former dead man – is eating at the table.
 - 3. Martha is serving and not complaining (like she did in Luke 10:40).
- B. Mary anoints Jesus. Most of the times you see Mary she is at the feet of Jesus.
 - 1. This act was expensive. Oil from the Nard plant was very costly and was often used as an investment because of its value.
 - 2. This act was unusual. Normally this oil was poured on the head.
 - 3. This act was humble. It was a servant's job to tend to the feet.
- C. Judas objects.
 - 1. This perfume was worth 300 days wages – That's over \$19,000 if you work at Chick-fil-A.
 - 2. Judas said he was looking out for the poor, but it was his own pocket he cared about.
- D. Contrasts between Mary and Judas

Mary	Judas
had a love for Jesus	had a love of money
out in the open	kept secrets
gave Jesus something expensive	took things from Jesus

- E. Jesus explains that Mary knew what no one else realized – he would die soon.
- F. The chief priests expand their plot to include Lazarus.
 - 1. Raising Lazarus was an embarrassment for them – especially the Sadducees who did not believe in a resurrection.
 - 2. How ironic – plotting to kill a man who had already died.

II. The Triumphal Entry.

- A. An ever increasing crowd thought Jesus was going to be the next King of Israel.
 - a. The crowd shouts “Hosanna!” which means “Save us now!”
 - b. Palm branches were a symbol of Jewish nationalism.
- B. Jesus rides a young donkey.
 - a. This was a very humble way to come into the city.
 - b. It was a fulfillment of prophecy from Zechariah 9:9.
 - c. The apostles did not realize the significance of this event until later.
- C. The crowds continue to grow which strengthens the resolve of the Jewish leaders.

III. Jesus announces that his time has finally come.

- A. Some Greeks come with a request to see Jesus.
 - a. They were most likely Greek converts to Judaism.
 - b. Jesus seems to see this as a sign that his hour has now come.
 - c. Phillip brings them first to Andrew, perhaps because Jesus put Andrew in charge of who was brought to him.

- B. Jesus makes three allusions to his death:
- a. Jesus compares his life to a seed.
 - i. There can be no resurrection without a death being died.
 - ii. Remember Romans 6:4 – we were “buried with him through baptism into death” so that we may be raised to a new life.
 - b. Jesus talks of being “lifted up” which has a double meaning.
 - i. The crowds understood Jesus to be referring to crucifixion.
 - ii. “Lifted up” also has the meaning of being raised like a flag for an army to rally around.
 - c. Jesus says that they would have the “light” just a little while longer.
 - i. *This is similar to his statement to the disciples in 11:9.*
- C. Jesus knows he is about to die and this deeply troubles him.
- a. A voice from heaven sounds to comfort Jesus.
 - b. Some thought they heard an angel others said it thundered.
 - c. This may have been because of their spiritual condition. They did not understand because they were not willing to.

IV. The Jewish leaders continue in their unbelief.

- A. John quotes Isaiah to say that this unbelief was from God.
- a. God blinded them so they could not believe. This was part of God’s plan.
 - b. If he had not done this then Jesus’ sacrifice would not have happened.
 - c. “There comes a time when God will strengthen us in our decision, whether for or against Jesus: we get what we want.” (David Guzik)
- B. Some of the leaders believed secretly but allowed their fear to keep their faith hidden.
- a. *Is it possible to be a secret follower?* Not for long.
 - b. Eventually either faith or secrecy will win over the other.
- C. Jesus makes one last appeal to believe, reminding everyone that he is from the Father.