

Gospel of John

Lesson 16 The Prince of Life John 11

Memorize the TRUTH!

I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.

John 11:25-26

Lazarus Dies While Jesus Delays – John 11:1-16

Day 1

1. a. What was Jesus' relationship with Martha, Mary and Lazarus?

b. Considering Jesus' love for Lazarus, why did He delay in going to him?
2. a. Why did the disciples not want Jesus to go to Bethany?

b. What do you think Jesus meant by His response in verses 9 and 10?
3. How are death and sleep similar? 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Learn the TRUTH!

Most people view death as something to fear, something to be avoided at all cost. But Jesus Christ overcame death! As you study this week, think about how you view death as it relates to your faith in Jesus. Do you see death as an enemy to fear, or do you believe that Jesus truly is the "resurrection and the life" (v. 25)?

Hope in the Midst of Death – John 11:17-32

Day 2

4. a. Using this passage and Luke 10:38-42, describe the personalities and faith of:
Martha

Mary

b. Which sister do you relate to most? What can you learn from them?
5. What does John 11:25-26 mean?
6. Why might Jesus have waited outside the village rather than going straight to Mary and Martha?

**Life out of Death
John 11:33-44**

Day 3

7. a. Why do you think Jesus wept?
- b. Why is this significant? Hebrews 2:14-18
8. a. Why did Martha object to moving the stone?
- b. What truth did Jesus tell Martha?
9. What might you learn from how this miracle unfolded?

Philippians 4:6

**Reactions to the Miracle
John 11:45-57**

Day 4

10. a. Why do you think there were such opposite reactions to this miracle?
- b. What does this say about belief in Jesus?
11. What is significant about Caiaphas' words?
12. a. How did this miracle bring immediate glory to God?
- b. How did it set in motion God's ultimate plan for Jesus? John 11:4

**Death and Life
John 11 Review**

Day 5

13. a. How do people feel about death today?
- b. What are your feelings about death? What experiences shaped these feelings? How have they changed through this study?
14. a. What important truth have you discovered in John 11?
- b. How will you apply this truth to your life?

Live the TRUTH!

Is there a crisis in your life that seems hopeless? God cares about all that you are going through. He is able to use it for His glory and your benefit. Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?" (v. 40) Do you believe? You too can see His glory if you will put your faith in Him and trust Him.

Commentary Gospel of John Lesson 16

The sign that confirms Jesus is the Messiah and the Son of God is the raising of Lazarus from death. Matthew, Mark, and Luke all record the story of Jairus' daughter, whom Jesus restored to life (Matthew 9:18-26; Mark 5:21-43; Luke 8:40-56). In addition, Luke 7:11-17 tells of a widow whose only son had died but was brought back to life by Jesus.

The raising of Lazarus seems to have even more significance, perhaps because he has been dead for four days before Jesus arrives. This was the Lord's greatest miracle and aroused the greatest response, according to verses 45 and 53; but only John recorded the event. Each Gospel author chose material that best suited his purpose. None of the authors could include everything he knew of Jesus' ministry (John 21:25).

The disciples were close to Jesus and heard His teaching for almost His entire earthly ministry, but they still had times of doubt and failure. By raising Lazarus, Jesus seeks to strengthen their faith through a small family in Bethany. Jesus is preaching across the Jordan, about 20 miles away, when a messenger tells Him His friend Lazarus is ill. No request is made for Jesus to come immediately, but Lazarus' sisters, Mary and Martha, want Jesus to know "The one [He] love[s] is sick" (11:3).

Aware of possible danger if Jesus returns to Bethany, the disciples remind Him the Jews there had recently tried to stone Him. His response to their concern is: "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? A man who walks by day will not stumble, for he sees by this world's light. It is when he walks by night that he stumbles, for he has no light" (11:9-10). Jesus seems to be saying if a person is doing what he or she should be doing, then that person has nothing to fear and will not stumble; but when a person does not live in the light, in obedience to God, he or she is likely to stumble.

John says that "when [Jesus] heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days" (11:6). Jesus' decision to delay going to Bethany does not mean He is afraid of the Jews, but that He intends to reveal the glory of God. At first He says Lazarus has fallen asleep (a common expression for death in that culture). But when the disciples interpret that statement to mean natural sleep, Jesus tells them plainly that Lazarus is actually dead, not just asleep.

Hearing that Jesus is coming to Bethany, Martha immediately leaves the mourners and goes to meet Him. Seeing Him, she says, "If you had been here, my brother would not have died" (11:21). Jesus responds, "Your brother will rise again" (11:23), and Martha replies, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day" (11:24). She does not anticipate Jesus calling her brother back from the state of death — especially after four days.

Jesus then makes a startling announcement: "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die" (11:25-26). His words make it clear that physical death is not the end of life for believers; death is only a departure from this world. Jesus is not denying the reality of physical death, because Lazarus clearly was dead when Jesus arrived in Bethany. Instead, He is referring to eternal life — fullness of life here and now, and perfection in the age to come.

Check It Out:

Jesus said He had no place to call home (Luke 9:58), yet if any home offered Him rest, hospitality and love, it was probably this one in Bethany. Mary and Martha knew they only needed to let Jesus know of Lazarus's illness, without demanding anything, because they trusted His loving response. Have you spent enough time with Jesus to know Him in the same way? Can you trust His love for you enough to express your needs without demanding a certain solution or deadline?

In this visit to Bethany, God confirms the mission of His Son — the Christ — by raising Lazarus from physical death. Martha likely does not grasp what Jesus is saying, but she shows confidence in Him by her confession of faith: “I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world” (11:27).

When Martha returns home and tells her sister that Jesus has arrived and is asking for her, Mary goes straight to Him. Falling at His feet, she says: “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died” (11:32). John records that “when Jesus saw her weeping ... he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled” (11:33). Some think this is a sign of anger on the Lord’s part; others interpret His agony as a sign of sympathy. The combination of both seems appropriate. Jesus was angered by the power of death (which He regarded as an enemy to be defeated) that had taken His dear friend Lazarus. At the same time, Jesus felt sympathy for Lazarus’s sisters — so much so that He “wept” (11:35), showing His compassion for His beloved friends.

Lazarus had been buried in a cave, with a large stone over its entrance. The first thing Jesus does, even before He prays, is ask that the stone be removed. He knows what is going to happen, and His thanksgiving prayer shows His confidence in what God will do here. With a loud voice, Jesus calls Lazarus by name. Lazarus comes out, still wrapped in linen burial clothes, and Jesus asks that the grave clothes be removed.

People react to this miracle in different ways: many put their faith in Jesus as the Messiah, while others express their concern to the chief priests and Pharisees. Religious officials, worried about losing their positions of influence, call a meeting of the Sanhedrin. Caiaphas, the high priest that year, unknowingly voices a prophecy: “It is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish” (11:50). He means better that Jesus should die than for the Sanhedrin to lose control of the people. John sees in his words a spiritual truth that applies to Jesus and His sacrificial, redeeming death. Although the religious leaders have a sense of who Jesus is, they reject Him, even as they tremble in their high places. According to verse 53, the official decision of the Sanhedrin that day is that Jesus must die.



People have different reactions to death and they have different views about it. Some experience fear or uncertainty. Others focus on the finality of death. Some see it as an escape or a rest. When Jesus restored physical life to Lazarus, we learn some significant things about death from His words to Martha. He said, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies” (11:25). While physical death is a reality, for Christians it is not the end. Rather, death opens the door into a new chapter of a person’s existence — eternity in the presence of Jesus. The new life Jesus offers begins when we believe in Him as our Savior and Lord. But many Christians are living without victory. Perhaps they, like Lazarus, are resurrected but still bound in “grave clothes” (unconfessed sins, needless fears, broken relationships). Is anything keeping you bound? Or have you found *abundant* (and eternal) life in Christ?



What do the following verses say about life after death?
Psalm 23:4

Psalm 49:14-15

Psalm 73:23-26

Job 19:25-27