

# Mount Olive Wednesday Night Bible Study and Prayer Meeting

April 14, 2021

## John 11: 1 - 14

Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. 2 (It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.) 3 Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. 4 When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby. 5 Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. 6 When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was. 7 Then after that saith he to his disciples, Let us go into Judaea again. 8 His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again? 9 Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. 10 But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him. 11 These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. 12 Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. 13 Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. 14 Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

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Pastor Tom gave us 3 questions to be thinking about during our discussion.

1. Do you believe the church is asleep or dead?
2. What has to happen to awaken the church?
3. Do you see parallels between the scriptures in John chapter 11 and the world today?

## **Verses 1 and 2**

*Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. 2 (It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)*

\*These verses set the stage to this story:

### **Characters:**

- Jesus,
- Lazarus -  
Brother of Mary and Martha, friend of Jesus
- Mary and Martha -

Luke 10:38 - 42 tells about Jesus' visit to their home when Martha thought Mary should be helping more getting dinner ready than sitting and listening to Jesus.

John 12:1 - 9 tells about Mary's extravagant act of anointing Jesus with expensive oil.

### **Setting:**

- Bethany
- Somewhere outside of Judea

### **Plot:**

- In the following verses

## **Verse 3**

*Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.*

\*Lazarus is sick and Mary and Martha believe that Jesus can heal him because they have seen or heard of Jesus healing people with his power.

\*The term 'whom thou lovest' refers to the special relationship Jesus had with this family. Jesus loved everyone, He has a more personal relationship with this group. We are the same way...we love lots of people but some we love more than others because we are closer to them.

#### **Verse 4**

*When Jesus heard that, He said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.*

\*Jesus explains to his disciples that the sickness isn't going to cause Lazarus to die, but the sickness will bring glory to God and thereby also bring glory to the Son of God.

#### **Verse 5**

*Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.*

\*These words confirm the special relationship with this family.

#### **Verse 6**

*When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.*

\*Jesus remains 2 days before going to Lazarus' home. This was a 'curve ball', unexpected event. We think prayers should be answered within our frame, often we want instantaneous answers.

#### **Verse 7**

*Then after that saith he to his disciples, Let us go into Judaea again.*

\*Now, Jesus is ready to go to Bethany in Judea.

#### **Verse 8**

*His disciples say unto Him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?*

\*Here the disciples remind Jesus of the hostile environment in that area towards Jesus. The Jewish leaders wanted to kill Jesus.

## **Verses 9 and 10**

*9 Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.  
10 But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.*

\*Jesus speaks to them about day and night, light and dark: in the day (when you have Jesus, the Light of the World, with you) you do not stumble and fall. Even in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5, Jesus referred to us as the light of the world so we can help others who cannot see, who are in the dark, so they do not stumble and fall.

Pastor Tom referred to fishing at a creek with several rocks on the banks causing him to stumble. He was embarrassed. We can be embarrassed about stumbling over sins in our way.

## **1 John 2:11**

*11 But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.*

\*Hate causes darkness, darkness causes stumbling.

## **Verse 11**

*These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.*

\*Jesus says that Lazarus is 'sleeping'.

## **Verse 12**

*Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.*

\*Disciples thought 'sleep' meant 'rest' and rest is a good thing for recovering from sickness.

## **Verse 13**

*Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.*

\*Jesus really means death.

\*We have heard about many 'back from the dead' accounts, some are compelling but some are skeptical. Hollywood glorifies 'back from the dead' stories and these take away from the Word of God accounts.

### **Verse 14**

*Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.*

\*Jesus was speaking very clearly: Lazarus is dead.

\*This is not even the first time that Jesus brought someone back from the dead. Matthew 9: 18 - 26 is the story of the ruler's daughter that he asked Jesus to heal. From this story Jesus' fame spread.

Pastor Tom recalled a story Rev. Dick Burns told him:

At a funeral service Dick was officiating, he heard a voice saying, "Lay hands on the body and he will be brought back from the dead." Dick discerned that the voice was not of God. Had he followed the voice, he could have brought disgrace to God and discredit to himself if the body did not regain life.

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Phone lines were unmuted and discussion followed answering the 3 questions:

1. Do you believe the church is asleep or dead?

Most agreed that the church is asleep, meaning there is still hope for awakening.

But Barb thought it did not matter if the church is sleeping or dead because Jesus could supersede death by a miracle.

2. What has to happen to awaken the church?

Need a revival - to get out and witness, promote Jesus Christ, show people scripture verses about Jesus' teaching, fill the church

Need a miracle - performed by Jesus who has the power to raise the church from the dead.

Need Jesus to return to wake us up.

Pastor Tom explained the 1-1-1 Project he heard about on the radio:

Two months before Easter church members committed to pray for 1 person for 1 minute at 1:00 each day. The results were incredible. And none of the prayer recipients knew they were being prayed for.

In studies of some of the bigger revivals in history it was shown that all of them were saturated with prayer before the revival even began. And not generic prayers but personal, committed prayers.

3. What are some parallels between our scripture tonight and the world today?

Comments included (but were garbled by interference on the open phone lines):

-Church is sick but not dead

-When we pray, we cannot be discouraged by delayed answers and then quit praying.

-This discouragement can lead to stumbling in our faith.

-Some sources of discouragement include:

UMC church, we have been hanging over this eminent split for a long time now.

Racial tensions like defacing MLK portrait in State College.

Recent court decision in Minnesota.

-even the interference on the open phone lines tonight can cause discouragement...but don't let it!

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Good night said by all!

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