



THE GOSPEL OF JOHN: LESSON 12 *"COME AND SEE"*

In our lesson this week, we will take a look at the last public miracle Jesus performed before His own Resurrection. This is perhaps the greatest and most famous miracle of all, as well as one of the most significant. Remember in chapter 2, Jesus changed the water into wine. He healed the sick man that was lying by the pool of Bethesda in chapter 5. In chapter 6 we witnessed the feeding of the multitudes with five barley loaves and two fish. Jesus healed a blind man in chapter 9, and now He will raise Lazarus from the dead. This sign will again prove His claim that He is the Son of God, the conqueror of death itself. John records the 5th "I AM" statement of Jesus. This story speaks volumes of the purposes and plans of God. We are reminded that God is on His own timetable; not ours (Thank goodness for that!), and that His ways are not our ways (Isaiah 55:8).

I pray that as you study this week, you will find comfort and peace, knowing that the Lord is in control of everything going on in your life. You can rest assured that He is never taken by surprise, or never late. Jesus feels your pain and sorrow and sympathizes with you. When you hurt, He hurts. Allow Him to be your comforter.

First Day

1. Read John 11:1-57, then read verses 1-44 again. Observe and list the facts you find in the first section. Remember to ask yourself the questions: Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?

2. Where did this story take place? Where had Jesus come from, in chapter 10?
3. Who are the main characters?
4. What are the repeated words and phrases?
5. What is the main point(s) in this section?
6. How does this section tie in with chapter 10?
7. What is the 5th "I AM" statement?
8. What promises do you find in this section?
9. What challenges do you find?
10. How did this section minister to you today?

That's it for today. I love this story, don't you? Although it's called a story, it's for real! How exciting it is to serve a God who loves us enough to stretch our faith. Will you trust Him?

Memory Verse of the Week: "... I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in ME, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" John 11:25-26

Second Day

Work on your memory verse. Do you believe in Him?

Our story takes place in the city of Bethany, which is not the same one mentioned in John 1:28. This village is on the east side of the Mount of Olives, two miles from Jerusalem, along the road to Jericho. We meet a family whom Jesus loves very much. Let's take a closer look ...

1. Read John 11:1-44. We meet Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. Read Luke 10:38-42 and note the differences between Mary and Martha's personalities. How are they alike? How are they different?

In verse 2, John brings up a story he will tell us in the next chapter. Most likely he wants us to differentiate between the various Marys in Jesus' life. He wants us to know that it is "this" Mary that loved Jesus so much and expressed it so eloquently. It also seems like John assumes the readers already know this story, perhaps because the account had already been written in the previous Gospels.

2. When Jesus heard about Lazarus, what did He say?
3. Jesus didn't react right away. His delay was determined. Why?

4. Why do you think John stressed the fact that Jesus loved this family?

I wonder what Mary and Martha thought when Jesus didn't respond quickly; when He didn't come to their rescue right away. I wonder if their faith was shaken or if they were discouraged. Perhaps it even raised some doubts in their mind whether or not His words were true. I wonder ...

5. How did the disciples react when Jesus told them He wanted to go to Judea? Why?

6. What do you think Jesus was saying in verses 9-10?

I love verse 5. I have it underlined in my Bible with my name listed at the end. This verse reminds me that Jesus loves me so much. I believe that John keeps reminding us that Jesus loved them to make sure we realize that Jesus didn't come right away, not because He was mean, or because He didn't care. It's because Jesus loved them soooo much that He did what He did. Verse 5 says that Jesus "agaped" them, which means to have a "deep divine and fervent love." He had a greater purpose than they knew. Not only would God be glorified in this miracle, their faith would grow, and their understanding would deepen. The Lord does the same in each of our lives. He doesn't immediately answer our prayer because His timing is perfect. He has work to do behind the scenes, if you will.

7. Read the following verses. Of what do they remind you?

- a. Jeremiah 31:3
- b. Jeremiah 29:11
- c. Jeremiah 32:17
- d. Jeremiah 32:27

8. Have you been waiting for the Lord to answer a specific prayer for a long time? Have you been feeling like He's ignoring you? Does He seem indifferent? Jesus deliberately delayed because He had a higher purpose. How does this story encourage you? What "higher" good may He have in your situation?

9. Can you think of a time in your life in which it seemed like God delayed, but later you understood that God had a better time and a better way?

10. Read Isaiah 55:8-9 and Romans 11:33-36. What do these verses tell us about God's plans? (Does that bring you joy or frustrate you?)

In verses 9-10, Jesus is telling the disciples that their anxiety was premature; His day had not yet run its course. Ray Stedman explains it this way: "When Jesus says 'Are there not twelve hours in the day?' He is referring to the appointed timetable of God, comparing God's plan to the twelve hours of broad daylight in each day. He was determined to walk in the daylight of God's will. To step out of the timetable -- even if doing so would seem safer by human reasoning -- would be tantamount to walking by night. It would lead to stumbling."

11. Jesus told the disciples that Lazarus was "sleeping." What did He mean?

"Sleep" is a term used in the New Testament to refer to a believer's death. They go to sleep here and wake up in the arms of the Loving Father. Our spirit will live forever!

12. Was Jesus being mean when He said that He was glad He wasn't there, in verse 15? What was He saying?

This ends our lesson for today. Jesus tells us the two-fold purpose of His delay in verses 4 and 15: that the Son of God may be glorified, and that they may believe. I pray that we will remember that when we have questions or doubts. I hope we remember that it is always for God's glory and our growth.

Third Day

Spend some time working on your memory verse.

Yesterday we ended with Jesus taking His disciples to Bethany. Our friend Thomas had an interesting response.

1. Read John 11:16-44. How did Thomas respond? What exactly do you think he meant?

Thomas was called Didymus in Greek circles, meaning "twin." Many take this to mean that he actually was a twin. (Where was the other one?) Some look at his response as courageous, brave, and loyal, willing to go with Jesus wherever He went and endure His persecution. Others think Thomas was a chronic pessimist, seeming to expect the worst out of the future (John 14:5, 20:24-29), losing all hope. Jesus was about to amaze Thomas. God will still amaze us today as we look to Him and believe He can, and will, act.

2. Who was with the grieving family when Jesus arrived?

Mary and Martha had many friends. It was also the custom for the family of the deceased to hire at least two flute players and professional mourners, or "wailers" to grieve with the family.

3. What did Martha do when she heard Jesus was coming? How was this characteristic of her personality?
4. What question does she ask? (Note her posture.)
5. When Jesus gives her the promise that Lazarus will rise again, how does she respond?
6. Jesus reveals Himself as the source of resurrection and eternal life. What is the prerequisite for eternal life, according to verses 25-26?
7. How does Martha affirm her faith in Jesus?
8. When Mary heard Jesus had come, what did she do?
9. How is her response different than Mary's? How is it the same?
10. How is Jesus' response to Mary different than His response to Martha?

11. Both ladies basically said, "If only ..." Do you have any "if only's"? What are they? What should you do? (What did the sisters do?)

Both sisters knew they should take their issues to Jesus. They were most likely discouraged, upset, hurting, and perhaps, a little angry. Still, they took their troubles to Jesus. It seemed like Martha needed to know that Jesus was in charge, while Mary needed to know that Jesus cared. He met each sister right where she was at.

12. Is there some kind of "trouble" in your life that you haven't yet brought to Jesus? Will you today? Allow God to be glorified, and your faith to grow.

I pray that this lesson reminds you to bring your cares, concerns, and sorrows to Jesus, who is our sympathetic High Priest (Hebrews 4:15). I also pray that if someone close to you has gone to be with the Lord, you can trust Jesus and pour out your heart to Him. He understands.

Fourth Day

Study your verses. How does it speak to your heart?

1. Read John 11:17-44

Jesus said "I AM" the Resurrection and the Life." Death and the grave have been conquered (1 Corinthians 15:55). Because He raised Himself from the dead, we will also be raised. He is the "firstfruits" of those who have fallen asleep (1 Corinthians 15:20).

2. Read 1 Corinthians 15. From this chapter, explain the importance of Christ's Resurrection and the significance of it for you and me. Also note any other important facts you find in this chapter concerning the Resurrection.

3. If Christ didn't rise, why would we be "men most pitiable"? (1 Cor. 15:19)

4. How should the fact of the resurrection change your life daily? (Does it?)

At first Martha didn't grasp what Jesus meant, but I think she finally got it. When we die, we will experience an even greater kind of life. I like what Dwight Moody once said, "One day you will hear that D. L. Moody of Northfield, Massachusetts, is dead. Don't you believe it! In that day I will be more alive than I have ever been before." What a hope we have in Jesus!

5. Back to our text, what did Jesus do when He saw them all weeping?

The phrase "groaned in the spirit" suggests anger, outrage, or emotional indignation. Why was Jesus indignant? Many believe that He was angry at death, which was the result of sin. He may have been upset at the mourners, because they still didn't "get it." Perhaps He was simply identifying with the pain that Mary and Martha were feeling. Verse 35 tells

us that Jesus wept. This is a silent or quiet bursting into tears, rather than the loud lamenting or wailing practiced by the mourners. Jesus again wept for the fallen world, as well as the pain of His friends.

6. How did the Jews react to His tears?

7. Jesus called Martha to action. What did He say to do?
(What was her response?)

8. Does faith involve action and obedience? Can you explain?

9. Why does Jesus pray out loud?

Whereas Lazarus had to be set free from his bandages, Jesus Himself left His grave without any human help. The name Lazarus is a Greek form of the name Eleazar, which means "God is my help." Everybody needs help from the Lord; everyone needs a Savior.

10. We are all like Lazarus in a sense. We are dead in our sins and then we are made alive in Christ (Ephesians 2:1). We are all called to be new creatures in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). Have you left your old ways or are you still walking around with your grave clothes? (Figuratively, of course.) Ask the Holy Spirit to show you any "old ways" that are still hanging on.

11. What is the greatest lesson you learned from this section?

See you tomorrow, ladies. You are alive ... free in Jesus!

Fifth Day

Write your verse from memory.

1. Read John 11:45-57. How did the Jews respond to the raising of Lazarus from the dead?

2. Why do you think it was a greater miracle to raise him from the dead after four days, rather than doing it on his deathbed?

3. Why were the Jews afraid of Jesus becoming too popular? (vs 48)

4. What impossible mission did they undertake, in verse 53?

5. What did Jesus do as a result of all this?

The Jews were afraid that the Roman armies would come in and ruin their Temple, as well as their nation if things got too heated. The Romans did not tolerate disorder of any kind. The Jews didn't want to ruffle the Romans' feathers.

The words of Caiaphas in verses 49-50 are sometimes called "the unconscious prophecy." Caiaphas served as the High priest from A.D. 18 until 36, when he was removed by the Romans. A. M. Hunter, in his book The Gospel According to John, interpreted his words in verse 50 like this: "Better a single life should be sacrificed on behalf of God's people than that the whole nation should be doomed to ruin. Consciously, Caiaphas was expressing a piece of cynical expediency; unconsciously, he was summing up the Gospel." John points out that the High priest was speaking more truth than he knew. He was unknowingly prophesying that the death of Jesus would bring the universal church together, making them "one flock." (John 10:16)

6. In review of this chapter, why do you think Jesus was so upset if He knew that He was going to raise Lazarus from the dead?

7. What is specifically relevant to your life in this chapter?

8. How does this chapter challenge you as a:
 - a. Wife?

 - b. Single?

 - c. Mom?

9. God is still in control, even when He seems to be nowhere in sight (vs 54). How does that bring you hope and comfort today?

