

(1) Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. It was Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill. So the sisters sent to Him, saying, “Lord, He whom You love is ill.”

(4) But when Jesus heard it He said, “This illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.” Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So, when He heard that Lazarus was ill, He stayed two days longer in the place where He was. Then after this He said to the disciples, “Let us go to Judea again.”

(8) The disciples said to Him, “Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone You, and are you going there again?” Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.”

(11) After saying these things, He said to them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him.” The disciples said to Him, “Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover.” Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that He meant taking rest with sleep. Then Jesus told them plainly, “Lazarus has died, and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.”

(16) So Thomas, called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with Him.”

Think on these things:

- 1) Chapter 10 (vs.39-40) ended with Jesus leaving Jerusalem headed to the other side of the Jordan River (‘Bethany beyond the Jordan’, or Bethabara) where John had once been baptizing. Look at a map to see how far away He is now from Jerusalem. How close is Bethany to Jerusalem?

Jerusalem to ‘Bethany beyond the Jordan’? **Around 20 miles**

Bethany (Lazarus’ home) to Jerusalem? **About 2-3 miles (more like a suburb)**

- 2) Here we get a glimpse into what is best understood as a friendship Jesus had with one particular family. The first introduction to the family is found in Luke 10:38-42, and it doesn’t refer to Lazarus at all. What do you learn about Mary and Martha from this Luke passage? What does John tell us about Mary in John 11:2, and what more do we learn about her in Luke 7:36-48?

Martha? **She was hospitable, hard-working and servant-minded (a Type A personality?)**

Mary? In **Luke 10**, Mary demonstrated a spiritual sensitivity, leaving her sister Martha to do all the work while she sat and listened to Jesus teach (Jesus commented that Mary had chosen the “good portion” [‘what is better’, NIV]). In **John 11:2** we learn that it was Mary who brought in the expensive perfume to anoint Jesus and wash His feet with her tears and hair.

- 3) What action did Jesus take when messengers arrived to let Him know Lazarus was very sick? What explanation does He give in vs. 4 & 15 as to acting this way?

Jesus remained across the Jordan for another 2 days after receiving the message. He explained to His disciples that God’s purpose in Lazarus’ sickness was to exalt Himself and His Son, and to cause belief among the disciples.

- 4) In v.7, Jesus says it's time to return to Judea, to Bethany, where Lazarus lives. His disciples immediately remind Him that this is a dangerous choice (v.8). How do you understand Jesus' answer to them that there "are 12 hours in the day" (consider John 9:4-5 and Ephesians 5:15-16)? Were the disciples willing to face danger with Him (see v.16)?

Jesus' answer infers? **By citing time, He may be indicating that it is limited. He shares that when we walk in darkness, we are likely to stumble (in life). In John 9 Jesus says there is only so much 'day' time when Christians can do God's work, and then the night will come. In Ephesians, Paul shares that Christians must look carefully as to how they walk (live) in this world, acting wisely and making the most of day time because the world's days are filled with evil.**

Were His disciples willing to face danger with Him? **Yes (v.16)**

- 5) Let's delve a little more into Jesus' answer to His disciples. A common biblical theme is that God's children (believers) "walk in the light," in the day, and that those outside of God's life walk in darkness, in the night. Take a look at 1 John 1:5-2:11. How might you apply this to your life, and to raising your family?

God dwells in the "light." When we walk in the light, we have fellowship with Him and other believers. Should we sin, we need to confess it to Him and seek forgiveness --- and everybody sins! Walking in the light is to keep God's commandments. It is to abide in Him and walk the same way Jesus walked in life. The darkness will pass away, and we must learn to love one another genuinely --- or else we remain in the darkness and disobedient to God.

We need to inculcate into our children that Christians are "people of the light," i.e., people of the day. We should consider teaching them that carousing at night is more likely to lead them into personal dangers and legal troubles (foster a rhythm of life that daytime is for activities with family and friends, and night for sleeping).

- 6) In vs.11-15, what term does Jesus use to reflect His view of 'death'? Is this a common Biblical perception (see 2 Samuel 7:12; Job 14:10-12; Matthew 9:18, 23-26; Acts 7:60-8:1; 1 Corinthians 15:6)? How does this fit into Christ's return (2nd Coming, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11)?

Jesus' term? **He calls it 'sleep'** Common Biblical perception? **Yes**

2nd Coming? **Paul teaches that those who are 'asleep' in the Lord, i.e., already dead and in the grave, will rise 1st at the Lord's commanding cry and the archangel's trumpet blast. Then those Christians who are alive at that moment will rise to join them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.**

People and situations I want to pray for this week: