


The Word

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Episode 21



JOHN 11	Life (Lazarus is raised by Jesus)
JOHN 12	Death (Jesus predicts His death)
JOHN 13 – 17	Life for His disciples (in the time between Jesus' departure and His return)
JOHN 18 – 19	Death (Jesus' crucifixion)
JOHN 20	Life (Jesus is risen)

Death vs Jesus

JOHN 11:1-27



We'll see how John carefully arranges this second half of his book to show how Jesus secures eternal life.

*In the previous section:
Jesus is God's Son,
doing God's work in
this world.*

*In this episode:
Jesus shows His power,
even over death.*

¹ Now a man named Lazarus was ill. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.

² (This Mary, whose brother Lazarus now lay ill, was the same one who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair.)

³ So the sisters sent word to Jesus, 'Lord, the one you love is ill.'

⁴ When he heard this, Jesus said, 'This illness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it.'

Sickness that leads to... glory?

Welcome to the second half of John's Gospel.

The section opens with one of Jesus' friends, Lazarus, seriously ill. **(v. 1)**

What does Jesus promise will happen to Lazarus?

- Death won't be the final outcome. **(v. 4)**
 - Lazarus' illness will lead to Jesus being glorified as God's Son.
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God's glory: a big theme in John's Gospel. Everything that is awesome about God. This glory is put on display in Jesus.

⁵ Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

⁶ So when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed where he was two more days, ⁷ and then he said to his disciples, ‘Let us go back to Judea.’

⁸ ‘But Rabbi,’ they said, ‘a short while ago the Jews there tried to stone you, and yet you are going back?’

⁹ Jesus answered, ‘Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Anyone who walks in the day-time will not stumble, for they see by this world’s light.

¹⁰ It is when a person walks at night that they stumble, for they have no light.’

What is so surprising about what Jesus does next?

- Jesus loved Lazarus and his sisters... **(v. 5)**
- ...so He deliberately delays setting off for two days! **(v. 6)**
- Jesus eventually sets off for Bethany... **(v. 7)**
- ...knowing that the Jewish leaders there want to kill Him. **(v. 8)**

Did you notice how fearless Jesus is about going back to Bethany? His hour may be drawing near but He still has work to do – there is a plan.

Jesus' challenge to His disciples is clear: trust me as the light, you don't need to let what we are about to face make you stumble.

¹¹ After he had said this, he went on to tell them, ‘Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up.’

¹² His disciples replied, ‘Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better.’

¹³ Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep.



What does Jesus mean in verse 11?

- Jesus is talking about Lazarus' death. (v. 13)

Jesus sees the death of His people as just temporary 'sleep.'

While their bodies 'sleep', the souls of His people immediately go to be with God.

Jesus promises that souls and bodies will be united when He raises them from the grave on the judgement day.

John 5:28-29: '...a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out...'

¹⁴ So then he told them plainly, 'Lazarus is dead,
¹⁵ and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.'

¹⁶ Then Thomas (also known as Didymus) said to the rest of the disciples, 'Let us also go, that we may die with him.'



Is Lazarus physically dead? Jesus spells it out... (v. 14)

Jesus explains the purpose of the miracle they are about to see. It is to grow their faith (as they see that Jesus is who He claimed to be – the Son of God). (v. 15)

Like the disciples, we might be puzzled at this point:

- Jesus said that Lazarus' illness wouldn't end in death, but Lazarus has died.
- Yet Jesus said that this would all happen for God's glory...
- ...and for the disciples' faith!

¹⁷ On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days.

¹⁸ Now Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem,
¹⁹ and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother.

²⁰ When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home.

²¹ ‘Lord,’ Martha said to Jesus, ‘if you had been here, my brother would not have died.’

²² But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.’