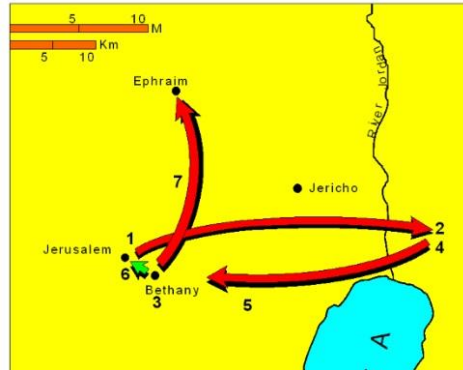


## WE HAVE SEEN HIS GLORY

### The Glory of the Saviour's View of Life & Death

#### INTRODUCTION

John, the author of this Gospel left the story of Jesus at a place across the Jordan where the late John the Baptist had been baptizing.



1. Jesus is at the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem. As he teaches, the people try to stone him for 'blasphemy.'
2. Jesus and his disciples leave Jerusalem, cross the Jordan and stay near the place where John had baptized. Many people came to him.
3. At Bethany, Mary's and Martha's brother Lazarus is taken ill. The sisters send Jesus a message.
4. Jesus delays leaving for 2 days.
5. Jesus and the disciples go to Bethany. Lazarus is dead and has been buried 4 days. Jesus raises him to life.
6. Eyewitnesses report the event to the Sanhedrin. They plot to kill Jesus.
7. Jesus travels secretly to Ephraim with the disciples.

The order of events according to John 10:22–11:57.

Christ was experiencing a fruitful ministry as we learn from John *"And many believed in him there."* (John 10:42, ESV). The author then takes us 150 kilometers west to the town of Bethany, near Jerusalem. There we are introduced to the sad situation in the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus.

**TEXT: John 11:1–16 (ESV)**

#### THE STORY

Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha was ill.

The sisters sent word to Jesus.

The messenger trip would have taken at least 2 days; and they said, “Lord, he whom you love is ill.”<sup>1</sup>

The author assumes that we know what is in the next chapter and he tells us that this one sister, Mary, was the one “who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair”.<sup>2</sup>

Their message is captivating: the one you love is ill. **Those words point to an amazing relationship.** These three siblings were close to Jesus. In fact, other than the inner circle of the disciples (Peter, James, and John), these **may have been three of Jesus’ closest friends.**

We then read these stunning words from our author: “*So, when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was*” (John 11:6, ESV).

Now we have to be careful here.

John is not telling us that Jesus was just really busy for two more days before He could break away.

John is not suggesting that Jesus couldn’t get a flight out and had to wait on stand-by for two days. **It’s just the opposite.**

Jesus intentionally chose to wait for two days. Why?

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<sup>1</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Jn 11:3). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

<sup>2</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Jn 11:2). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

Notice verse 5: *“Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So, when he heard . . . he stayed . . .”*

That is striking!

Was Jesus callous?

Was he unconcerned?

Was he totally insensitive to their situation?

No!

As we work back the answer is given: *“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” (John 11:4, ESV).*

Do you see that? **The most loving thing Christ can do for those he loves is to see His Father glorified and be glorified Himself.**

Today there are many family and friends known to us who have been laid off of work. What’s the most loving thing that can happen in their lives? Answer: that the glory of God will be displayed.

*see the answer*

Today business are impaired, retirement savings are lost. What’s the most loving thing that can happen in that situation? Answer: that the glory of God will be displayed.

Today people are lonely, some are ill. What's the most loving thing that God can do for them? Answer: that the glory of God will be displayed.

*love = best thing*

The love of Christ was also evident for His disciples. *"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." (John 11:14–15, ESV).*

*= J*

Dr. D.A. Carson writes, "Jesus is glad he was not present when Lazarus died, presumably because he would have prevented his death and therefore removed the opportunity to provide this faith-engendering resurrection."<sup>3</sup>

This teaches us another lesson about the perspective of Jesus Christ.

**Jesus is deeply invested in sustaining and increasing our faith.**

Remember what He said to Peter: "But I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail."<sup>4</sup>

The disciples of Jesus were concerned that if they returned back to the vicinity of Jerusalem the life of Christ and theirs would be in jeopardy. *"The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone you, and are you going there again"" (John 11:8, ESV)?* Jesus gave them an interesting parable:

<sup>3</sup> Carson, D. A. (1991). [The Gospel according to John](#) (p. 410). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.

<sup>4</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Lk 22:32). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

*“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.””* (John 11:9–10, ESV)

### What does he mean by that?

To walk in the day means to walk in the light that Jesus gives; that is, to walk in fellowship with him, believing and obeying his words.

Contrarily to walk in the night is to walk disobediently.

So how does this apply to going, or not going, to Jerusalem?

Jesus is saying that going to Jerusalem is in keeping with His Father’s will.

You can go into a dangerous scenario, in God’s will, but not stumble.

To go into seemingly safe scenario opposed to God’s will, you will stumble.

It is safer to travel into danger in God’s will than travel into safety without Him. Jonah learned that lesson didn’t he?

When Jesus heard the news of Lazarus’ situation he said these comforting words: “This illness does not lead to death.”<sup>5</sup> Seemingly moments afterward he said, “Lazarus has died.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Jn 11:4). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

<sup>6</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Jn 11:14). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

Isn't that a little confusing? It reminds me of another time when Jesus was speaking to His disciples. Turn to Luke 21. Jesus is foretelling wars and persecution to His disciples and then He makes this astounding statement:

*"You will be delivered up even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and some of you they will put to death. You will be hated by all for my name's sake. But not a hair of your head will perish."* (Luke 21:16–18, ESV)

You will be killed, but not a hair on your head will perish.

You will not die, when you die.

Is Jesus confused?

Do not fall into the false and harmful theology that suggests God's people will never suffer, never have harm done to them.

The perspective of Jesus sees way beyond this world to another existence where His disciples will never die and no one will touch a hair on their head – ultimately and forever. So for Christ, death is not death, it is sleep. "He said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him."<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Jn 11:11). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

## APPLICATION

In difficult days the best perspective to hold onto is the perspective of Jesus. **He always sees things accurately and fully.** From this passage I believe there are several things to remember:

- #1. The most loving thing Christ can do for those he loves is to see His Father glorified and be glorified Himself. *exp his*
- #2. It is safer to travel into danger in God's will than travel into safety without Him. *Gospel*
- #3. The promises of Jesus extend way beyond this world to another existence where His disciples will never die and no one will touch a hair on their head – ultimately and forever

*Father, today we face unprecedented days. Nobody disputes that. The world governments, the world economies, the world social order is in chaos. Heavenly Father the best thing you can do for us is to glory Your Son in these events. We affirm with our Lord that it is safer to enter into these anxious days, in the will of God, than outside the will of God. And Heavenly Father we thank you for the truth that this world is not our home and we are travelling through. We await a day when the perfections of Your glory will be everywhere and we will be glorified with you.*