

Why We Live with Hope
Series: E-100—John 11:1-57
August 28, 2016 Pastor Bill Bump

As we conclude our look at the miracles of Jesus, we see the ability of Jesus to reverse the iron grip of death.

The beginning of the story makes it clear that what follows has the purpose of bringing glory to Jesus and showing His power.

John 11:1-6 ¹ *A man named Lazarus was sick. He lived in Bethany with his sisters, Mary and Martha.*
² *This is the Mary who later poured the expensive perfume on the Lord's feet and wiped them with her hair. Her brother, Lazarus, was sick.* ³ *So the two sisters sent a message to Jesus telling him, "Lord, your dear friend is very sick."*
⁴ *But when Jesus heard about it he said, "Lazarus's sickness will not end in death. No, it happened for the glory of God so that the Son of God will receive glory from this."* ⁵ *So although Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus,* ⁶ *he stayed where he was for the next two days.*

John's gospel is built around revelations of the glory of God in Jesus.

Not understanding Jesus' purpose caused those involved to question His love.

John 11:17-24 ¹⁷ *When Jesus arrived at Bethany, he was told that Lazarus had already been in his grave for four days.* ¹⁸ *Bethany was only a few miles down the road from Jerusalem,* ¹⁹ *and many of the people had come to console Martha and Mary in their loss.* ²⁰ *When Martha got word that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him. But Mary stayed in the house.* ²¹ *Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died.* ²² *But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask."*
²³ *Jesus told her, "Your brother will rise again."*
²⁴ *"Yes," Martha said, "he will rise when everyone else rises, at the last day."*

Jesus responded with a profound truth about Himself.

John 11:25-27 ²⁵ *Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying.* ²⁶ *Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this, Martha?"*
²⁷ *"Yes, Lord," she told him. "I have always believed you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who has come into the world from God."*

This is the great hope that caused the Apostle Paul to rejoice.

1 Corinthians 15:54-57 ⁵⁴ *Then, when our dying bodies have been transformed into bodies that will never die, this Scripture will be fulfilled: "Death is swallowed up in victory.* ⁵⁵ *O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?"*
⁵⁶ *For sin is the sting that results in death, and the law gives sin its power.* ⁵⁷ *But thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

The promise Jesus made in John 11 is available to all who believe.

Next, Jesus showed strong emotion at the heartache death can cause humans.

John 11:28-37 ²⁸ Then she returned to Mary. She called Mary aside from the mourners and told her, "The Teacher is here and wants to see you." ²⁹ So Mary immediately went to him. ³⁰ Jesus had stayed outside the village, at the place where Martha met him. ³¹ When the people who were at the house consoling Mary saw her leave so hastily, they assumed she was going to Lazarus's grave to weep. So they followed her there. ³² When Mary arrived and saw Jesus, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died." ³³ When Jesus saw her weeping and saw the other people wailing with her, a deep anger welled up within him, and he was deeply troubled. ³⁴ "Where have you put him?" he asked them. They told him, "Lord, come and see." ³⁵ Then Jesus wept. ³⁶ The people who were standing nearby said, "See how much he loved him!" ³⁷ But some said, "This man healed a blind man. Couldn't he have kept Lazarus from dying?"

Jesus was angry at the terrible results of evil and the people's lack of faith in His power.

Finally, Jesus responded with powerful action.

John 11:38-44 ³⁸ Jesus was still angry as he arrived at the tomb, a cave with a stone rolled across its entrance. ³⁹ "Roll the stone aside," Jesus told them. But Martha, the dead man's sister, protested, "Lord, he has been dead for four days. The smell will be terrible." ⁴⁰ Jesus responded, "Didn't I tell you that you would see God's glory if you believe?" ⁴¹ So they rolled the stone aside. Then Jesus looked up to heaven and said, "Father, thank you for hearing me. ⁴² You always hear me, but I said it out loud for the sake of all these people standing here, so that they will believe you sent me." ⁴³ Then Jesus shouted, "Lazarus, come out!" ⁴⁴ And the dead man came out, his hands and feet bound in graveclothes, his face wrapped in a headcloth. Jesus told them, "Unwrap him and let him go!"

Jesus made a connection between what He was doing and what He said back in John 11:4.

John 11:4 But when Jesus heard about it he said, "Lazarus's sickness will not end in death. No, it happened for the glory of God so that the Son of God will receive glory from this."

Jesus wants us to know that God was involved in this miracle and that He is not a worker of magic.

Jesus is the arrival of God's final, glorious renovation of all things, including our bodies.

Lazarus was a preview of our resurrection.

Conclusion

Jesus is coming back to this earth in power and great glory, and this story is a window into that glory.