

F/ I am the Resurrection and the Life – John 11-12

- **John 11v1-16 – Jesus stays away and Lazarus dies**

- Do you remember the man born blind in John 9 and how that was “for the glory of God”? The man spent 38 years blind – it would have been hard to believe that that was for God’s glory! Now Lazarus is also ill for “God’s glory”. What does Jesus say about the ending of this story? Does that give hope for you in your situation?
- Notice too how Lazarus and the family were clearly worshippers of Jesus and loved by Jesus, but this did not mean that they had no suffering. Rather in suffering, Jesus gives hope.
- Notice too how the reason the disciples do not want to go is because they are afraid they will suffer at the hands of the Jews.
- What can we learn from this about how we deal with or cope with suffering?
- What can we learn from Jesus calling death “sleep”?

- **John 11v17-37 – “I am the Resurrection and the Life”**

- Martha tends to get a lot of bad press, but notice her faith here expressed in v22, 24, and 27! Are you able to make these statements?
- Notice too Martha’s concern for her sister (v28).
- Mary’s faith in Jesus causes her to make a very similar statement to Martha in v32.
- How does Jesus respond to the same question from Martha and Mary? (notice how one is theological and the other is emotional!) What does this teach us about seeing what lies behind the questions people ask in their suffering?
- In his theological answer, Jesus states “I am the resurrection and the life”. What does this statement mean for you?

- **John 11v38-44 – Sign 7: Lazarus raised**

- Martha has a very practical reason for not doing as Jesus says. Does my practical thinking override what Jesus is asking me to do?
- Jesus prays to the Father for the benefit of the crowd and then calls Lazarus out. What does this say about his authority? Notice how even the dead obey the voice of Jesus! What authority do we have in the name of Jesus?
- Notice how Jesus did a miracle, but the people still needed to do the practical follow up activity! The work of God is a partnership.

- **John 11v45-57 – Plot to kill Jesus**

- Here is the irony. A dead man is raised, and so people want to kill!
- While many are increased in faith, some are determined to cause trouble. The leaders cannot deny the “signs”, but are concerned about their status. What most concerns me in life?
- More irony is found in Caiaphas’s prophecy (v49-53). He has one meaning in it, but God has another! It is interesting how God works through the false-expectations of humans.
- As the leaders plot, Jesus bides his time for his death, just as he bided his time for Lazarus’s resurrection. Jesus is ultimately in control of every situation.

- **John 12v1-11 – Jesus anointed for his burial**

- Notice how different people with different skills together honour Jesus. Martha prepares the meal to serve Jesus and his friends. This provides the opportunity for Mary to worship Jesus with the perfume.
- The irony is that as she is maybe in part honouring Jesus for bringing Lazarus back from the dead, Jesus is seeing the act as preparing him for his burial!
- Further irony is provided as the leaders plan to kill the man who has risen from the dead! Can't they see who has the power in life and death here?! How slow are we to grasp what God is doing?

- **John 12v12-36 – Jesus' Triumphal Entry and prediction of death**

- Jesus was biding his time, but now is the day for a bold entry into Jerusalem! Are you waiting for God's timing at the moment? He chooses the right time.
- The crowds quote from Psalm 118 – you may like to read this and you will find other verses in there that are pertinent to the situation Jesus is facing. Notice how the crowds proclaim him "Lord" and "King".
- After the glory of the crowds celebrating him coming, Jesus is quick to point to his real glory being in his death (v23-25). Glory is not in public adulation, but in obedience to the Father. How hard this is for some of us to learn!
- Jesus casts a very different angle on death and life in v24-25 and in v32-33! Does our view need changing to be in line with his?
- The crowds are perplexed as they do not expect the Christ to die (v34) – the story of life and death is playing out very different to people's expectations.
- The episode of Greeks wanting to see Jesus being included seems strange. Maybe this is to indicate that for the non-Jews to really see Jesus, he needs to die and rise again.

- **John 12v37-50 – Mixed responses to Jesus' claims**

- Despite the miracles which point to who Jesus is, many do not believe. What does this say about the role of miracles in evangelism? What do the verses quoted in v40 indicate about who is responsible for this slowness to believe? What does that say about our evangelism?
- It is interesting that some among the leaders believed. Sadly, they are more interested in the "praise from men than God": their belief is shallow and academic rather than deep and heart-felt. Who do I seek to please? How heart-felt is my belief? What level of sacrifice am I prepared to make for my belief in Jesus?
- Jesus speaks words of life and death: following them leads to eternal life, ignoring them leads to judgement. Which way am I going?