

“Did You See That?”

John 11:1-54

May 4, 2014

VIDEO: John 11:1-54...

T/S: Before we unpack today’s text... let’s realize & remember:

Exegetical CONTEXT: AS WE MOVE to chapter 11, we cross an important literary divide in this Gospel. Thus far we have examined the way Jesus' ministry takes advantage of the various institutions and festivals of Judaism, making them interpretative vehicles for his self-revelation. In fact, chapter 10 concludes this section with a "closing frame": Just as the narrative began with the story of John the Baptist ([1:19ff.](#)), so it ends on the same note ([10:42](#)). John the Baptist's work frames the entire revelation (section of John’s Gospel) on Jesus.

- NIV Application Commentary

Remember where we left off in John 10:22-42...

**Sheep... Shepherds (good & bad)... Syncretism...
Sovereignty... Savior... Scripture... Stoning... Separate... Snatch-ability**

T/S: Now... let me ask you: “What did you see in vv.1-54?”

Most people see & say:

The miracle of Laz being raised from the dead...
(which makes Jesus really cool & very nice)

**Today we're going to read our Bible's better...
and SEE a whole lot more :-)**

T/S: We're going to see the Truth-in-Love of a single Jesus-jewel,
but from multiple, miraculous & Messianic facets.

Intro: Let me just ask you: Did you see...

1. Did you see yourself in the crowd?
2. Did you see yourself in the cave?
3. Did you see yourself IN-Christ?
4. Did you see Christ in the cave?
5. Did you see Christ coming out of the cave?

Did you see the gospel & it's (4) spiritual laws?

T/S: Well... let's go back thru the text again & see what we see...

PREVEIW: We'll break the text down into the 4 spiritual laws:

- A. *Love with Sovereignty* - vv. 1 - 16
- B. *Lost in Sin* - vv. 17 - 33
- C. *Lord and Savior* - vv. 34 - 44
- D. *Live to Serve* - vv. 45 - 54

BIG IDEA: The Gospel = mMm (miracle Messiah mission)

Laz is the PLATFORM... to highlight the Miracle

Jesus is the POINT! Jesus is the only Messiah

We are the PEOPLE... who have been graced to see
God's glory – so that,
we will live on Mission!

T/S: Let's go see...

I. LOVE and SOVEREIGNTY

- A. Self**
- B. Sick**
- C. Sin**
- D. Savior**

The Death of Lazarus

1Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. **2**It was Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill. **3**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."

5Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. **6**So, when he heard that Lazarus^a was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. **7**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?" **9**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. **10**But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is

not in him.” 11After saying these things, he said to them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him.” 12The disciples said to him, “Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover.” 13Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he meant taking rest in sleep. 14Then Jesus told them plainly, “Lazarus has died, 15and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.” 16So Thomas, called the Twin,^b said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with him.”

- v.1 you are spiritually sick (too)

- ref. to Mary and perfume (explained in ch.12) proves homogeneous nature of Synoptics (Lk 10:38-42) with John's gospel

- v2 someone who knows (and likely loves you KNOWS & loves Jesus)

- v3 they sent a request to Jesus for healing (of you on your behalf)

- v4 by grace! - Jesus decides and declares... your sickness will not (although it could & should have) end in eternal death...

Moreover, your story is for God's glory!

- v5 Jesus loves you & your whole family...

- v6 BECAUSE He loves you all, all of His sovereign, providential choices are intentionally being orchestrated to bring about the the maximum glory for God and goodness for those who receive and return His love (Rom 8:28).

this is true ALL the time...

especially when His ways don't seem to make sense

"...true love waits!" – JDP

- v7 Jesus (AND His committed disciples/followers) GO to the sick & dying... Matt. 28:18-20

Note the word "again"

GO-ing is NOT a "one and done" thing...

GO-ing is at the heart of BE-ing (Acts 1:8) – JDP

- v8 Just for clarity's sake... this is a "No matter what!" foundation.

God understands the risks but do YOU?

*** it's not about YOU...

*** ...risk to the lost...

Fearful facts (alone) bring natural reservation, vacillation, & hesitation. However, faith, motivated & matured in love, goes. "ALL-in" & gives EVERYTHING it had to accomplish the Messiah's miraculous mission - No matter what!

- v9 we all like Jesus, have a mission to accomplish, complete with a set amount of time...

- NOTE: unlike the prosperity pimps... The Bible is clear that sometimes sickness & even death may be His glory-raising will for Christians (also cf. John 9; 21:19; Ex. 4:11; Job 1&2...)

- v10 We need not fear the consequences of obedience... Oh no... what needs to be feared is the consequence of persistent (eternity-shaping) patterns of disobedience.

walking in the dark without Christ does not end well

those who walk in the Light are called to go to those stumbling in the dark

*** 12 hours = an exact measure of manageable time to get the mission fulfilled... (providence, sovereignty, "a plan"...)

*** "night is coming" - ditto above. Sense of urgency...
Illustration: farmer before winter (get it in the barn now or know that all that is left will be lost)

- Jesus knew (and explained) that waiting to raise a dead Laz would do more to strengthen believer's faith than showing up early to heal a sick friend... Apply personally! (Tough times require tough faith. - JDP)

- v11 Jesus models for His missionaries...

Truth be known, the sick are already dead... But not to worry, Jesus can (and will) awaken their hearts, souls, mind, & strength (which, in response, they will love & follow Him with)

Note: this is a pre-scheduled miracle

Note: God's way & timing vs ours ways & timing

- v12-13 how often we think our dead friends are just snoozing...

Note the tone of cowardice & self-preservation

We act like they don't really need us... when in reality, the truth is... we don't really love them.

*** What degree of lostness are you comfortable with? (quantity & quality)

*** What would you be willing to trade your life in for?

*** Is what you're living for... worth Christ's dying?

- v14 Sometimes the truth must be shared bluntly... always loving and sometimes loud... YOU or your friend (or the people group) are DEAD.

Note: The shock factor is always for saving purposes. If that's not true, a healthy, loving representation of Christ is missing. In such cases, "the mission is a mistake and the missionaries aren't being missionaries." – JDP

- v15 God does so much "for your sake" (and mine) that is designed to initiate. & inspire our faith in Him

see His glory in this...

see His goodness in this *** "so that you will believe"

*** a.k.a. to save your soul!

*** to give you eternal life!

see His GRACE in this

- v16 Thomas speaks... and we are left asking ourselves: Is he cynical or inspirational... There tends to be both in the crowd AND in the church... One's to be revered & the other on rebuked
(see 12 spies... Are You Korah or a Caleb?)

II. LOST in SIN

- A. Jesus Cares
- B. Jesus Comes
- C. Jesus Calls

I Am the Resurrection and the Life

17Now when Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. 18Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles_c off, 19and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother. 20So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, but Mary remained seated in the house. 21Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. 22But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you." 23Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." 24Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." 25Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life._d Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, 26and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" 27She said to him, "Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world."

28When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in private, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you." 29And when she heard it, she rose quickly and went to him. 30Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha had met him. 31When the Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary rise quickly and go out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there. 32Now when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet, saying to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." 33When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled.

Key point: When Jesus comes to us... that's GRACE.
 When we respond by going to Him...that's FAITH.

- v17 Laz is dead-dead (4 days meant no doubt, he's dead-dead!)
- v18-19 our social circles are our immediate (Acts 1:8 Jerusalem) mission fields...
- v20 NOTE: subtle but important point... Martha puts the interests of Jesus (knows the crowd will turn Him in) above get own... even when times are heart-wrenchingly hard. This is the fruit of a lovingly devoted disciple.
- v21 even disciples can confuse Christ's power & plan sometimes... We presume upon God - I've been there :-)
- v22 steadfast faith is always the mark & measure of a true disciple
- v23 Jesus can (and often does - just look at any & every Christian) answer impossible prayers with miraculous power

- v24. Again, even true disciples can know the particulars but miss the point... Sometimes we can be blinded from the fuller truth because we are fixated on a partial truth...

(Example: see the Sovereignty/Freewill debate).

- vv.25-27 = point of entire passage!

1. Gospel Facts (proven in Laz)
2. Gospel Fork. (posed to ALL)
3. Gospel Faith (pic. in Martha)

vv.28-32. Jesus called for Mary & she came running, humbling, and worshipping - even in (or especially in) or deepest, darkest sorrows. This is a portrait of a true Christian's relationship with the One, true, Christ.

- v33 Jesus "feels" more than you realize...

Jesus is angry with death's reality

Jesus is angry with a pagan-like funeral atmosphere

*** "We tend to blur the lines and misinterpret the differences between God's power & His plan"

- see John 2:4 & 7:5-9

- see here with Jesus' delay (11:15)

*** might we be like Martha... acknowledging the eternal miracle that Jesus will do in our eternal lives BUT miss the immediate miracle He intends to do right now ?

*** See that Jesus shares another "I am" statement... Not "I control resurrection & life" BUT rather, "I am the resurrection and life"

*** When Jesus asks Martha if she believes... It is not in regard to Laz receiving eternal life, it is in regards to Christ's miraculous control over death & life in the here & now...

How about you?

*** Jesus' ministry is to both the dead (Laz) and the mourning (M&M plus friends & family). BUT... don't focus as much on His targets as what He taught! This ministry is all about the Messiah

*** NOTE: "weeping" in their context was a week of wailing!

T/S: Being dead FOUR days is significant (Jewish tradition thought the soul hovered over the dead body 3 days – with the possibility of re-entering)... Thus "dead 4 days" put to rest ANY explanation BUT a miracle.

- link 1 Cor 15:55 with Jesus explaining to Martha...
- NOTE NIV commentary explanation of Jesus' attitude and confrontational tone at the tomb... at war with death!
- Martha, in her bold statement of biblical belief in Jesus, affirms John's reason for writing this inspired gospel
(cf. John 20:31)

III. LORD and SAVIOR

- A. Perplexity**
- B. Problem**
- C. Promise**
- D. Prayer**
- E. Power**

Jesus Weeps

28When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in private, “The Teacher is here and is calling for you.” 29And when she heard it, she rose quickly and went to him. 30Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha had met him. 31When the Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary rise quickly and go out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there. 32Now when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet, saying to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” 33When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled. 34And he said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Lord, come and see.” 35Jesus wept. 36So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!” 37But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?”

Jesus Raises Lazarus

38Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. 39Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, “Lord, by this time there will be an odor, for he has been dead four days.” 40Jesus said to her, “Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?” 41So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. 42I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me.” 43When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out.” 44The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go.”

- v34 Jesus is not messing around... See also the intense irony in the word choices: "Come and see" being said TO Jesus...

- v35 *** "The smallest verse/quote says the most."

- Arguably the greatest reflection of Christ's humanity in all the Bible.

this is so much more than love

this is so much more than compassion

(tho both are supernatural & divine)

Friend, this is PROOF!

*** Jesus is the God-man

*** His humanity is huge & a necessity in our salvation.

*** If he had no humanity he could not be a substitute for humans.

*** Without substitutionary atonement, there's no Gospel...

*** if there's no gospel, we're all going to hell.

*** Thus, I for one am really glad to see that Jesus wept :-)

NOTE: key difference and definition in and behind the weeping (vs wailing) of Jesus & the crowd

- v36-37 the crowds/multitudes have been and will continue to be split over Jesus...

- vv.38-44 = the miracle account

A. Perplexity (v.36-37)

God "works all things after the counsel of His will" ([Eph. 1:11](#)) and "does not give an account of all His doings" ([Job 33:13](#); cf. [40:2](#));). Jesus delayed because His purpose was not to heal Lazarus, but to raise him from the dead and thereby bring glory to Himself and to the Father ([vv. 4, 40](#)). - **MacArthur New Testament Commentary**

B. Problem (vv.38-39)

1. NOTE: the doubting in v.37 leads to Jesus being "deeply moved" (angry) again
2. The cave is closed
3. Laz is dead & decaying...
4. "It's too late..." (It's NEVER too late for the living – Amen!)

C. Promise (v.40... KEY to the blessing of this passage)

1. The promise is a loving, hope-giving rebuke... (i.e. like telling people they are sinners in need of a Savior that is coming)
2. Stop focusing on others & start focusing on ME
3. IF you believe... you WILL see the GLORY of GOD!

Obedience opens our eyes
to see better what God is doing
in our lives...

***What stones do you need to roll away
so that you can see the
miraculous blessings God has for you?***

4. Resurrection power = Glory of God (i.e. Christian witness)

Leon Morris QUOTE:

For [Jesus] the "glory of God" was the one important thing. This means that the real meaning of what He would do would be accessible only to faith. All who were there, believers or not, would see the miracle. But Jesus is promising Martha a sight of the glory. The crowd would see the miracle, but only believers would perceive its real significance, the glory.

D. Prayer (vv.41-42)

1. ...the church father Chrysostom thought (Morris, *John*, p. 360 n. 79), that Jesus involved the bystanders so there would be no doubt that it was really Lazarus who was raised
2. Jesus prays in praise, not for permission but for impact.

E. Power (vv.43-44)

1. COME-FORTHE! = QUOTE: *"In contrast to the circus-like atmosphere that marks the performances of modern 'faith healers' (who in any case cannot raise the dead), there was*

no showmanship, theatrics, or hype. Jesus was content to let His divine power speak for itself. At His command the 'king of terrors' (Job 18:14) yielded up his lawful captive; the grave was robbed of its victory (1 Cor. 15:55); the door of death & Hades was unlocked by the One who alone holds the keys (Rev. 1:18)." – **John MacArthur**

2. *Because of His resurrection, all believers (including Lazarus) will one day receive glorified, incorruptible bodies. Then, Paul writes, "this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, 'Death is swallowed up in victory'" ([1 Cor. 15:54](#)). - MacArthur New Testament Commentary*

*** "Look beyond the Messiah's miracle to its messianic message!"

See the foreshadowing of Christ crucified & Christ risen!

1. Physically
2. Geologically
3. Emotionally
4. Spiritually
5. Miraculously

NOTE: Jesus doesn't coerce life... He **COMMANDS** it!

Question: Do you look like Martha (in the video) when you see God raise the dead spiritually?

Why?

or

Why not? (the answer = faith)

IV. LIVE to SERVE (Responses)

- A. Miracles**
- B. Many**
- C. Multitudes**
- D. Murderers**
- E. YOU?**

The Plot to Kill Jesus

45 Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what he did, believed in him, **46** but some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. **47** So the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered the council and said, "What are we to do? For this man performs many signs. **48** If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation." **49** But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all. **50** Nor do you understand that it is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish." **51** He did not say this of his own accord, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, **52** and not for the nation only, but also to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad. **53** So from that day on they made plans to put him to death.

54 Jesus therefore no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went from there to the region near the wilderness, to a town called Ephraim, and there he stayed with the disciples.

- NOTE: John 11 = the 7th "I am" & 7th miracle reported in John...
Laz is the pre-cross crescendo!

*** the Laz account (like the rest of Christ's ministry & teaching) forces people into a "belief or unbelief" posture.... Per John 3:36, this can be said another way... to obey or disobey = to embrace belief OR unbelief... Either with Me or against Me (Luke 11:23)

A. **Miracle(s)** - Lazarus & EVERY true Christian!

- the lack of details surrounding a post resurrected Laz is intentional... That's so that the focus remains on the "Resurrector"... and the resurrection that *is to come*. (see 11:4 & 40 plus 20:31)

- Laz is a shortened version of the Hebrew name Eleazar, which means "helped by God" (a fitting name... See Jer. 29:11)

B. **Many** – Mary, Martha, and many more... but not 100%

C. **Multitudes** – “the crowds”

**Unbelief is never satisfied...
Jesus will always DIVIDE the crowd
and UNIFY the Church...
Whereas the wolves
will always divide the Church
& unify the crowds. - JDP**

- Laz was Jesus' greatest pre-cross miracle that foreshadows His crucifixion... AND... it is the "last straw" for the Pharisees...

- NOTE: some people saw the miracle and STILL did not believe... Even more, they ran to the religious leaders to arrest Jesus! Thus, miracles do not replace THE miracle...

QUOTE:

This response of unbelief in the face of the clearest proof is confirmation of Christ's teaching in [Luke 16:31](#): "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." The chief cause of unbelief is not inadequate information, but a heart in rebellion against the authority of God & his word. - Homer Kent

QUOTE: (re: unbeliever's stubborn hard-hearts)

Their response demonstrates that no amount of evidence, even something as spectacular as the raising of a dead man, can convince some sinners to abandon their hypocrisy and sin to come to the Savior.

– John MacArthur

D. Murderers - CAIAPHAS:

Theoretically, a high priest served for life. By the first century, however, the office had become heavily politicized, with the Romans frequently removing those high priests who displeased them. Caiaphas's tenure as high priest was actually one of the longest in the first century, a tribute to his political acumen and his conniving and opportunistic nature.

Caiaphas was frustrated by the indecision of the rest of the Sanhedrin; in response to their hesitancy he proposed a radical, thoroughly ruthless solution—one in keeping with his character. His proposal was death. "**It is expedient,**" he told them, "**that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation not perish.**" He presented them with a false either/or dilemma, giving them two extreme alternatives as if there were no other options.

- MacArthur New Testament Commentary

T/S: The high priest's malicious proposal to execute Jesus met with the Sanhedrin's approval, **so from that day on they planned together to kill Him.** Their decision, made well before Jesus was even arrested, rendered His later trial a total mockery. It was a mere formality, confirming a sentence that had already been passed. In the wake of the Sanhedrin's decision to put Him to death, **Jesus no longer continued to walk publicly among the Jews, but went away from there to the country near the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim; and there He stayed with the disciples.**

Where does your response to Jesus bring you?