



CORAM DEO

Sermon Discussion Guide

October 11, 2026

TEXT: John 11:1-16

SUMMARY

The miracle of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead only occurs in John's Gospel. He records it as the seventh of seven signs supporting his thesis that "Jesus is the Christ" (John 20:31). As each sign points forward a greater fulfillment, this sign points toward a greater resurrection—that of Jesus himself. (20:1-10) Such is perhaps the reason why John wrote more content, forty-four verses, on this sign than any other. The Lazarus narrative can be outlined in three headings, Jesus with: his disciples (v. 1-16); Mary and Martha (v. 17-37); and Lazarus (v. 38-44). The main point of the entire scene is that Jesus is "the resurrection and the life" (v. 25), which is the fifth of seven "I am" statements in John.



MEMORY VERSE

"Then Jesus told them plainly, 'Lazarus has died.'" - John 11:14

DEEPER DIVE

The "disciples" (v. 7, 8, 12, 16) are only mentioned in this section of the Lazarus narrative. Once Jesus arrives at Bethany they will be merely observant bystanders to the miracle that awaits. But they've yet to cross the Jordan and Jesus intends to teach them before they do. This passage centers around the trust that a disciple must place in Jesus as their leader and they as his follower. We see such trust displayed in three areas: his timing (v. 1-6), his traveling (v. 7-10) and his teaching (v. 11-16) In sum, he delays his departure to a dangerous place for a difficult mission. The main point: disciples trust the decisions of Jesus. When he moves, where he goes and what he says. They follow his lead.



TRUSTING JESUS IN THE DARK

Everyone in this passage knows more than the disciples. Mary and Martha know about Lazarus and their request for Jesus to visit. Jesus knows why he delays and what he will do when he arrives. The readers of John's Gospel know where this passage points. But the disciples are in the dark. They know very little. Their job is to simply trust Jesus. Such is the same for our lives. We know little of what the Lord knows about us, our current condition and the future that awaits. We simply trust and obey him. The disciples do not want to go to Judea, and certainly not for a dead man. For they fear they may die too. But they go anyway, because this much they believe: Jesus knows what he is doing. May that be the view of every disciple.

THINK IT THROUGH

1. Jesus does the unexpected. He "stayed" back (v. 6) instead of going to heal the sick. Why do you think Jesus delayed? What lesson(s) does this teach us about God's sovereignty and timing?
2. Jesus continues to display courage going into "Judea again" (v. 7-8), without any respect to his own life. How can Jesus do this? In what ways can we model a similar posture of living?
3. The phrase "fallen asleep" (v. 11) is a New Testament euphemism for death. Where else does Jesus use this phrase, and what other NT author uses it? What comfort does it bring to the Christian?

NEXT STEPS

- Study John's Gospel to define what it means to be Jesus' disciple. (See John 8:31-32; 13:34-35; 15:7-8)
- Read the account of Mary and Martha in Luke 10:38-42. Note the details that help interpret their roles in the Lazarus narrative.
- Read the other two resurrection accounts of Jesus' ministry. (Mark 5:35-43; Lk. 7:11-17) Mark their differences from that of Lazarus.
- Revisit God's answers to your prayers. In reference to the Lord's timing, see how they have lined up with your original requests.
- Study the apostle Thomas. He is recorded later in John (14:5; 20:24-28). Compare his comments across the Fourth Gospel.
- Consider the opportunities the Lord has provided for ministry and spiritual success. Take advantage of the day time and the light he provides (cf., John 11:9)