

I Am the Resurrection and the Life

John 11 || Pastor Matt Trexler || 19 July 2020

*To CARE for one another in truth and in love,
To GROW together as followers of Jesus,
To SERVE those God has placed in our path.
– CG Mission Statement*

Icebreaker: Wrestle with this quote by Joni Erickson Tada: “Suffering has prepared me for God. Suppose you had never in your life known any physical pain. How could you at all appreciate the scarred hands with which Christ will greet you? What if no one had ever hurt you deeply? How could you adequately express your gratefulness when you approach the throne of the Man of Sorrows? If you had never been embarrassed, if you had never felt ashamed, you could never begin to know just how much he loved you when He took your shameful sins and made them His. Don’t you see when we meet Him face to face, our suffering will have given us at least a tiny taste of what He went through to purchase our redemptions? We will appreciate him so much more. And our loyalty in those sufferings will give us something to offer Him in return. For what proof could we bring of our love and faithfulness if this life had left us totally unscarred? What shame would we feel if our Christianity had cost us nothing?”

Sermon Summary for John 11:17-27

Jesus, our LORD, looks out over the great battlefield of our lives – He sees death and sadness, anxiety and grief, violence – and He charges right into it. Because He is Life, He has come to end these things. His promise to us: “I am the Resurrection and the Life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die, and whoever lives by believing in me will never die.” So we must ask ourselves, just as He asks Martha: Do we believe this?

Christ could have moved swiftly to heal Lazarus, saving Mary and Martha from their grief. Yet Jesus waits. Why? Yes, Jesus gives and fulfills promises, but He never seems to act quickly. Instead, we’re called to wait on Him. Our Savior knows we need healing/relief, but what He wants for us is something far better, far greater: an unshakeable confidence in who He is. And He isn’t afraid to allow disappointment and suffering if it ultimately leads us to trust and rely on Him. God does some of His deepest healing (in ways imperceptible to us) in these dark times.

We tell ourselves we can’t be angry at God – that it’s somehow not spiritual or good. But the Bible shows again and again this isn’t true. If anything, Christ wants us to come to Him with these real, raw emotions. These are feelings born out of love and trust in God. The truth is: Jesus gets angry too. God rages (not at us but) against sin and pain and death, because it’s not the way it’s supposed to be. But He doesn’t just get angry; Jesus weeps. He is flooded with compassion for this world. So if we ever doubt God’s goodness, we only need to remember His tears.

Christ doesn’t let death have the last word; He does something about it, conclusively, on the cross. We need this to take root in our hearts – to find comfort and confidence in this. It’s why we can trust Him. Decaying relationships, despair, depression, guilt, shame, deep wounds of abuse – these can begin to be healed now in anticipation of the full healing that will one day come. Because what God has begun, He is going to finish. On the cross He conquers death so it wouldn’t conquer us. Death no longer gets the last word. Because Jesus has come to bring life.

Discussion Questions *(It’s better to wrestle deeply with a few good questions than to gloss over many.)*

- In this passage Jesus loves, Jesus waits, Jesus weeps, Jesus is angry at sin, pain and death. How does the event of John 11 change the way you want to respond to the personal difficulty of our current situation?
 - Discuss this thought: “Jesus isn’t afraid to allow us to experience sadness, disappointment, even suffering. We want immediate shortcuts; of course we do. Jesus just knows that sometimes that’s not the best way.”
 - What is the gift Jesus is offering in John 11:25-26? How does this affect our sadness and pain?
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Prayer: See this week’s prayer guide. Link [here](#).

Engage & Experience: Have you experienced growth during a time of sadness when it seemed God wasn’t responding? How does it help you pray for and support others who are going through a time of sorrow now?