

As you read...

It's one thing to talk about new life being given in a spiritual way. It's an entirely different thing to witness it being given in a physical way. Today, we join in with the disciples and the crowds as we watch Jesus raise His friend Lazarus back to life after he died.

This is easily one of the most profound moments in the Gospel of John. We are given witness to: Jesus' own description of death as a sleep (because we will wake up at the Resurrection), Jesus' experience of grief as he mourns the passing of a friend, the very real grief of Mary and Martha as they mourn the death of their brother, the testimony to the Resurrection of all believers on the Last Day, and the clear demonstration of Jesus' power over death.

As you read, consider the depth of both Jesus' words and the experiences of each person who was present at this moment:

- Consider the disciples' perspective as they fear what the leaders will do if Jesus performs one more miracle. After all, they are already angry enough with everything He has done.
- Consider Mary and Martha's perspective of knowing Jesus as friend and teacher turn to knowing Him as Lord and Messiah.
- Consider Jesus very real understanding of the human experience in the face of death and grief in this moment.

As you do, take in the journey you have been on so far in John's Gospel as well. Take that journey with you as you hear these powerful words of promise echoed today by our Lord:

“I am the resurrection and the *life*.”

*“That they may have *Life*”* Gospel of John Bible Reading Plan
Trinity Klein Lutheran Church, Spring, Texas

Read [John 11:1-44](#)

Lazarus Dies at Bethany

11 Now a man was sick, Lazarus from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ² Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair, and it was her brother Lazarus who was sick. ³ So the sisters sent a message to him: “Lord, the one you love is sick.”

⁴ When Jesus heard it, he said, “This sickness will not end in **death** but is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.” ⁵ Now Jesus loved Martha, her sister, and Lazarus. ⁶ So when he heard that he was sick, he stayed two more days in the place where he was. ⁷ Then after that, he said to the disciples, “Let’s go to Judea again.”

⁸ “Rabbi,” the disciples told him, “just now the Jews tried to stone you, and you’re going there again?”

⁹ “Aren’t there twelve hours in a day?” Jesus answered. “If anyone walks during the day, he doesn’t stumble, because he sees the light of this world. ¹⁰ But if anyone walks during the night, he does stumble, because the light is not in him.”

¹¹ He said this, and then he told them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen **asleep**, but I’m on my way to **wake** him up.”

¹² Then the disciples said to him, “Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will get well.”

¹³ Jesus, however, was speaking about his **death**, but they thought he was speaking about natural sleep. ¹⁴ So Jesus then told them plainly, “Lazarus has **died**. ¹⁵ I’m glad for you that I wasn’t there so that you may believe. But let’s go to him.”

¹⁶ Then Thomas (called “Twin”) said to his fellow disciples, “Let’s go too so that we may **die** with him.”

The Resurrection and the Life

¹⁷ When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. ¹⁸ Bethany was near Jerusalem (less than two miles away). ¹⁹ Many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother.

²⁰ As soon as Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him, but Mary remained seated in the house. ²¹ Then Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother wouldn’t have **died**. ²² Yet even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you.”

²³ “Your brother will rise again,” Jesus told her.

²⁴ Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”

²⁵ Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the **life**. The one who believes in me, even if he **dies**, will **live**. ²⁶ Everyone who **lives** and believes in me will never **die**. Do you believe this?”

²⁷ “Yes, Lord,” she told him, “I believe you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who comes into the world.”

Jesus Shares the Sorrow of Death

²⁸ Having said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, saying in private, “The Teacher is here and is calling for you.”

²⁹ As soon as Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to him. ³⁰ Jesus had not yet come into the village but was still in the place where Martha had met him. ³¹ The Jews who were with her in the house consoling her saw that Mary got up quickly and went out. They followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to cry there.

³² As soon as Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and told him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother wouldn’t have **died!**”

³³ When Jesus saw her crying, and the Jews who had come with her crying, he was deeply moved in his spirit and troubled. ³⁴ “Where have you put him?” he asked.

“Lord,” they told him, “come and see.”

³⁵ Jesus wept.

³⁶ So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!” ³⁷ But some of them said, “Couldn’t he who opened the blind man’s eyes also have kept this man from **dying?**”

The Seventh Sign: Raising Lazarus from the Dead

³⁸ Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. ³⁹ “Remove the stone,” Jesus said.

Martha, the dead man’s sister, told him, “Lord, there is already a stench because he has been dead four days.”

⁴⁰ Jesus said to her, “Didn’t I tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?”

*⁴¹ So they removed the stone. Then Jesus raised his eyes and said, “Father, I thank you that you heard me. ⁴² I know that you always hear me, but because of the crowd standing here I said this, so that they may believe you sent me.” ⁴³ After he said this, he shouted with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” ⁴⁴ The **dead** man came out bound hand and foot with linen strips and with his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unwrap him and let him go.”*

Questions

1. What do you notice about the reactions of the disciples, Mary and Martha, and the crowds in this moment? How are they the same? How are they different?
2. What does it mean for you that Jesus understands what it is like to lose someone that you love?

3. Who do you relate to most in this moment: the disciples, Mary, Martha, the crowds, Jesus, or Lazarus? Why?
4. Does this moment recall any life experiences you have had? What are those and why does this moment bring those to memory?

A moment to pray.

Jesus, Your power over death is incredible. Your compassion humbles me. Even when I don't show it, I know that You understand me and what I am going through. Thank You for those reminders when I have blind to see that. As You raised Lazarus, I trust that one day You will also raise me. Strengthen me with that promise and pour out Your life-giving Spirit in and through me until that time comes. In Your name. Amen.