



Life Guide

applying God's Word to life

November 3, 2024: All Saint's Day Saints Triumphant: Live Like You'll Live Forever

John 11:32-44

³²When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."

³³When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. ³⁴"Where have you laid him?" he asked.

"Come and see, Lord," they replied.

³⁵Jesus wept.

³⁶Then the Jews said, "See how he loved him!"

³⁷But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

³⁸Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. ³⁹"Take away the stone," he said.

"But, Lord," said Martha, the sister of the dead man, "by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days."

⁴⁰Then Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?"

⁴¹So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. ⁴²I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me."

⁴³When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" ⁴⁴The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face.

Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go."

1. Which beloved saint comes to your mind as we celebrate Saints Triumphant? How long has it been since he/she died?
My mom. She died at age 58, 6 years ago when I was 25. It felt way too soon. She never got to see any of my kids. But I wouldn't haul her back out of heaven just to do that.
2. It helps to read the first 31 verses of the chapter to get the full story. When Mary and Martha send word to Jesus that Lazarus is sick, he waits around two more days. How did they react? How would you have reacted to his timing?
Mary and Martha give Jesus a little dig when he finally gets there. "If you had been there, my brother would not have died." We certainly also get upset with God about what he allows to happen to us and the timing of his plan. "Why isn't he helping faster?" "If he cared about me, this wouldn't be happening."
3. Why was Jesus "glad" he wasn't there [with Lazarus]? See John 11:4,15).
Jesus wasn't glad to make Mary and Martha suffer grief, but he did say he was glad that he was not there to heal Lazarus before he died for the sake of the disciples and the others who were going to see him raise Lazarus from the dead. He was going to do this sign to reveal his glory as the Son of God. He wanted them all to believe in him.
4. Losing a loved one like Mary and Martha did, especially earlier than we expected, is a highly painful and emotional experience. How did Jesus show Mary and Martha how much he cared about them all?
Before the verses of our text pick up, Jesus comforted Martha with his word and promises. He pointed her to see that Lazarus would rise again. She maybe thought he was saying that as kind of a platitude, "Oh yeah, he'll rise at the end." But Jesus was trying to show her that he was the Resurrection and the Life right in front of her and he was going to raise Lazarus. Then when he got to Mary, and saw her weeping, and saw the tomb of Lazarus, he wept because he loved and cared about them all! Their grief was part of the reason for raising Lazarus.

5. For what reasons was Jesus deeply moved and troubled when he arrived at grave of Lazarus?

Jesus was moved and affected by Mary's weeping, and the others weeping, and by the sight of the grave of his dear friend Lazarus. Those are fairly obvious, but he's also troubled, even agitated by the weeping and mourning of the whole scene because it seems like no one is expecting him to be able to do anything about it. He had told them, "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it." But now that Lazarus was dead, they weren't trusting his message or his word to them anymore. They thought Lazarus was a goner for good.

6. How will remembering what happened with Jesus' timing in this story help you the next time you or your loved one is sick or dying?

Suffering patiently is so hard, but in order to do it, you have to equip yourself ahead of time. Otherwise, you may fly off the handle at God right away. God does not promise that we or our loved ones will not suffer, but what he does promise is to work it for the good of those who love him. That good often takes days, months, years to see it bloom out of a bad situation. Even just the thought of Jesus waiting around two days while Lazarus is dying may remind us that we have to be still and wait for him to bless us.

7. Jesus once told the story of a rich man and a beggar named Lazarus, (Luke 16:19-32--we're not sure if it's a parable or a real story). The rich man goes to hell. Lazarus goes to heaven. The rich man begs for Lazarus to be sent back to warn his brothers to repent. The punch line is: "They will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead." What do these two stories have to do with each other?

The rich man is begging for Lazarus to go and warn his brothers. But Father Abraham says, "No, they have Moses and the prophets. Let them listen to them." The rich man objects, "No, but if someone goes from the dead then they will repent." Abraham says, "If they do not listen to Moses and the

Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead." That point is proved true in this story because a real man named Lazarus is raised from the dead for all to see and many of the Jews and the Pharisees still would not believe in Jesus or repent. From this time on they plotted to kill both Jesus and Lazarus. They rejected even someone coming back from the dead.

8. In verse 4, Jesus promised, "This sickness will not end in death." How does this promise become true for every believer? How does this change the way we grieve?

Maybe it seemed like Jesus was being semantic, but he technically said it would not "end" in death, not that death wouldn't come into the picture. So Jesus goes and raises Lazarus from the dead and proves his word true. It didn't end in death. We also have to remember that Lazarus did die again at the end of his life, just like our loved ones die. But for every believe, the sickness of our frail human bodies will not end in death. Jesus will bring us through the door of death into life eternal. There on the Last Day, we will receive a glorified body with no more sickness or pain or death. Since this is the case, we grieve to say good bye to our believing loved ones, and rightly so, but we rejoice to know that are safe in the Savior's arms forever, living and reigning with him. In that sense, we grieve for ourselves, not for them.