# John: The Word Became Flesh - John 11:1-37

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Date: 17 March 2024

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[0:00] Go ahead and turn open to John chapter 11. We have got quite a few verses to get through this morning. We're going to be looking at verses 1 through 44. A well-known story. If you have grown up in the church, as we look at the life of Lazarus and God's miraculous work there.

So let me pray for our time and then we'll begin and spend some time in God's Word together. Let's pray. Father, we count it a privilege to gather this morning. Lord, to be reminded that you are a great God.
Jesus, that you are a marvelous Savior. That as far as the east is from the west, so far have you removed our transgressions from us. Lord, we're here. We're clean. We're forgiven if we have trusted in your perfect work of your death, burial and resurrection.
And so Lord, thank you that if you're in Christ, you're a new creation. Lord, I pray that this morning, if we've come here and we have been far from you this week, Lord, I pray that our gathering would be time to refresh our souls in your presence. Lord, it would be opportunity for repentance of sin. And Lord, we would leave here filled with your spirit ready to live out this next week for your glory and for the joy of others. And so Lord, whatever you want to accomplish in this time, we ask, we give you permission.
[1:31] Spirit of God, fill me and use your words to edify, to exhort, to change us. And might we hear from you today. It's in your name. We pray Jesus. Amen.

So we're going to continue in our study here in the Gospel of John. And we're getting to the section in our study where it's sort of a demarcation point. Many theologians break this Gospel up into two sections, chapters one through 12, known as the Book of Signs, and then chapters 13 to 21, known as the Book of Glory.
So the first 12 chapters, we're looking at these miracles, these signs that John chooses to record. And then the second half of the book really gets into the upper room discourse and looking at how Jesus is glorified through his death, burial and resurrection.
But we're kind of coming to that point at the end and we're going to look at the final sign, the final miracle that John records. He actually records of the about 40 miracles that are recorded in the Gospels.
John records seven of them. And just to refresh us, Jesus turning water into wine, miracle number one, the raising of the official sun, number two, the healing of the lame man at the pool of Bethesda, miracle number three, feeding of the 5,000, miracle number four, the calming of the storm, miracle number five, the healing of the blind man, miracle number six.
[3:00] And then finally, the seventh miracle that's actually unique to the Gospel of John, the raising of Lazarus. And of the seven signs that John records, and he loves that word sign as opposed to miracle, because sign points to something.

It's a testimony of the person that's doing it, not so much miracle, the power of it. And so he uses that word sign, but this is the most significant of the seven miracle signs that he records.
And I think there is not a miracle recorded in the Gospels that declare any louder that Jesus is more than a prophet than this one, okay?
That you can raise somebody from the grave. And in this story, we're going to actually get three images of God, three tableaus, pictures of who God is as we observe Jesus.
And I'm going to highlight those three images as we get to the second portion of this story together. But let's just get into it, because we've got some ground to cover.
[4:08] Beginning here in verse one, John writes, Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.

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It was Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill. Kind of a curious statement there about Mary, because that actually has not occurred yet.
It'll happen in chapter 12, but John's given us a little bit of a preview there. But right now, what's happening? So the timing of events, we have just finished going through the Feast of Dedication. We learned about that in chapter 10, verse 22. So that's the celebration of Hanukkah as we know it today. That would have happened in the wintertime. And so we're in between that and the springtime for the final Passover for Jesus.
And so there's just a few months left in Jesus' earthly ministry. And that's what I want us to sort of get our mind around. Where is Jesus? Well, Jesus has fled Jerusalem after the religious leaders wanted to arrest him.
[5:21] They tried to stone him. They called him a blasphemer, as you recall, when he declared, hey, I and the Father are one. We're not just one in purpose. We're one in essence.

And so the religious establishment did not like Jesus declaring himself to be God. So they're trying to kill him. And so Jesus has left Jerusalem, and it actually says in John chapter 10, verse 40, it says he went away across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptized at first.
And there he remained. So Jesus is just north of Jerusalem. Says he's on the east side of the Jordan River.
So he's in what is modern day country, the country of Jordan. And he is there. He's doing ministry. People are coming to faith in him.
Now concurrently, he's up north, then down south, just outside two miles east of Jerusalem. We meet a family. They live in this town called Bethany.
[6:27] And Bethany is a beautiful name. If you're named Bethany, if you're a female, the translation, however, it translates to be house of the poor.

So if you were maybe destitute, this was the place where you would live. Think of it maybe like Hilliard to Spokane kind of a thing. And so Bethany was just east of Jerusalem, just on the east slope of the Mount of Olives.
And there's a family that's living there. And we're introduced to them here. There's two sisters, Mary and Martha, and then a brother. Lazarus. And in the Hebrew, his name translates Eleazar, one of Aaron's sons.
And his name actually translates to God who helps. Does God help Lazarus? Big time. But what we find is these are adult siblings. There's no mention of parents.
And so we imagine that they are just, they're living as a family unit without parents. There's no mention of them. And what we know about this family is that Jesus is very close to them.
[7:32] This was a family that during his time in Jerusalem, he would often stay in Bethany. He would visit this family. Think of this as sort of Jesus' adopted earthly family, his home away from home.

And what we find out too later on in verse five, it actually says that Jesus loved this family. So very close friends of Jesus. And what we find out about this family is that present, there's a, they're facing a, just difficult circumstances.
The brother of the family. Lazarus, he's sick and he's dying. And it goes on here in verse three says, so the sisters sent to him, Jesus, saying, Lord, he whom you love is ill.
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.
So while Jesus is north closer to Galilee, he receives word, right? This, this friend of yours whom you love, he is, he's ill.
[8:49] He's sick. And so this is a desperate time for this family. And it may have been desperate not just because they love their brother, but it could have been that Lazarus was the, the main provider, the main protector for his sisters.

And so they're in a desperate place and they believe that Jesus can help. And so they cry out to him for help. And one of the things that we actually learn here related to illness is that sometimes suffering here, it's, it's for a purpose that we don't understand.
And it grows our theology of suffering. In fact, John writes this illness, it is for the glory of God. And that's huge.

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Illness has nothing to do with lack of faith. And there's a lot of teaching out there these days, some of it coming out of Reading, California with the Bethel movement and believe, you know, ascribing that your illness has something to do with the fact that you just lack faith.
And what we find out clearly from Scripture is, wait a second, this illness is for the glory of God. And in fact, some in life, I would suggest have been given a vocation of suffering.
[10:22] And somehow God gets glory in that. Probably a key text from the Old Testament that, that declares this from Exodus 411 says, who has made man's mouth?

Who made, who makes him mute or deaf or seen or blind? Is it not I, the Lord? And maybe that will grow your theology of suffering a bit that God has purpose in it.
Well, why, Jay? No, really, why? Why? Why have I been given this lot? Why have I been given this trial? This illness?
I don't know. I don't know. But I love the fact that someone does. I don't know.
I don't know why I had chronic fatigue. I don't know why some of my family have suffered with that. I don't know. Why was I sick at 12 and had a colostomy bag since I was 12 years old?
[11:31] I don't know. But God has purpose. And we have to rest in that because the alternative is, well, it's just random. How is that for an answer? How is that helpful? Not at all.

What I love is that God has purpose. He has superior knowledge. His ways are good. His eyesight is better than ours. He sees around corners. We don't.
And actually, he does more than just see around corners because it says in Isaiah 46-10, he declares it the end from the beginning. And so we have to rest in God's sovereignty.
And yet I would say in real time, we need to be careful in how we minister to one another. I don't know that the best thing for somebody who's suffering for you to go and just say, God's sovereign, suck it up, deal with it.
I think we have to be careful in how we minister because newsflash, Christians are not immune from saying dumb things to one another.
[12:38] And our charter in suffering, Paul says in Romans 12-15, he says, you know what? Weep with those who are weeping. Grieve with those who are grieving.

He says to the Galatians in Galatians 6-2, to bear one another's burdens. How do we do that? We do that by praying for one another, entering in through prayer, by encouraging one another. Sometimes we bear another's burden by just simply being present with them.
There is great comfort in not grieving or hurting alone. Well, let's continue on. Let's look at verses 5-7.
It says, now, Jesus loved Martha and her sister Lazarus. So when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was than after he said to the disciples, let us go to Judea again.
This is shocking, church, actually, that Jesus has these dear friends, close friends, they're crying out for help. Jesus, help us, our brother's ill.
[13:51] And how does Jesus respond? It says he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. It says, if God is dragging his feet, what in the world?

If I get a phone call from a child that says, Dad, I'm off the road, I'm in a ditch, I'm not going to respond with, well, you know, I'm out to lunch with Pastor Scott and man is a good sandwich. Can I call you back in about an hour? I'm going to get in my car immediately and go. We had occasion one Christmas where one of my daughters got too close to the candles and her hair actually went up and I didn't just sit there and go, man, that's, that's, whoa, that's a fire.
I mean, I immediately jumped into action. You would think this physique can't move like a stealth cat. Trust me, it was, it was incredible. The speed at which I jumped and lunged and covered her with a blanket to put out the fire.
It was a Christmas memory. We will never forget. And I just, I come to this, this section and it says Jesus delayed.
[15:11] He waited two more days and it's hard to sort of what in the world is going on here. And yet what I want to say to us here this morning, churches, there's great purpose in his slowness.

And we're going to get to see that as the story unfolds. Let's look at verse eight. John writes, the disciples said to him, Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone you.
And are you going there again? Jesus answered, are there not 12 hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble because he sees the light of this world. But if anyone walks in

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the night, he stumbles because the light is not in him.
I just want us to note here, Jesus is letting everyone down. He is disappointing everyone. This family, he delays by two days.
And now he's saying, hey, but we're going to go and we know that Bethany is like two miles just outside of Jerusalem. And his disciples are like, you know, Jesus Judea is a bad decision.
[16:24] And his response is, guys, I've got this. It's okay. In fact, he then speaks figuratively. He's like, it's still day. And what is he saying there?

Not that there's daylight. He's saying, hey, I'm not talking about physical light. He's talking about spiritual light. We're in the center of God's will here, guys. They can't harm me until God's appointed time.
We are good. We're good. I think there's a lesson there for us that's huge, right? If we walk in sin, we're prone to stumble.
But as we walk with the Lord, He's with us. I think we stumble because we veer away from the protection of our shepherd.
Look at the, an exhortation for us to stay close to the Lord. Let's not dabble in sin. Let's not reap the consequences of that. Let's stay close to the shepherd.
[17:31] Let's continue on, verse 11. 16, it says, after saying these things, he said to them, our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him. And the disciples said to him, Lord, if he's fallen asleep, he will recover.

Now, Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he meant taking rest in sleep. Then Jesus told them plainly, Lazarus has died.
And for your sake, I am glad that I was not there so that you may believe. But let us go to him. So Thomas called the twin, said to his fellow disciples, let us also go that we may die with him.
You just got to love Thomas, right? This is not a courage statement. This is not bravado. This is not, this is not Narnia, you know, for Aslan.
Let's go do this thing. No, this is Eor, right? Well, we're going to die. We're doomed.
[18:44] Let's go with Jesus to Jerusalem, right? So we have going here. Oh, well. But notice Jesus uses the metaphor of sleep to explain death.

And I think that's significant, right? That in death, we don't go into nothingness. There's always consciousness. And what I want us to be assured of here is Jesus is not promoting some doctrine of soul sleep by using that metaphor for death.
That somehow we're unconscious until his final return. That's not taught in Scripture. If you've come out of a Jehovah's Witness background or Seventh-day Adventist background, that's a doctrine that is taught.
But the Bible is clear on this subject. In fact, it says, Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5.8, he says, we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord.
So if you're in the body, if you're physically here, you're away from God. But if you're away from the physical body, you've died, you're home with the Lord. Additionally, Paul said in Philippians chapter 1, 23, he says, hey, I'm hard-pressed between the two. My desire is to depart, i.e., my desire is to die and be with Christ.
[20:07] And then he says, for that is far better. Death is not far better if we've just moved into unconsciousness until Christ returned. Paul would say, I'm going to just continue to minister on.

But I'm hard-pressed. I want to minister for the Lord, but I want to be with Him. And he says, you know what? If you depart, then you're with Him. Now, I mentioned in this story at the start that we've got three images of God that were given as we observe Jesus.
And this first image is really highlighted in this next section. We've already been observing it related to Jesus' timing. But let's read it together here, verses 17 to 27.
You guys are amazed at how quickly we're moving through this. I know, it's shocking. Verse 17, now, when Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days.
Bethany was near Jerusalem about two miles off, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother. So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, but Mary remained seated in the house.
[21:16] I just have to comment here. This is so Martha and this is so Mary. Is it not? Martha can't sit still. Mary's okay to be still, stays in the home. Martha's like, I'm going to intercept Jesus. And so she goes.

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Verse 21, Martha said to Jesus, Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever you ask from Him, from God, God will give you.
Jesus said to her, your brother will rise again. And Martha said to him, I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.
And Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live. And everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?
And she said to him, yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world.
[22:22] So Jesus arrives in Bethany. His friend Lazarus has been now in the grave for four days.

And typical within this culture was to bury the body as soon as possible on the same day if possible. Why? It's a hot climate. There's no way to keep the body cool. And so that was typical of the custom.
And the first image that I want to highlight of God or the tableau is that we see that our God is a God who waits. We serve a God who waits. And recall from verse six, it says, he stayed in the location where he was for two additional days.
And yet his timing is perfect. Just not to us.
In fact, Jesus, his slowness, it creates in the hearts of Mary and Martha, creates stress, anxiety, disappointment.
[23:42] And if you can relate to that perhaps, as you reflect on God's timing in your life.

Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. It's almost as if what are you going to do now, Jesus? If I call the ambulance and they don't arrive for a day and the person's on their deathbed, what good are they?
How much help are they going to be now? And I think Martha here, she's not actually trying to be disrespectful to Jesus. I think she's simply being honest with the ache in her heart. It's not wrong for Christians to grieve.
In fact, it's wrong not to grieve if the occasion calls for it. We already mentioned that from Romans 12, 15, right? Weep with those who weep. We've been given that charter. Grieve with those who grieve.
It's not wrong to grieve if the occasion calls for it. It's wrong not to grieve. But as believers, it's also wrong to grieve without hope if the person has died and they were in Christ.
[25:10] Paul said it this way in 1st Thessalonians 4.13, don't grieve like unbelievers who have no hope. So we grieve, right? God calls us to be human to, in fact, to grieve in the face of sorrow. It's not weakness. It's good.

But don't do it without hope if the person knew Christ. And the response that Jesus has for Martha here, he begins the console her and he says, hey, Martha, your brother, he's going to rise again. Okay, Martha? It's going to be okay. And she hears these words of Jesus and how does she interpret them? She's thinking Jesus is pointing to the future. She believes in a future resurrection. In fact, she says that because she says, I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day. Okay? She was a student of her Old Testament and resurrection is taught in the Old Testament.
Daniel 12, 2 says it this way, many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt.
[26:26] This is not a New Testament-like concept. It's throughout Scripture. We know however in the New Testament, resurrection is taught for those in Christ when we die.

Our spirit, our soul goes immediately to be with Jesus, to be apart from the bodies to be present with the Lord. But our physical body, it awaits future resurrection upon Christ's return.
But I want us to note that our spirit, our inner person goes to be with the Lord. That's why Jesus said to the thief on the cross in Luke 23, truly I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise. And yet there's a future resurrection for your body that you will await. But since Martha is thinking about future resurrection, Jesus makes some comments on this reality.
He said back in verse 25 and 6, he says, whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live. And everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Now how can these two things be true at the same time, right?
[27:31] That we can die and yet it says we shall never die. Do we die or do we never die? What do we do with that? Well, if we die physically in Jesus, it's a transition.

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You will live. Death is a doorway back to Eden, church. To be in the very presence of God. Or said differently, if you're in Christ, you will never die.
Spiritually. Again, death is this doorway back into God's presence. And the key, the thing that we need to take away here is that it's only those who have trusted in Christ in this life that will experience the resurrection unto life.
Amen? Only those who have trusted in Christ in this life. And I get it, there is this cultural pressure of equity in everything, including religion, that they're all viable and they're all equally true and it doesn't matter what you believe in yet.
Jesus says, I am the way. We're going to get that in John 14. I'm it. It's not fair.
[28:51] Well, Jesus makes the offer to everyone. In fact, that's John 3.16, whoever believes in him will not perish. So we need to be proclaimers of that message, despite the pressure that culture has on us.

Because if it's true, if that's a means of salvation, then I would not be out there suggesting that many surgeries will do. If you have a particular kind of cancer and the physician says, this is what you need to cure it, I wouldn't be out there going, well, you know, aspirin will do, you know, just go vegan and that'll do, you know.
I mean, many ways to cure this thing. There's one cure. You want that answer. Well, back to this image of the God who waits and I want to maybe qualify this statement.
Our God is a God who actively waits. He actively waits. He's not, he's not coasting.
Colossians 117 says he actually upholds all things by the power of his will. He's active all the time.
[30:09] He's like parents of twins. Got a lot to say there, but no time. He'll be for a therapy session later. You can listen to me.

Jesus is active all the time, but he's actively waiting. And according to Martha and Mary, yet his waiting, it stinks. His timing's off.
Yet according to God, it's perfect. And I think when we come to this, this, this truth that God actively waits, we love this picture of God and we hate it at the same time.
Right. We, we actually, we, we love that God is patient when it comes to maybe dealing with our sin, his forbearance when we're in a season of rebellion. We love it. Right.
But then when it comes to hearing God waiting for an answer, it can be difficult. I didn't get the answer I wanted. I'm still waiting. I have expectations about life and God.
[31:09] When are you going to do the thing I'm asking of you? We're just impatient people living in an impatient world. And so if God doesn't immediately act, what happens?

We take offense. We think maybe it's a lack of concern on God's part. Or worse, we decide that we're going to impugn his character. He's not actually good.
Or we go even further and we just say he doesn't even exist, period. I want us to note a couple of things that occur because of God's slowness and his timing in this narrative.
Okay. He waits two days. The travel down to Bethany would have been probably about two days, four days. Lazarus has been buried now for four days.
Why is this timing impeccable on God's part? Because in this day, there was a superstition that was present. A Jewish idea. It was not good theology, but it was a superstition of the day.
[32:12] Some of the rabbis taught this and they believed that the spirit of a dead person had opportunity to reunite with the body within three days of death.

So the person who had died was not really dead, dead. There was still like a little period of, you know, probation. They might come back.
And so Jesus, his delay gives enough time for there to be no question about the authenticity and power of the miracle.
This individual, Lazarus, he is dead, dead. And so we see purpose even when it's hard to perceive in the moment here. And Jesus knew that.
Secondly, his slowness allowed for a crowd of people to be present and able to then observe this miracle. And in the first century, the burial process, the day of death, the person's buried and then there's seven days of official grieving and the home would have become crowded.
[33:15] And it was because in verse 19 it says, many of the Jews had come to console this family. So I love the image. These people, they were coming. They were behaving well. They're grieving with those who grieve. They're coming to support the family.

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They're there at a memorial service and Jesus completely ruins it. It's a wonderful scene. It's brilliant. I mean, no one saw this coming. Should we wear black? Let's wear black. We wore the wrong color. What in the world?
The God of Providence, hard at work. Even when we are forced to wait. Amen.
Let's continue on. Look at verse 28. When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary saying in private, the teacher is here and is calling for you. And when she heard it, she rose quickly and went to him.
Now Jesus did not yet come into the village but was still in the place where Martha had met him. And when the Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary rise quickly to go out, they followed her.
[34:22] Supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there. Now 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.

When Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled. And he said, where have you laid him? And they said to him, Lord, come and see.
Verse 35. You start memorizing scripture. Here it is. Jesus wept. We got it.
So the Jews said, see how he loved him. But some of them said, could not he who opened the eyes of the blind also have kept this man from dying? Well, of course he could. If he hadn't delayed two days, perhaps.
But he delayed because he had something else in mind. Following this exchange between Jesus and Martha, OK, Martha heads back home, tells her sister quietly that Jesus has arrived, maybe so that Mary could have some time with Jesus, some face time with him without the crowd.
[35:32] She expresses some disappointment the same as her sister, Lord, who had been here, my brother wouldn't have died. I want us to just note one of the more amazing realities of God from this narrative.

And it's this about God. God feels emotion. He feels emotions. I think that's important because as a church, we strive to have very good theology, sound doctrine.
But it's not devoid of life. God feels it's both head and its heart. God feels and you see it here.
It says when Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews who had come with her were also weeping, it says he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled. How can that be?
God is not responder. God is author. In his sovereignty, how does this then work?
[36:42] I don't know. I don't know. But I want us to consider the author can weep as he reads the epic born from his own pen.

And you know this for those of you that have a film that you watch and rewatch that makes you cry every time. If you need that cry, you just throw that film on and you're like, oh, I'm going to get a cry. And then if you don't, you feel cheated because you know, right? Maybe that's a good question for some of you. You want to get to know one another? What's that one film that makes you cry? And I want us to think that maybe that's like God. He can rewatch something that he has already sovereignly determined and yet feel.
He can be swept up loving the characters, being present there in that, even though he is the author. I think there's something to that.
And there's a couple examples in here of God feeling emotions. We see it here first in verse 33. He says he was deeply moved in his spirit. It's an interesting phrase here to be deeply moved in a spirit.
[37:51] It's like it actually you could translate he was snorting like a horse, like an angry horse. It's an interesting phrase, but it's this concept of anger.

Like Jesus is feeling anger here. He's moved in his spirit and it's towards anger. And what, what, who is he angry at? Is he angry at Mary? No, is he angry at Martha?
No, Lazarus? No, I propose to us church that he's angry at death. The fallen state of how far from Eden his creation is enduring.
Jesus hates sin. He hates death. God is not neutral towards death. And in fact, Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 15-26 where he says the last enemy death is destroyed.
So death is described as what? An enemy, an enemy. Jesus hates the devastation it brings upon his friends.

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[38:57] And I think that anger in his spirit is a recognition that things are not the way they're supposed to be church. When God created the heavens and the earth, he said what?

It's very good when he was done before sin entered and death followed. So we see that he was deeply moved. Additionally, it says he wept.
Jesus wept. So the second image of God from the story is we have a God who actively waits. We also serve a God who weeps.
And if you guys first remember the time perhaps you saw your father cry. Maybe some of you have a dad and you never saw him cry, right? Because dads don't cry, don't cry.
The older you get, the softer you get, you cry at everything. And I am now crying at the horse movies my wife forces me to watch. I mean, see Biscuit, I'm there with her, right?
[40:00] It shakes you when you see dad cry. Here, God is crying. He's crying. He's angry at death. He's aching for his friends as they grieve, even knowing what is about to occur.

So interesting because Isaiah calls Jesus a man of sorrows, you know, man of sorrows. God created a world that was very good, but as a result of our rebellion, it is now very broken.
And these tears of Jesus, they tell us something important about God. That our God is not a God that has avoided suffering.
That he's actually willing to ache. And there's no better like proclamation of the fact that God was willing to suffer an ache than the cross. We're going to celebrate that in a couple of weeks with Easter.
Our God is very different than any God that is proposed out there. You think about God, the God of the Bible, Yahweh versus Allah of the Quran. Very different pictures.
[41:17] In fact, our God, as he weeps, he's showing that he is near to us, that he's imminent, that he's close, that he's involved. In the sacred writings, the Quran, the only verse describing Allah's nearness, his imminent, is Surah 50, verse 16, that says, Allah is as close as your jugular.

That's not the God of the Bible. Very different picture of God. Our God is a God who is willing to weep.
But he didn't just stop there. Let's look at 38 to the end of our text. It says, then Jesus deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a grave and a stone lay against it. Jesus 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 for days. And Jesus said to her, did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?
So they took away the stone and Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I 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.
[42:35] When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, Lazarus, come out. The man who had died came out his hands and feet bound with linen strips and his face wrapped with a cloth.

And Jesus said to them, unbind him and let him go. So Jesus is now with the family, he's with the crowd, he's at the burial place.
It would have been a hollowed out cave, maybe 10 foot square stone slab covering the entrance off and the stone could be rolled. And there would be a place in the tomb to lay the body horizontally. And typically in this culture, the body was left in this condition for a year. Then the bones placed in a burial box or an ossuary made of limestone and then placed in a different area of the tomb.
But at this point, four days had passed and Jesus took away the stone. And Martha, she's concerned, she's like, hey, Jesus, it's going to stink.
[43:49] We don't embalm like the Egyptians do. There's going to be an odor. She has no concept. I want us to see it. She has no concept of the miracle about to take place. I love her faith. It's in a future resurrection. She has no concept about what's about to take place.

And then Jesus prays out loud on account of the people standing around that they could believe that the Father had sent him. And I love that the miracle is not for entertainment. It's for gospel advancement.
I think there's something there when we talk about God's work in our life. We need to name Jesus. Has He delivered you from something? Has He freed you from an addiction? Then you name Him because you're pointing to Him as the power of God in your life.

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And so Jesus, when He does miracles, is like, this is from the Lord. And He boldly claims out here, Lazarus, come out.
And He comes out. And I'm sure you're going to be just weirded out, dumbfounded, shocked.
[45:06] Is He floating? Is He hopping? He's bound. No idea. But I'm sure you're just, you're speechless. You're speechless.

And we're given this final image of God here that we serve a God who actively waits, who weeps. But He goes in beyond and He's a God who resurrects. Amen?
And why is this miracle so important in the gospel writing of John? Because it demonstrates that Jesus has the horsepower to make good on what He has promised to us, church.
That whoever believes will not perish but have everlasting life. Church, if Jesus could raise Lazarus on this day, then He has the power to rescue all of us from death as well. Amen?
He has the horsepower. He's demonstrated that. You don't go to the surgeon who, his training is he played the game of operation as a kid and didn't hit the buzzer, and he's ready to do a heart transplant on you. That would be idiotic.
[46:20] Or you go to the guy and say, hey, could you build a rocket because as a kid he played with tinker toys. You're looking for somebody who has like the resume to pull off the job.

Jesus raised a man from the grave. That's good news for us, church, because our hope in future resurrection is not wishful thinking.
It's the reality of how things are, which means there's a promise of resurrection and there's a promise of reunion. Reunion. This morning I was texting in class.
Sorry, Sushil. But I was texting a friend of mine who's a pastor in Seattle who lost his older sister. Gosh, about, could be coming on 20 years now.
And he lost her on St. Patrick's Day today. And it was God's call into ministry. But I just sent him a text. I said, hey, David, reunion brother, it's assured.
[47:24] I get to preach on Lazarus today. Guys, reunion. It's a blessed hope. And Jesus says in verse 25, I am the resurrection in the life.

I am the resurrection of life. This fifth I am statement of Jesus. And you know what? You know what's critical here? Our theology is not our savior. We need sound doctrine.
We need to understand clearly what the gospel is, but we're trusting not in a set of facts. We're trusting in a person. We're trusting in Jesus, right? He says, I am the resurrection.
And so the question for all of us this morning is, are you connected to the person of Jesus? Have you trusted Jesus?
Have you talked to him about your need of rescue and his power to forgive you of very real sins committed?
[48:27] You want to defy death? Jesus already has. And we have to be connected to him. And I love what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15, 55, he says, oh death, where is your sting?

That last enemy has been destroyed, church. And I think Jesus on this day, before his own crucifixion resurrection demonstrates, I can resurrect, but I can resurrect others as well.
Beautiful. How are we saved? Trust in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved and you will live forever. Bank on it. I'll end with the words of D.L. Moody, who Billy Graham then also had recited upon his death.
But back in 1900 in his autobiography, this is what D.L. Moody wrote. He said, someday you will hear in the paper that D.L. Moody of East Northfield is dead.
Don't you believe a word of it? In that moment I shall be more alive than I am now. And as we read in Psalm 16, Melissa read for us, and in his presence, our pleasure is forevermore. Amen? That's our hope.
[49:40] Father, thank you for time together. Lord, thank you for this preview even as we look forward to Easter in a couple weeks. Lord, thank you for the timing of that.

We saw you have power to resurrect from the grave. And Lord, thank you for these images, helping us understand you better, that you're actively waiting and it's just a reminder that your timing is perfect.
Help us to rest in that. Lord, would you give us perfect peace as we dwell with you, as we draw near to you, that Lord maybe there is unmet expectation, there's hopes, there's aspirations, there's things we desire. Lord, let us rest in your goodness and your sovereignty and your power today.

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Would you provide peace that surpasses just maybe the longing that we experience, that little ache each day? Let us rest in that, that your timing is perfect.
And you even demonstrated here in this story. And Lord, thank you that you ache, that you weep, but Lord, thank you that you did something about it.
[50:45] Lord, that you have entered in and dealt with the final enemy. Lord, thank you that for those in Christ, that death is a transition home, it's a doorway into your presence. Lord, it almost seems too good to be true, and yet you have said that this is how it is, and we will rest that you are a God that only tells the truth.

Lord, we love you, we thank you for our time together in Jesus' name, and all that people said. Amen.

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