

# In His Time

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- [ 0 : 00 ]     Now let us turn in our Bibles to the New Testament to the Gospel of John chapter 11.
- The Gospel of John chapter 11 and we're going to read the first 46 verses. John 11 verse 1.
- Now a certain man was sick named Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.
- It was that Martha which anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. Therefore his sister sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.
- When Jesus heard that he said, this sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.
- [ 1 : 11 ]     Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. When he had heard, therefore, that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.
- Then, after that, saith he to his disciples, let us go into Judea again. His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee, and goest thou further again?
- Jesus answered, are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbles not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.
- These things said he, and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth. But I go that I may awake him out of sleep.
- Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. Howbeit Jesus spake of his death.
- [ 2 : 34 ]     But they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.
- And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there. To the intent you may believe. Nevertheless, let us go unto him.
- Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow disciples, Let us go also, that we may die with him. Then when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already.
- Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off. And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary to comfort them concerning their brother.
- Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him. But Mary sat still in the house.
- [ 3 : 43 ]     Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.
- Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha said unto him, I know that he'll rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.

And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God, which should come into the world.

And when she had so said, she went her way and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come and calleth for thee. As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly and came unto him.

[ 5 : 00 ] Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him. The Jews then, which were with her in the house and comforted her, when they saw Mary, as she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there.

Then, when Mary was come, where Jesus was and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping, which came with her, he groaned in the spirit and was troubled, and said, Where have you laid him?

They said unto him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept. Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him.

And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused it? Even this man should not have died. Jesus therefore again, groaning in himself, cometh to the grave.

[ 6 : 23 ] There was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. Jesus said, Take away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh, for he's been dead four days.

Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God. Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was.

And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always.

But because of the people which stand by, I said it, that they may believe, that thou hast sent me.

And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead, came forth, bound hand and foot, with grave clothes.

[ 7 : 38 ] And his face was bound about, with a napkin. Jesus saith unto him, Listen, and let him go. Then, many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.

But, some of them went their ways, to the Pharisees, and told them, what things, Jesus, had done.

And may God bless to us, the very reading, of his own word. We sing once more to God's praise, on this Scottish altar.

This time, Psalm 86. And we sing verses, marked one to five, four stanzas. Five verses, four stanzas.

Psalm 86. O Lord, do thou bow down thine ear, and hear me graciously, because I sore afflicted am, and I'm in poverty.

[ 8 : 46 ] We go down to verse 5. For thou art gracious, O Lord, and ready to forgive, and rich in mercy, all that call upon thee, to relieve.

Psalm 86, verses 1 to 5. O Lord, O Lord, do the open, down my ear, and hear me get just thee, because I so, may be till Sigh.

up there. Because I mor murders, and my soul, thy ill fisheries, every tapping on me.

O now, my God, thy sacred seal, that puts his trust in me.

Sit down to thee, thy daily life, be merciful to me.

[ 10 : 31 ] Rejoice thyself, my soul, O Lord, I lift my soul to thee.

For thou art rich, dear God, O Lord, I lift his dear, O dear.

And rich, dear God, I come upon thee to me.

Let's turn in our Bibles to the passage of God's word which we read in the Gospel of John, chapter 11.

And while I want to refer to much which we read, let's just read again verse 44. The Gospel of John, chapter 11, verse 44.

[ 11 : 57 ] And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes.

And his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto him, loose him and let him go.

The prelude, the prelude to this miracle is that there is mounting opposition against Christ for performing a miracle in opening the eyes of a man born blind.

Think of it. Think of it. Opposition to someone that can open the eyes of a man born blind.

Does that not teach us the natural enmity and the natural man against Christ? He does good.

[ 13 : 09 ] He does good. And mounting opposition against him is the result. Isn't sin foolish?

Apart from anything else? To be against Christ is foolishness beyond words. That's the prelude to this miracle.

What's the sequel?

Do they say, oh, we must have been wrong, been against them. Eh? No. What is the natural man? How do they react?

This man must die. A man that can open the eyes of someone born blind. A man that can raise the dead.

[ 14 : 26 ] He must die. Do you see how evil, not just how foolish, but how evil sin is.

They want this man that goes about doing good to die. And the quicker the better. How sad. How sad.

How sad. Albeit the response was blasphemy. Albeit the response was hatred.

Albeit the response was a murderous spirit. God was glorified. Verse 4 The Son of God might be glorified Sorry, this sickness is not unto death but for the glory of God that the Son of God might be glorified.

God's glory. Verse 40 Jesus saith unto Said I not unto thee that if thou wouldst believe thou wouldst see What? The glory of God.

[ 15 : 38 ] Albeit men and devils do their utmost to get rid of Christ God is glorified.

And my friend the most important thing in the universe is the glory of God on earth. So you must ask what glorifies God?

Most of you have been brought up in the catechism shorter catechism and will know the first question what is man's chief end? Meaning what's the chief purpose?

The main reason why human beings are on earth? And the answer is man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.

So if you're not very sure are you a Christian or not ask yourself this question can you enjoy God?

[ 16 : 45 ] my friend you can be made to worship God you can be made to go to church you can be made to read the Bible you can be made to pray that's not the question here's the question do you enjoy it?

can you enjoy it? Can you enjoy God? Listen if you're not a Christian you do not know why you were born you don't know why you're existing and you're miserably failing to fulfill the very purpose you exist if you don't enjoy God.

got it? What glorifies God? They say there's only two things if you read the Bible there's only two things that amazed Christ walking on this earth God walking on the earth two things he was astonished at one great faith great he marveled at their faith and tragically tragically the other end of the extreme made him marvel he marveled because of their unbelief how can they see such things and not believe it amazed the son of God that unbelief was so powerful so deadly so evil but here he's amazed here he's encouraged because he sees a display of great faith

Martha and Mary in their despondency and their death show great faith he has to wait four days before their saviour their hero Christ acts we have to learn faith and patience go together is it not natural for you and I when we pray and ask God to do something for us we expect instant instant reaction don't we nothing happens in a day or two you didn't hear faith and patience go together we're sanctified our faith grows by having to wait for God to answer isn't this a challenge of faith

Lazarus dies despite Jesus saying this sickness is not unto death that's a challenge for faith isn't that a challenge for faith God was glorified through their faith whether Lazarus was resurrected or not they trusted Christ Christ was their saviour some way somehow they knew it would work for good but they trusted Christ their faith was in him they loved him before he was resurrected they still went to him they still poured their heart out to them although their hearts were broken although things were happening they could not understand yet their heart went out to them in faith their friend

[ 20 : 55 ] Jesus they send him word to come and heal him before he dies and Jesus waits a further two days a further two days he waits that's testing that's patience your heart's broken he doesn't come immediately if they were wondering if Jesus heard their first prayer now they must be wondering if he cares he's obviously heard it but he intentionally delays two days Jesus says this sickness is not unto death and the next thing Lazarus dies our bible we've read it clearly he died a couple of lessons there surely is or not god's word may often seem to contradict but only for a while on close examination it's not god's word cannot contradict itself god's word cannot be true but it may appear for a while to be untrue we learn that from this something else we learn from this in the ways of god in the ways of god things often get worse before they get better you remember moises when god called moises to lead the children of israel out of egypt out of the oppression you remember moises started arguing with god saying i'm the wrong person look i don't have that gift that i don't have that talent lord you've got the wrong man i'm not the man to lead i'm 80 to start off with i'm 80 but look i'm not a good speaker i'm not a politician i can't sway people to follow me but of course as always god won and

Moses has to lead the people out he has to go into pharaoh and say let my people go what happens when he obeyed what happened the people Moses just laughed at him and Moses made the oppression of the Israelites worse he said you'll produce the same amount of bricks without straw can you hear Moses can you hear Moses at worship that night lord i told you i'm the wrong man they're not listening to me but people are not listening to me and pharaoh's not listening to me you see it's the way of faith it's the way of god it's the way god works it's the way god stretches faith before things get better before your prayers answered there's an apparent contradiction there's a delay at least things often get worse before they get better but i want i want primarily actually to look at the at four different responses actually four different responses to death here they're they're so devastated at the death of this brotherly loved lazarus first of all in verse 16 the response of thomas you all heard of him doubting thomas well here he is come let's also die with them sheer pessimism everything's finished let's just all die together learn this will you despair and hopelessness is never a virtue never a grace yes things can be bad yes things can be very very bad but as long as you're out of hell there's never a situation that is hopeless less oh there might be no hope in you but there's hope in

Christ Christ and God are in charge of providence as long as you are out of hell there's hope but do listen since I've mentioned it one of the awfulest things I've heard about hell I don't like preaching about hell as you probably know by now but here's one thing about hell I never forgot I'll never forget the minister saying in hell there's not even a false hope imagine not even a false hope in hell my friend you're out of hell there's hope and despair hope less less is never a grace never a virtue if you're out of hell and we're all out of hell blessed be the name of

God Christ died for sinners who deserve to be there and he took their hell for them so there is hope for the worst out of hell and I think we should learn from the pessimism of doubting Thomas that for the Christian see Lazarus was a Christian for a Christian death is not the worst possible scenario for a Christian death is not the worst possible scenario for a Christian it's far worse for a Christian to be backsliding it's far worse than death for a Christian to commit a new serious sin that's bad news that's bad news it's worse news than death to hear of a

Christian denying the faith that's far worse than death for the Christian you know perfectly well you've heard it you must have used it sudden death for the Christian for the Christian only sudden death is sudden glory of course we've lost a friend of course we've lost a praying partner in the death of a Christian of course the sad elements but it's not the worst possible scenario there's worse things than death there's denying God there's evil there's sin the one criterion by which we measure the significance of an event is does it glorify God that's the one question well that's doubting Thomas's reaction what about

[ 29 : 32 ] Martha and Mary's reaction to the bad news well I think we can say it's basically just non-acceptance that's often people's response to death I can't believe it it's not true I'll wake up in the morning and it'll all be a dream well that's natural but we're looking for what's spiritual if only you had been here this wouldn't have happened Martha and Mary basically say that if only if only listen when bad news comes if only's never bring healing if only's don't bring healing we have to remember God is in control God knows what he's doing

God's timing is actually quite good we might at the present feel it so inconvenient but in the broader picture God knows what he's doing nothing is meaningless God has a purpose and we have to learn to accept God is in control God has a purpose everything is going according to God's plan and God's plan is good that is good in the last analysis good finally think about a blessing what is a real blessing by definition a real blessing must be permanent think of it if this blessing you've got if this great thing you've got oh only lasting a couple of years it's gone it's only a blessing for two years any temporary blessing is not like the blessing of God because the gifts and the calling and the blessings of God are without him changing his mind what a tremendous comfort that is to the

Christian God doesn't change his mind boy we let him down don't we Christian brothers and sisters we let him down but he doesn't change his mind I often think I used to I don't know if I've mentioned it before it's worth being in again last book of the Old Testament Malachi 3:6 I'm sure that's what it is for I am the Lord I change not therefore you sons of Jacob are not consumed that verse used to terrify me then I began to try and understand it what wonderful good news therefore you sons of Jacob are not consumed it's as if God is saying to them look you sons of Jacob you jolly well deserve to be consumed instantly but because

I am God you're not consumed because I do not change my mind because you've behaved miserably as a Christian God doesn't change his mind the gifts and the calling of God are without his change of mind that's good news what a tremendous thing it is to be a Christian we're the only ones you know that can really put our head in the pillow and sleep yes I've let my Lord down and I'm ashamed of myself but God's the same the gifts the blessings of God are without change of mind the crowd what's their response verse 37 well if Thomas's attitude is negative if Martha and Mary's attitude is non acceptance

I think we can safely say the crowd's attitude is cynicism cynical could not this man that's supposed to have all this power this man that's supposed to be so compassionate this man that could easily have healed him this man that you hero could he not have stopped it if he's so great if he's so loving that's cynicism that's cynical listen one of the first steps in healing now listen you cannot possibly get through this world without trials without trouble man is born into trouble as the sparks fly upward you can't avoid trouble there are hard times so we've got to learn how do we get healing in hard times the first step in healing is accepting

[ 35 : 19 ] God has the right to do what has happened he has that right after all he made the world he made the world it's his world it's not your world it's not my world it's not the church's world it's God's he has the right to do what he wishes with his world he has he has the right here's the way to healing let God be God you've heard of human rights have we not human rights you've heard of animal rights haven't you tell me when did you last hear of divine rights hmm we're prepared to give them to the animals what about

God who created all things for himself I always remember the first time I tried witnessing what a mess I made of it I was in business and was so grateful to God that we went down to try and get a contract and we got it within 10 minutes I'm delighted so pleased and I said oh Lord I must thank you I'm going to thank you so I'll try witnessing man what a mess I made I had no earthly idea how I started but I managed to say to my new client new customer I can't I can't actually remember what I said but I do I'll never forget his reply he says look I was I was very young I was only early 20s he says look sonny boy when you've seen what I've seen in this world you won't believe in a God who would let this tragedy happen to me I've had this tragedy in my life and I can't believe in a

God that would let that happen to me I hadn't a clue how to reply and I went home and I asked someone older than me if it said what would you have said oh he said I would have just said I don't know why more of that doesn't happen I mean the way we treat God if he happens to exist the way we treat God if he happens to exist what would you do it doesn't it it's amazing he made us so that we would honor him on earth we don't even believe if he exists or not but we're going to please ourselves we're going to do our own thing what would you do has God not got the right divine rights we're all for human rights we're all for animal rights how about divine rights our time's up time to go right the example

Christ how does he support what's his attitude to death what's his attitude to sorrow to tragedy to trauma read it all there in one verse he groaned he was troubled and he wept listen Jesus is the perfect human being perfect never sinned he can weep he can weep it's right to weep when you're sad I'll tell you what's not right refusing to be comforted that's what's wrong of course there's sad things of course it's natural and human at gravesides to weep and in death to be sorrowful there's times of mourning in the bible but refusing to be comforted they're refusing to let god be god that's the sin that's what's wrong now listen if the son of god the perfect human being the man who never sinned if Jesus cannot escape weeping in this world how do you expect to get through this life without weeping there are sorrowful times there's no shame in weeping perfectly human to weep Jesus was called the man of sorrows the one that was acquainted with grief and what did he do then he was genuinely sorry troubled and he wept he loved how he loved Lazarus they all said how he really loved them well he prays he prays what does he pray for god's glory that's essential it doesn't it's not verbatim what he pray but the long and the short of it is he prays for god's glory you see as we said at the beginning most significant factor in any event was is god glorified through this verse 41 he prays at this grave site where there's so much sadness so much sorrow i thank thee i thank thee eh what's he thanking god for in this time of sorrow he's thanking god if you read it carefully that his prayer back in bethany four days ago was heard it's been heard now four days later i thank you that when verse 41 isn't it they took and Jesus lifted up his eyes father i thank thee that thou hast heard me you heard my prayer way back at the beginning for help for support for strength for your glory and it's now been answered i couldn't understand what what to make first of all verse 42 i said this for the sake of those standing by verse 42 but because of the people which stand by i said it for their sake what's what's what's what do you mean by it well he's just saying this basically that those standing by may believe

he said it for their sake that they might believe you see we're back to the really the beginning the whole context of these last few chapters in John that we've been looking at it's all over the identity of Christ we today it's a very popular thing this identity isn't it and is there any wonder we have a politician in parliament who says they can't define what a woman is you have hordes of young people about problems with identity listen if we do not believe we were born made in the image of god what else can we have but problems of identity if you do not believe we're created in the image of god of course you'll have problems of course you'll be changing your mind hundreds thousands of options the first sin the root sin and belief in god the identity and the whole root the whole context of these last few chapters has been the Jews would not accept Jesus was the son of god they would not accept he was the saviour of the world he would not accept he was a messiah they would not accept who he said he was and Jesus says for the sake of those standing by i said this and what did god say well god i thank thee you've heard me you see they said you've no relationship with god the father but for the sake of those standing by that they might believe and he said rise from the grave now we're back to him proving yet again he was who he said he was the son of god the saviour of the world that can forgive sin so our time's up if this whole story ended at verse 42 it was all so negative but Jesus gives three words three words Lazarus come forth three words the whole picture changes it's all such a wonderful story it's all so god glorified three words three words from Jesus maybe you're here today so now but god hasn't spoken three words to me i beg your pardon god hasn't spoken three words to you i beg your pardon what's that in front of you what's this book far more than three words have you read it have you studied it do you believe it if not you're no better than the pharisees you're no better than the crowd you're no better than those who hate Jesus and are heading for a lost eternity but hear the word of Christ come unto me come to me all ye that labor and are heavy laden i'll give you rest i'll give you peace i'll give you what you're looking for but you must turn to me you must trust in me may god the holy spirit make his word effectual to every one of us let's pray

[ 46 : 31 ] our father in heaven be pleased to take the things of christ and to make them ours keep us in your love keep us in your fear wash all our sins away in the blood of christ for we pray all in his name alone amen we conclude by singing the last singing more verses in psalm 86 in the scottish psalter verses 10 to 13 psalm 86 in the scottish psalter at verse 10 because thou art exceeding great and works by thee are done which are to be admired and thou art god thyself alone and we sing to verse 13 because thy mercy toward me in greatness doth excel and thou delivered hast my soul out from the lowest hell psalm 86 verses 10 to 13 psalm 86 psalm 86 psalm 86 psalm 86 psalm 86 psalm 86 psalm 86 psalm 86 psalm 86 psalm 86 museum has had heard millions psalm 86 psalm 87 psalm 86 psalm 87 psalm 83 psalm 86 psalm ■■■ed

Oh Oh Oh, Lord, my God, will on my heart do it.

I will hear the wind, all I'm a glory, Lord, my love, I'll strive.

I come to thy name always, because thy mercy downward me, and in the sound of exile.

Oh, sof na'er has my soul, are from my death, O level.

[ 49 : 50 ] The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all now and forevermore.

Amen.