

**ROAD TO EASTER**  
**THE DEATH OF LAZARUS**

Monday, February 19

Reading: John 11:1-13

**John 11:11** *After He had said this, He went on to tell them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up."*

After His last confrontation with the religious leaders in Jerusalem, Jesus left to minister across the Jordan in the province of Perea (cf. Luke 13:22 – 17:10). It is here that He receives news of the illness of His friend. We first meet Mary and Martha in Luke 10:38-42. They were very close friends of Jesus. In fact, John states that Jesus loved them. Mary is identified by her actions that will not be recorded until the next chapter. John is probably assuming that she is known for this from the previous gospels (Matthew 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9).

Jesus expresses two reasons for the sudden sickness and death of Lazarus. First, like the man born blind, Lazarus' death would end by bringing glory to God. Jesus' delay was not out of lack of concern. It was part of God's plan. In Jewish thought, a spirit hovered around the body for three days before permanently departing. By waiting for the fourth day, Jesus was proving that this was no trick or mere resuscitation. Lazarus was irreversibly dead.

The second reason was to strengthen the disciple's faith. Bethany was less than 2 miles from Jerusalem where the leaders had tried to kill Jesus on His last visit. In fact, Thomas seems to believe Jesus' death is inevitable (see 11:16). But Jesus knew this was the will of God and so there was no danger in going to His friend. The disciples needed to trust that Jesus knew what He was doing according to God's plan.

**LESSON ONE:** "The Will of God." Jesus talks about walking in the light and walking in the darkness. These are common illustrations used in the Bible. To walk in the darkness is to live according to the world's ways. To walk in the light is to live for God. The safest place a believer can be is in the light of God's will. He has a plan and purpose for our lives and we must follow His leading and take advantage of the opportunities He gives us. (READ Ephesians 5:8-20). How do these passages help us to better understand living in the light of God's will?

**LESSON TWO:** "The Glory of God." How can sickness and death bring glory to God? The hard and difficult things in our life often seem to be all bad. But God wants to use them to show the world His power and glory. By living for the Lord through the bad times we proclaim His glory by our faith. Even in death, a believer's testimony of God's love and care brings glory to His name (see 2 Timothy 4:6-8). How are you showing God's glory in today's circumstances? What testimony will you leave behind about the faithfulness and love of God?