

The story of Lazarus being raised from the dead is a significant event. It is the seventh sign recorded by John, and was selected by God to show that Jesus is the resurrection and the life. With the Feast of Dedication now over, the time before Jesus' death draws near. *Historically*, this is the event that makes the religious leaders decide to put Jesus to death; *structurally*, in the flow of the Book of John, this forms the link between Jesus' public ministry and His suffering and death.

11:1 Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.

11:2 It was the Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.

11:3 So the sisters sent word to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick."

Lazarus was from Bethany near Jerusalem, to be distinguished from the Bethany mentioned in 1:28 and 10:40-42. Mary and Martha were his sisters, and are mentioned in Luke 10:38-42. Mary had wiped Jesus' feet with her hair, which will be recounted by John in the next chapter.

In Chapter 10 Jesus had claimed to be one with the Father (Jn. 10:30) which led to attempts to seize and stone Him (Jn. 10:31), but he eluded their grasp. Next, He and the disciples went beyond the Jordan to stay at the place where John was first baptizing (Jn. 10:40).

While He was gone, Lazarus, who was a friend of Jesus, became seriously ill, so his sisters sent word to Jesus, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick." They don't specifically ask if Jesus can come as they may have been aware of the perils He faced if He did. Nevertheless, their comment is a plea for help.

11:4 But when Jesus heard this, He said, "This sickness is not to end in death, but for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it."

11:5 Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

In verse 4 Jesus does *not* mean that Lazarus would *not* die, for it is clear that he does; rather, it means that this sickness will end in the glory of God, and the result (so that) will be that the Son of God may be glorified through it. If the Father and the Son are glorified through the resurrection of Lazarus, then the supreme glorification of both come at the resurrection of the Son (Carson, 406).

The mention of Jesus' love for Mary, Martha and Lazarus helps to soften the fact in 11:6 that He purposefully delays returning. In other words, Jesus' failure to leave sooner was not due to any lack of affection for the family. The process by which the Father and the Son will be glorified may seem harsh, but the death and resurrection of Lazarus is for his good, the disciples' good, and the good of the sisters, as well.

11:6 So when He heard that he was sick, He then stayed two days longer in the place where He was.

Verse 6 begins with the important grammatical connection “so” or “therefore.” It connects Jesus’ decision not to depart immediately with the preceding verses. His delay was based on His desire to glorify God and the love He had for the family. To paraphrase: “Therefore, because Jesus desired to see the Father glorified and because He loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus (vv.4-5) when He heard that Lazarus was sick He delayed in going back to them.” The double time reference of “then” and “after this” in verse 7 also puts some emphasis on the delay (Morris, 540).

The traditional reconstruction of the events of the passage is that the journey from Jesus’ location to Bethany must have been about a day’s journey, for when Jesus returned, Lazarus had been dead for four days (v.39). If Lazarus died shortly after the messengers went to find Jesus, and Jesus waited two days before going to Mary and Martha, the four days are accounted for (Morris, 539, 540). However, as Carson points out, this seems to ignore the details. In 11:4 Jesus says that “this sickness is not to end in death.” In other words, Lazarus was not yet dead when the messengers arrived to inform Jesus of his sickness. Then only after the two days delay does Jesus say, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep.” It is thus more likely that the four days that intervene before Jesus arrives to Bethany were days of travel. A total of ten days transpire from when the messengers leave Mary and Martha until Jesus arrives at their home. From Jewish sources it was well known that about 40-45 kilometers could be traveled by a healthy person in a day. Therefore, Jesus was probably closer to the other Bethany (Bethany/Batanea; Jn. 1:28), which was about 150 kilometers from the Bethany near Jerusalem. Some suggest that Jesus’ delay makes Him responsible for Lazarus’ death, but this is not so, for even if He had left immediately, Lazarus would have already been dead for two days. However, even if His delay *did* result in Lazarus’ death, on what basis could Jesus be criticized? For through this death the glory of God is manifested in a way that it would not have been manifested if Lazarus had lived.

By waiting, Jesus accomplishes two things: He is powerfully demonstrating Himself to be the resurrection and the life (v. 25) and He is powerfully establishing the faith not only of the disciples (v. 15) and of some Jews who were onlookers (v. v45), but also the Bethany family itself. As the narrative is cast, the delay is good for all concerned including Lazarus, Mary, and Martha. How then can Jesus legitimately be cast as hard-hearted?

This is why the ‘therefore’ of verse 6 contributes to the flow of the argument. Lazarus’ death will not finally issue in death; it is for the glory of God (v.4). This does not mean that Jesus is indifferent to human suffering. Far from it: Jesus loves Martha, Mary, and Lazarus (v. 5). Indeed, it is in consequence of that love that He delays His departure for two days, waiting for the divine signal, the news of Lazarus’ death, before He sets out on the four day journey (v. 6), for this delay will make a substantial contribution to the strengthening of the faith of the Bethany family (Carson, 408).

11:7 Then after this He said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again."

11:8 The disciples said to Him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone You, and are You going there again?"

After the two days of waiting had passed, Jesus tells the disciples that it is now time to go to Jerusalem.

The disciples can hardly believe that Jesus wants to return to Judea when it was just a short while ago that the Jews wanted to stone Him (10:31, 39). They realized that (humanly speaking) Jesus could die at any time; they fail to realize that through His death comes both His resurrection and glorification (Carson, 408).

Before we look at the next verse, the truth taught here is invaluable. There are times when those whom Jesus loves are in a crisis and Jesus does not come to their aid immediately. But in those times, He delays to display God's greater glory. In John 9, when the disciples saw the blind man they asked Jesus, "Who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?" (Jn. 9:2) Jesus answered them by pointing out that they were asking the entirely wrong question; the man was blind "so that the works of God might be displayed in him" (Jn. 9:3). Knowing these things should cause us to stop demanding that God respond immediately, but instead, adjust our thinking to His ways and with our ultimate aim that God be glorified.

11:9 Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world."

11:10 But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him."

Before the invention of accurate timepieces, both the Jews and the Romans divided the daylight of each day into 12 hours. This of course meant that the length of each hour changed as the seasons changed and there were longer and shorter periods of daylight. Typically, people worked while they could in the daylight and stopped when it got dark. On a literal level, "the light of the world" is the sun. On a deeper level, these verses are a response to the disciples' concern in verse 8. Jesus is saying that He is safe to walk as long as it is in the daytime. Concretely, this means He can do the Father's work as long as the Father wills, even if it means going back to Judea where they seek to kill Him. "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it" (Jn. 1:5). It is impossible for the night to impinge upon the daylight hours. When light and darkness are both present, it is always the light that is the victor.

The disciples are also safe while Jesus, the Light of the world is present. Furthermore, while there is still daylight, He and the disciples *must* continue on with the work the Father has given them. In the historical setting, to be with Jesus is to be in the light and the disciples should make the most of the presence of Christ while He is in their midst (Morris, 541); Jesus' light shines most brightly while He is doing His work (Carson, 409, 362).

Verse 11 makes a shift from the realm of natural daylight to symbolic language; Jesus speaks of the light being *in* them, not simply shining upon them. In Semitic thought the eye was thought to be the gateway that allows light into the body (Kostenberger, 330); it is, therefore, a small step to take in thinking that a person is connected to the world of spiritual light through the eye. In Matthew 6:22 Jesus said, "The eye is the lamp of the body; so then if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light." If one can see things clearly, his whole being will be enlightened. In Ephesians 1:18 Paul prayed "that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints."

Verse 11 is the corollary of verse 10. In verse 10 the one who walks in darkness will stumble; in verse 11 the one who does not have the light of Christ to guide him will also stumble. If Jesus leaves, the brightness of the light of His presence will not be available to see by, but those who remain will be able to see if Jesus, the light of the world, shines in them. Those who are not illumined by His light will surely be in total darkness.

It is instructive to see that the disciples' logic was determined by natural instinct, rather than seeking to follow the will of God. Though it was *Christ's* desire to go and it was He who invited the disciples to join Him (Let us go – v. 7), they argued about the wisdom of His decision and did not respond until they felt they had exhausted all their options. We can easily criticize them, but we fail to see that we are just the same. As Christians, we need to learn to trust the directions the Master leads us, not challenge them.

11:11 This He said, and after that He said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I go, so that I may awaken him out of sleep."

11:12 The disciples then said to Him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover."

11:13 Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that He was speaking of literal sleep.

11:14 So Jesus then said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead,

11:15 and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, so that you may believe; but let us go to him."

Death for a believer is sometimes referred to as sleep (I Cor. 11:30; Acts 7:60), for it is not final. It is a state that he will be awakened from.

The disciples understandably miss what Jesus is saying, so He patiently corrects them; He says clearly that Lazarus is dead.

It sounds strange for Jesus to say that He was glad that Lazarus died, but He could rejoice even in death because He knew what He would do; the great power He would display would reveal more about Him and create an even greater faith in the disciples, but ultimately and most importantly, it would glorify God.

11:16 Therefore Thomas, who is called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, so that we may die with Him."

Thomas is primarily known as a doubter (Jn. 20:27), but here he puts on a display of pure courage, though it is misguided. He believes that if Jesus goes back to Judea he will surely die, and he verbalizes his willingness to suffer his master's fate. However, it is a gloomy perspective and isn't marked by an abundance of faith (Morris, 545).

11:17 So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days.

Without filling in the details of travel, verse 17 finds Jesus in Bethany. The length of time Lazarus was in the tomb may be significant. Rabbis of the day believed that the soul lingered for three days above the body of the deceased hoping to re-enter it, but on the fourth day when it sees the decay it departs for good and at that point, death was irreversible (Carson, 411; Morris 546). However, this belief may not have come into existence until later in history.

11:18 Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off;

11:19 and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary, to console them concerning their brother.

11:20 Martha therefore, when she heard that Jesus was coming, went to meet Him, but Mary stayed at the house.

11:21 Martha then said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.

11:22 Even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You."

In verse 21 Martha is not scolding Jesus for not being there, but is simply expressing her grief; her words, "probably echoed what she and Mary had said often to each other (cf. v. 32) during the past few days" (Morris, 548).

Some see Martha's words, "Even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You," as evidence that she believed that if Jesus desired to, He could raise her brother from the dead at that moment. But the unbelief in verse 39 and her response in verse 24 argue against this. The "now" of verse 22 may just mean something like: "I know you could have saved Lazarus from death had You been here, since I know even now that God always hears your prayers."

11:23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

11:24 Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day."

Carson calls verse 23 "a masterpiece of planned ambiguity" (Carson, 412). On the most basic level, Jesus could be understood as meaning that Lazarus would rise on the last day. This is the way Martha understood it, and it may have been a commonplace way of expressing hope in times of a death; it was

the sort of thing people had been saying to her for days. But at another level Jesus is promising to raise Lazarus immediately.

11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies,

11:26 and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"

11:27 She said to Him, "Yes, Lord; I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God, even He who comes into the world."

Notice how Jesus ministers to Martha. Martha knew the creeds of her faith. She knew that the OT Scriptures had spoken of resurrection and agreed with Jesus' theology. But Jesus moves her from placing her faith in a creed to putting her faith in Him. In effect, he was saying that he was the creed.

In earlier chapters of John, Jesus had said that He was the one who was given authority to raise the dead (5:21, 25-29; 6:39-40). Now He says He is the resurrection and the life. Both of these statements are true, but the difference in meaning is profound. Jesus can give life because He *is* life! His hope is to move Martha from an abstract idea about a future resurrection to the realization that He possesses life in Himself (Jn. 1:4, 5:21, 24-29; 6:33, 40, 47; 8:12; 10:28). He then asks, "Do you believe *this*? Does she believe in the one who is the creed? Her answer is full of faith and hope; she not only believes these things, but believes that He is the Christ (v. 27).

These two verses are also interesting in the paradoxical manner in which they are presented. Jesus said He was the resurrection, but he also said, "everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die." Of course, He does not mean that believers will not die physically for Lazarus was already dead, and He had just said He was the resurrection, implying that people will die who He will raise. The thought is that everyone who believes in Him already possesses eternal life, even on this side of the resurrection, and the life Jesus gives will never end; it will spring forth in resurrection.

Hodge makes some good comments about the life that Christ shares with every believer that can be applied to these verses in John. He says:

When our Lord said, "I am the vine, you are the branches: he that abides in Me, and I in him, brings forth much fruit: for without Me you can do nothing" (Jn. 15: 5), He certainly meant that the vital union between Him and His people is something more than that which may subsist between disciples and their master, — a union including merely trust, congeniality, and affection. The influence to which the fruitfulness of the believer is attributed is something more than the influence of the truth which He taught; however, that truth may be applied or enforced. Their abiding in Him, and He in them, is something more than abiding in the profession and belief of the truth. Christ is the head of the Church not merely as its ruler, but as the source of its life. "It is not I", says the Apostle, that live, "but Christ lives in me" (Gal.2:20). Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that *Jesus Christ is in you*-- unless indeed you fail the test?" (2

Cor. 13:5). It is from Him, as the same Apostle teaches us, that the whole body derives those supplies by which it lives and grows (Eph. 4:16). "Because I live, you shall live also (Jn. 14:19). "I am that bread of life" (Jn. 6:48). "This is the bread which came down out of heaven . . . he who eats this bread will live forever" (Jn. 6:58). "We shall be saved by his life" (Rom. 5:10). "The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a life-giving spirit" (1 Cor. 15:45). "As the Father has life in Himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in Himself" (Jn. 5:26). You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life" (John 17:2). "Your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall you also appear with him in glory" (Col. 3:3, 4). *The Scriptures, therefore, plainly teach that there is a vital union between Christ and his people; that they have a common life analogous to that which exists between the vine and its branches, and between the head and members of the body. The believer is truly partaker of the life of Christ.* (Hodges Systematic Theology II, 698)

11:28 When she had said this, she went away and called Mary her sister, saying secretly, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you."

11:29 And when she heard it, she got up quickly and was coming to Him.

11:30 Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha met Him.

11:31 Then the Jews who were with her in the house, and consoling her, when they saw that Mary got up quickly and went out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there.

11:32 Therefore, when Mary came where Jesus was, she saw Him, and fell at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died."

The house was full of visitors and probably professional mourners, as well, who had come to mourn Lazarus' death. In the midst of this, Martha tried to arrange a little time when Jesus and Mary could talk privately. However, when Mary left to meet Him, the crowd followed along assuming that she was on her way to the tomb. When she saw Jesus, she fell at His feet and said the same thing that her sister had said.

11:33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, He was deeply moved in spirit and was troubled,

11:34 and said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see."

11:35 Jesus wept.

11:36 So the Jews were saying, "See how He loved him!"

11:37 But some of them said, "Could not this man, who opened the eyes of the blind man, have kept this man also from dying?"

Jewish funeral customs dictated that even poor families were to hire professional mourners (two flute players and a wailing woman) and since it doesn't appear that this family was poor (see 12:1 ff.), there were probably many more than this.

Most translations translate the phrase in the latter part of verse 33 as "deeply moved" in spirit; the NKJ translates it as "groaned" in the spirit, while the NLT has "was moved with indignation." Carson says, "In extra-biblical Greek, it [*the word translated as 'deeply moved'*] can refer to the snorting of horses; in applied to human beings, it inevitably suggests anger, outrage or emotional indignation." (Carson). In the NT, it occurs twice in this chapter (cf. v. 38), and elsewhere only in Matt. 9:30; Mk. 1:43; 14:5 where it is the response of Jesus after healing people. It is difficult to reach a definitive conclusion on what is being said. If it expresses anger, what is Jesus angry about? Considering that it never appears with an object toward which His agitation is directed, it may simply be describing the welling up of Jesus' emotions as He is caught in the intensity of the moment and is aware of what will take place (Kostenberger, 340).

Jesus' weeping is also difficult to understand. There would be no reason to weep for Lazarus whom He was about to raise. Perhaps He, the spotless Lamb of God, who held a unique intimacy with the Father wept over the presence of death itself that had entered God's creation and the pain it causes for those He loves. If these reasons are close, then the bystanders are partially correct when they interpret Jesus' tears as an expression of His love for Lazarus, though they err when they think it is for the same reasons as their own (Kostenberger, 341-342).

The question "Could not this man, who opened the eyes of the blind man, have kept this man also from dying?" is sound in principle, but to even ask the question expresses massive unbelief (Kostenberger, 342).

11:38 So Jesus, again being deeply moved within, came to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone was lying against it.

11:39 Jesus said, "Remove the stone." Martha, the sister of the deceased, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there will be a stench, for he has been dead four days."

11:40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?"

The Jews often buried their dead in caves hewn from stone and sealed with a rock. Martha's objection to removing the stone confirmed that she did not understand Jesus' comment that He was going to raise her brother (v. 23). Though the Jews wrapped the body of the dead in spices, they did so to control the repulsive odors of decomposition, not to embalm it like the Egyptians. These verses emphasize that Lazarus was beyond all hope of recovery.

It is not recorded in John that Jesus had told Martha that she would see the glory of God, but Jesus may be referring back to the previous conversation when Jesus had told her "your brother would rise." Raising Lazarus would surely display God's glory whether specific mention of it was made or not. Though

the miracle would attest to Jesus' power and would be a marvelous gift to the sisters, Jesus' greatest concern is for the glory of God.

11:41 So they removed the stone. Then Jesus raised His eyes, and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me.

11:42 "I knew that You always hear Me; but because of the people standing around I said it, so that they may believe that You sent Me."

11:43 When He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth."

11:44 The man who had died came forth, bound hand and foot with wrappings, and his face was wrapped around with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

Jesus' prayer aligns Himself and His mission with the Father; He and the Father are in constant communion so that Jesus never acts outside of the Father's will, nor does the Father ever refuse to do what Jesus asks. Christ prays out loud so that others can hear "to draw His hearers' into the intimacy of Jesus' own relationship with the Father" (Carson, 418). He then calls Lazarus to life: "Lazarus, come forth!" We are reminded of Jesus' words in John 5:25, "the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live." The power of Jesus' voice is that of the power of God.

"The man who had died" is a perfect participle indicating the permanency of his "dead" condition that has now been changed. He came forth bound in grave clothes. No doubt the people were stunned and stood there speechless, making Jesus tell them that he needed to be unbound.

The resurrection of Lazarus follows a pattern seen in the book of John; He often combines physical actions to illustrate the spiritual claims that Jesus made about Himself. For example, after Jesus had physically fed 5000 people with five loaves and two fish, He claimed to be the Bread that has come down from heaven (Jn. 6). Later, He called Himself the Light of the world (Jn. 8) and displayed this by physically opening the eyes of the blind (Jn. 9:5-6). Now He claims to be the resurrection and the life, and proves it by raising Lazarus from the dead. As Jesus had said in John 10:37-38, "If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father."

11:45 Therefore many of the Jews who came to Mary, and saw what He had done, believed in Him.

11:46 But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them the things which Jesus had done.

11:47 Therefore the chief priests and the Pharisees convened a council, and were saying, "What are we doing? For this man is performing many signs.

11:48 "If we let Him go on like this, all men will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation."

Jesus' words and deeds frequently divided the Jews (6:14, 15; 7:10-13, 45-52) and they do again here; many who saw Jesus' miracle believed, but some went immediately to the Pharisees to report what had

taken place. Although it doesn't say that they went with malicious intent, the way the story plays out it feels like that was the case.

The Pharisees could not make an independent judicial decision, so they convened a council (v. 47) called the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin was a Jewish legislative and judiciary body that functioned under the authority of Rome, but was allowed to make many decisions in matters concerning the Jews and their customs. The Sanhedrin in Jerusalem probably consisted of seventy-one members that included (Mt 26:3,17,59; Mk 14:53; 15:1; Lk 22:66; Acts 4:5 f; 5:21; 22:30) high priests (i.e. the acting high priest, those who had been high priests, and members of the privileged families from which the high priests were taken), elders (tribal and family heads of the people and priesthood), and scribes (i.e. legal assessors), as well as Pharisees and Sadducees (see Acts 4:1 ff; 5:17,34; 23:6).

The answer to the question, "what are we doing?" is "nothing." Up until then He has always foiled them. Repeatedly, they found it impossible to refute Jesus or disprove His claims. His miracles logically tied Him to God. The exchange that had recently taken place with the blind man was particularly embarrassing (Jn. 9). But instead of considering what all this meant, they immediately imagined what could happen if He wasn't stopped. The extent of their fears is expressed when they say, "ALL men will believe in Him." If the followers of Jesus became a mob, with or without Jesus' approval, Rome would step in to handle things which would be bad for everybody. They specify that their place (probably the temple) and the nation would be in jeopardy. If Jesus were not the messiah, their logic would have been correct; their positions, their place of worship, and the very nation which enjoyed semi-autonomy could be destroyed by Rome.

11:49 But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all,

11:50 nor do you take into account that it is expedient for you that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation not perish."

Caiaphas was the high priest that year. He remained in office until 36 AD when both he and Pilate were removed at the same time (Carson, 421).

Verses 50- 52 are remarkable and laden with double meaning. The death of Jesus would be best from both a political perspective (it would stop the Romans from interfering if things escalated and would save the nation) and in terms of what would be best for the ruling party (they would not lose their status). But what is so amazing is that Caiaphas uses sacrificial language, though he had no intention of suggesting anything Christian by it. He was saying that they needed to kill Jesus to save the nation and the leaders from Rome, and so His death would be like the scapegoat, but as we learn in verse 51 and 52, his words became prophetic.

11:51 Now he did not say this on his own initiative, but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation,

11:52 and not for the nation only, but in order that He might also gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad.

When Caiaphas spoke, God was also speaking through him, even if they were not saying the same things (Carson, 422; Acts 4:27-28). He prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation. In other words, both he and God saw Jesus' death as substitutionary; either Jesus dies, or the nation dies. "If He dies, the nation lives. It is His life instead of theirs" (Morris, 568). "But while Caiaphas is thinking at the purely political level, John invites his readers to think in terms of the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (Jn. 1:29, 34, Carson, 422). Jesus would die, not for the nation only, but in order that He might also gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad. In a purely Jewish context, 'the scattered children of God' would be understood to refer to the Jews of the diaspora, who would be gathered together in the Promised Land to share in the kingdom of God (e.g. Isa. 43:5; Ezek. 34:12; 36:24 ff.; Carson, 422).

This also has typological connections; the real children of God are those who believe in Christ. Through the death of Christ both Jews and Gentiles are gathered as one people of God (Eph. 2:14-22).

11:53 So from that day on they planned together to kill Him.

11:54 Therefore Jesus no longer continued to walk publicly among the Jews, but went away from there to the country near the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim; and there He stayed with the disciples.

The advice of the high priest is accepted and plans are made to kill Jesus. "In short, Jesus is not to be arrested to be tried; He is to be tried because He has already been found guilty (as Mark 14:1-2 presupposes). And this, John insists, has been precipitated by the raising of Lazarus" (cf. also 12:10; Carson, 423). Jesus raised Lazarus at the cost of His own life. And it was through His death that He would be glorified. And if we look into the next chapter we will find that Jesus raised Lazarus into a life where people wanted to put him to death.

The implications for us are that Jesus raises us from spiritual and natural death at the cost of His own death on the cross; and all whom he raises from the dead He calls to be willing to lay down their lives also. It is easier to have a creed than to have a Christ. But if you don't have Christ, your creed will never raise you from the dead.

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die."

Do you believe this?