



John 11:39-57, Lesson #34

Lessons Organized and Presented by Gerald Cumby

John 11:39-45, Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, “Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days.” Jesus said to her, “Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?” Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, “Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me.” Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come forth!” And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Loose him, and let him go.” Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him.

✓ **“If you would believe you would see the glory of God”:**

Note: Jesus was fully capable of this miracle without the faith of Martha or Mary. However, without their belief they would never see the glory of God. They could see the end result and certainly would be happy, but they would miss the glory of working together with God in the fulfillment of His plan.

If only we could understand that the Lord desires to see our growing faith and that this is His objective for us.

- **Jesus lifted up His eyes and said: “Father, I thank You that You have heard Me”** Jesus likely had the traditional posture of prayer – hands raised, eyes open upwards as if looking towards heaven.
 - *Jesus was confident in His relationship with God the Father.*
 - *The public nature of the prayer was for the sake of Mary, Martha, and **the people who are standing by**.*
 - *No pomp of self-glory, no wrestling in prayer even; but simple words of thanksgiving, as if Lazarus had already returned.” (Dods)*
- **He cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come forth!”**
 - *“The loud voice was not, of course, because a loud voice was needed to make the dead hear.*
 - *Probably...so that the crowd could know that this was no work of magic, but the very power of God.*
 - *On a previous occasion (John 5:28) Jesus said that a time would come when all who were in their graves would hear his voice. This occasion was a single demonstration of that authority.*
 - *Jesus spoke to a dead body as if Lazarus were alive because He is God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did ([Romans 4:17](#)).*

- *“If Christ had not specifically called out to Lazarus only, perhaps all the dead would have risen.” (Trapp)*

Matthew 27:50-54, “And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. ⁵¹ At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split ⁵² and the tombs broke open. The bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. ⁵³ They came out of the tombs after Jesus’ resurrection and^[e] went into the holy city and appeared to many people. ⁵⁴ When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, “Surely he was the Son of God!”

- **And he who had died came out:**
 - **Jesus fought death at Lazarus’ tomb and plundered the grave.**
 - **Jesus told death that He would soon completely conquer it completely.**
 - **Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him.**
 - Those who came to join in the sorrow of the grieving sisters did not expect that their reason for grief would be taken away.
 - Only after seeing what Jesus did...did they believe!
- John 20:29, “Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”**

John 11:46-48, “But some of them went away to the Pharisees and told them the things Jesus did. Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, “What shall we do? For this Man works many signs. If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation.”

- John continues his persistent theme – the words and works of Jesus divide humanity between those who believe and those who reject.
- There were **some** who saw both the power and sympathy of Jesus yet responded by working against Him.

Note: Charles Spurgeon, reputable biblical scholar, called the reporting of this to the Pharisees, “some of the meanest conduct that has ever been recorded in human history.”

- The religious leaders (Sanhedrin) opposition changed. First, they opposed Jesus because they weren’t convinced He was the Messiah. Now they opposed Jesus because they were convinced that He was the Messiah. They admitted the miracles, but look how they treated the Miracle-worker...They denied Him; They opposed Him; They were afraid of His influence over the people.

“If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation.”

- Most commentators believe that **our place** refers to *the temple*. The religious leaders had made such an idol of the temple that they were willing to kill Jesus to preserve it.
- It is telling that the religious leaders thought of the temple as **our place**, as if it belonged to them.

John 11:49-52, “And one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, “You know nothing at all, nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish.” Now this he did not say on his own authority; but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, and not for that nation only, but also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad.”

- Caiaphas thought logically for the few in leadership, but certainly not morally. It was logical that **one man should die for the people**, but it was not moral to reject the Messiah and seek the death of an innocent man.
- He is saying that they cannot even calculate, cannot even work it out that such and such a course of action is the most beneficial for the council (Sanhedrin)...to stay in power.

John 11:53-54, “Then, from that day on, they plotted to put Him to death. Therefore, Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went from there into the country near the wilderness to a city called Ephraim, and there remained with His disciples.”

- The men with real political power decided to murder Jesus. The time was now short until the death of Jesus.
- The plot of all plots: “Never mind about His miracles, or His teaching, or the beauty of His character. His life is a perpetual danger to our prerogatives. I vote for death!”

- **“Therefore, Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews”:**

- ✓ Jesus did not do this out of fear, but because *His hour had not yet come* (as in [John 7:30](#)). The hour had not yet come, but it was soon to come.

John 11:55-57, “And the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went from the country up to Jerusalem before the Passover, to purify themselves. Then they sought Jesus, and spoke among themselves as they stood in the temple, “What do you think—that He will not come to the feast?” Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a command, that if anyone knew where He was, he should report it, that they might seize Him.”

- It was the last few days before the coming Passover – at which Jesus would be betrayed, arrested, condemned, and crucified.
- As to asking themselves the question...”Do you think he (Jesus) will come to the Feast, they expected an answer ‘No’...for the Sanhedrin

officials considered it unlikely that in view of circumstances He would not be so foolish to appear at the Feast.”

- The command was from the leaders of the Jewish religious body (Sanhedrin). Although most of the chief priests were Sadducees (normally uncooperative with the Pharisees), the found common cause in their opposition to Jesus. They wanted His head.

NOTE: “It is not advantageous for the political and religious leaders to have someone like Jesus to influence the peasants. And...So...We Christians are not supposed to be involved in politics?

Oh...the web we weave to make sure we don’t rock the boat!!

Come on...Child of God...Rock the Boat!

Information resources:

<https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary>

<https://www.christianity.com/bible/commentary/matthew-henry-...>

<https://biblehub.com/summary/john>

[Study Guide for John 11 by David Guzik - Blue Letter Bible](#)

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage>

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Gospel-of-John.html>

[Summary of the Gospel of John - Bible Survey | GotQuestions.org](#)

<https://www.workingpreacher.org/.../raising-lazarus>

<https://biblesummary.info/john>

<https://www.walking-by-faith.org/teaching/new-testament/john/...>

[Raising Lazarus from the Dead \(John 11:1-44\) - Walking by Faith](#)