

IF... YOU HAD BEEN HERE

John 11:1-54

Tags

The Gospel of John, Jesus, John, Lazarus, Bethany, Mary, Martha, sister, anointed, ointment, feet, hair, ill, the one you love, illness does not lead to death, for the glory of God, Son of God, glorified, disciples, two days, Judea, Rabbi, Jews, seeking to stone you, day, walks, stumble, light of this world, fallen asleep, awaken him, death, rest, believe, Thomas, four days, Jerusalem, God, ask from God, brother, rise again, resurrection on the last day, I am the resurrection and the life, believes, die, live, do you believe, Lord, Christ, world, teacher, calling, tomb, weep, fell at his feet, brother, dies, weeping, moved in his spirit, greatly troubled, come and see, Jesus wept, eyes of the blind man, cave, stone, lifted up his eyes, Father, thank you, sent me, voice, Lazarus come out, hands, feet, face, unbind him, Pharisees, chief priests, council, signs, Romans, our place, our nation, Caiaphas, high priest, die for the people, whole nation should perish, prophesied, one, children of God, scattered, made plans to put him to death, Ephraim

Introduction

It wasn't safe in Jerusalem. It seems that either murder or arrest were the order of the day for the religious leaders. Jesus leaves and returns to the place where John the Baptist had earlier ministered. The questions about Jesus swirl in the crowds and many believe. Meanwhile, at a different Bethany, darkness is closing in for some of Jesus' dear friends. The family of Lazarus, Mary, and Martha are in crisis. Lazarus is seriously ill, so Mary and Martha send word to Jesus about the situation. The hope is that Jesus will come and heal him. Messengers go quickly to find Jesus and explain the situation, but instead of rushing to their home, he lingers for two days. By the time Jesus and the disciples arrive, hope had become grief and the funeral is over.

From the darkness, Jesus will perform the seventh sign and declare, "I am the resurrection and the life." Jesus weeps with his friends and grieves, but he came to do more than just cry with them. He came to face death and show his power over it. The battle was over before it began, and as Jesus approached the grave, he knew exactly what would happen. The crowd would witness Jesus call Lazarus from death to life, darkness to light, from bondage to freedom. The sisters expressed their confidence in Jesus by saying IF... YOU HAD BEEN HERE, but the truth is that not even death can stop Jesus.

Outline

Adversity is an opportunity to glorify God (v. 4).

The truth must govern feelings (vv. 5-8).

Jesus is always on time (v. 17).

Belief in Jesus is always personal (vv. 25-27).

Jesus cares about our sorrows—knowing he would raise Lazarus did not keep him from shedding tears (vv. 33-35).

Death can't have the last word when Jesus calls your name (vv. 43-44).

Help people with their grave clothes (v. 44).

Jesus is a threat to your kingdom (vv. 47-52).

God's plan was in place long before the council made plans (v. 53).

Jesus never leaves his disciples (v. 54).

Application

Do you believe that Jesus loves you and will meet you wherever you are?

Have you been saved from sin and death by responding to the call of Jesus?

What part of your kingdom do you still need to surrender?

Questions

1. How should we view suffering as Christians? Name three ways to glorify God when you are suffering.
2. What can we learn about the way Mary and Martha approached Jesus? How do you see their different personalities come through?
3. How do you fight the battle between feelings and truth?
4. When did your faith become personal? What does someone have to believe about Jesus in order to be saved?
5. How are you affected when you read, "Jesus wept?" Read Hebrews 4:14-16. What does this teach us about prayer?
6. What can we learn about ministering to others from this passage?
7. What part of your kingdom needs to be surrendered?