

**JOHN SERIES #15 & #16: Living in the Shadowlands, Parts 1 & 2**  
**Jn. 11**  
**Grace Community Church**  
**Kingston, TN**  
**Sunday, March 3, 2020**

1. **TITLE:** In C. S. Lewis' book series, *Chronicles of Narnia*, he refers to the world, as we know it, as the "Shadow-Lands," because it is only a shadow of what is to come.

2. **TEXT:**

- a. Jn. 11:1-6, (1) Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. (2) It was that Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. (3) Therefore the sisters sent to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick." (4) When Jesus heard that, He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it." (5) Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. (6) So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was.
- b. Jn. 11:11-14, (11) These things He said, and after that He said to them, "Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up." (12) Then His disciples said, "Lord, if he sleeps he will get well." (13) However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep. (14) Then Jesus said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead."

3. **INTRODUCTION:**

- a. In John 11, there is a lot more to the story of the raising of Lazarus than the raising of Lazarus. That was the secondary story.

**I. OUR PERSPECTIVE OF REALITY IS LIMITED**

**A. THE SHADOWY NATURE OF THIS REALM**

**1. We are not living in reality**

- a. The phrase "not living in reality" usually refers to a schizophrenic person who is mentally out of touch with reality

**1) EX: Prince Mongo, a colorful figure in Memphis**

- b. But I mean is that, at present, we are not living in the REAL world, but in the SHADOW-LANDS

**2. AT PRESENT, WE ARE LIVING IN THE SHADOW OF REALITY**

- a. 1 Cor. 13:12, "For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known."

### 3. Scripture teaches the shadowy nature of this world:

a. Col. 2:16-17, (16) So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, (17) which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.

b. Hebrews 8:5, [when Moses served in the Tabernacle], he "... serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, 'See [that] you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.'"

c. [Hebrews 10:1, "For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, [and] not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect."

#### B. A SHADOW IS NOT REALITY

1. EX: When you see the shadow of an airplane on the ground you cannot tell much about the plane

2. This world is a shadow of the real world

#### C. SHADOWS NEVER RUIN [A SAINT]

1. There are a lot of things in this SHADOWY world that are unpleasant, but they cannot ultimately harm believers.

#### D. SHADOWS CAN NOMINALIZE REALITY

1. The shadows of this world have a way of diminishing our perception of reality

2. We all know people who are so Shadowland oriented they have no consciousness of Reality

3. In Jn. 11, Mary and Martha were that way

## II. THE PAIN REFLECTED IN THEIR LOSS

### A. THEIR PROFESSED BELIEFS

1. Jn. 11:21-27, (21) Then Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. (22) "But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You." (23) Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." (24) Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the

resurrection at the last day." (25) Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. (26) "And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" (27) She said to Him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."

2. We *practice* what we believe, all else is religious talk

3. Mary made the same remark in John 11:32, "Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, 'Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.'"

4. What these ladies said they believed did not align with how they lived

a. John 11:33, "Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled."

1) WEEPING (Gk.):

a) "to weep audibly ...."<sup>1</sup> "*Wail ... lament ... Howling*"<sup>2</sup>

b) PRESENT TENSE: continuing action

2) COMPARE with v. 35, "Jesus wept" (this is a different Greek word) which "denotes to shed tears, weep silently"<sup>3</sup>

**B. Christ came into this situation trying to turn Mary and Martha's focus from the SHADOW-LANDS to the REALITY**

1. V. 4, "This sickness is not unto death"

2. V. 14, "Lazarus is dead"

3. Christ tried to turn Mary and Martha's attentions to Who He was, but they were so entrenched in the SHADOW-LANDS that they did not comprehend the REALITY of what He was saying

**C. What did Christ think of Mary and Martha's fixation on the SHADOW-LANDS?**

1. V. 33, He "GROANED in His Spirit" (GK: from a word that means to "snort with anger"<sup>4</sup>)

### III. CHRIST'S PURPOSE FOR RAISING LAZARUS

<sup>1</sup> *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, κλαίω, p. 347.

<sup>2</sup> H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, κλαίω, p. 955.

<sup>3</sup> *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, "Weep, Weeping," δακρῶ, p. 1229.

<sup>4</sup> *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, εμβριμαομαι.

**A. WAS NOT to merely raise Lazarus from the dead or to answer the pleas of Mary and Martha to raise their brother**

**B. v. 4, WAS for, “the glory of God”**

- 1. Before God could be glorified in the resurrection of Lazarus, Lazarus first had to get sick and die.**
- 2. Did God get more glory from Lazarus’s life, or from his death and resurrection?**

#### **IV. THE PROPER RESPONSE TO OUR LOSSES**

**A. The story of Lazarus sickness/death was only the secondary story (the SHADOW of the real story). The real story was, “How was God going to get the glory out of that situation.”**

**B. The story of our trouble and trials in life is only the secondary story. The REAL story is, “How is God going to get the glory out of these things?”**

**C. SO, WHAT SHOULD OUR RESPONSES BE WHEN TROUBLES COME OUR WAY?**

**1. #1: ACKNOWLEDGE THERE IS A PRIMARY STORY BEYOND OUR PERSONAL SECONDARY STORY**

**a. EX: The apostle Paul was someone who operated with this mindset**

**1) 2 Corinthians 12:9, “And He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”**

**2) 2 Corinthians 12:7, “And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger [Gk: *angel*] of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure.”**

**2. #2: ABSTAIN FROM PREOCCUPATION WITH SELF**

**a. Mary and Martha were so preoccupied with “self” that they got angry at Christ because He did not come as quickly as they thought He should. In fact, they fussed at Him (Jn. 11:21, “Lord, if You had been here, Lazarus would not have died.”)**

**b. We should respond as Job did, following the tragedies that befell him.**

1) Job 1:21, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, And naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; Blessed be the name of the LORD.”

2) Job 1:22, [God’s response to Job’s actions] “In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong.”

3) Job 2:10 [Job told his wife], “You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?’ In all this Job did not sin with his lips.”

**C. EX:** of modern saints who have looked at the PRIMARY story

a) David Miller

b) Shirley Robinson (from our church in MS)

**3. #3: UNDERSTAND THAT THIS APPROACH TO FACING LIFE’S DIFFICULTIES MAY PRODUCE SORROW IN YOUR HEARTS**

a. Think about what Lazarus felt AFTER his resurrection

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

2) 2 Corinthians 5:8, “We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.”

3) Luke 16:23, “And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.”

b. Lazarus could endure all of this because he had a deep understanding of the SHADOWY nature of this world and the REALITY of the next world

**D. APPLICATION:**

1. When you experience heartache:

a. Don’t live in the SHADOWS

b. Look for the REAL story (of how God is going to be glorified in your situation)

2. EX:

a. Someone lied about you (Jn. 14:6, Jesus said, “I am the TRUTH.”)

**b. Someone abandoned you**

**1) Hebrews 13:5, “/will never leave you nor forsake you.”**

**2) Prov. 18:24 says that He is a friend that sticks closer than a brother**

**c. If your mom and/or dad rejected you (John 14:18, “I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.”)**

**d. If you are suffering great emotional duress because of the pain someone else inflicted upon you (Isaiah 53:4, “Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted.”**

**e. If you have been diagnosed with a terminal disease (John 11:4, Jesus said, “This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God ....”)**

**f. If your body is wracked with pain/affliction (Be like the apostle Paul who said in 2 Corinthians 12:10, “I take pleasure in infirmities ....”)**

**3. Philippians 4:19, “And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”**

**4. Psalms 50:10, “For every beast of the forest [is] Mine, [And] the cattle on a thousand hills.”**

**5. Psalms 37:25, “I have been young, and [now] am old; Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, Nor his descendants begging bread.”**

**6. Proverbs 3:6, “In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.”**