

Miracles of Jesus 12-11-25a

This is Sunday, the 25th of November, 2012. We continue our study in the miracles of the Lord Jesus Christ, looking this morning in John chapter 11 at the raising of Lazarus from the dead. Very fascinating account, lots of details.

No matter how many times we go through this, there's always something fresh to see. Let's take a moment to go to the Lord in prayer and dedicate our time of study to Him, and then we'll begin. Father, what a blessing and a privilege it is to spend this time setting aside all of the cares and the requirements and the assignments that occupy and almost define our daily lives to refresh our souls at the wellsprings of living water that we find in Your Word.

We thank You for the Lord Jesus Christ. We thank You for His work on our behalf on the cross, His ongoing work in heaven at Your right hand as He intercedes for us and encourages us through the gift of Your Spirit and the power of the Word that we find before us. As we study this passage, we ask Your blessing on each one.

May we find in it encouragement, sustenance, motivation, and clarity of thought as we look at our opportunities and the calling that You have issued to us, that we can grow in grace and knowledge, that we can be fruitful, lay hold of righteousness by faith, and reflect Your glory and the glory of the Lord Jesus as we live in the light of these things. We pray it in Jesus' name. Amen.

John chapter 11. Lazarus dies, and four days later, Lazarus lives. Not the first time Jesus raises someone from the dead, but perhaps the most detailed account.

As always, we need to see a little bit of the context. And for this, we can turn just back a page to John chapter 10. If you have a red-letter Bible, you'll see a lot of red ink there.

Jesus presents Himself as the Good Shepherd, the Shepherd who knows His sheep. And notice in verse 22, the time, the time of year. It was the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem, and it was winter, and Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch.

So Jesus is in Jerusalem. This is toward the close of the year. Remember the formal feast schedule, the spring feasts and the fall feasts have already been concluded for that year.

What is this feast? Feast of Dedication. This is your extra feast. This is your Esther Hanukkah feast.

So we're in December, and it is winter. And Jesus is walking in Solomon's porch. The Jews surround Him.

Never a good thing when your enemies have you surrounded, unless you're the Lord Jesus. "...and said to Him, How long do you keep us in doubt? If you are the Christ, tell us

plainly." Now why are they asking this question? Because like in John chapter 9, the blind man asks them, Oh, do you want to follow Him also? Is this why you need clarification on who He is? This is in hopes of getting an indictment for blasphemy. They want Him to say plainly.

They want it recorded by numerous witnesses. That's why they're surrounding Him. "...Jesus answered them, I told you, and you do not believe.

The works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me. But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you." And that's the whole preceding section of chapter 10 there. My sheep hear My voice.

I know them. They follow Me. I give them eternal life.

They shall never perish. Neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father who has given them to Me is greater than all.

And no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one. Now this is bonus.

Pharisees wanted Him to say He was the Messiah. He's gone beyond that. He says, I am God.

Well, this is all they need. So then the Jews took up stones to stone Him. By the way, they took them up again to stone Him.

"...Jesus answered them, many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me? It's not for a good work we stone you, but for blasphemy, because you being a man make yourself God." Then He gives them the quote from the Old Testament. If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me.

But if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, verse 38, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me and I am in Him. Look at the works. Don't just take the statement and draw a conclusion.

Look at the evidence. Look at the works. These are the signs.

Remember John's whole gospel is organized around those seven signs. "...Therefore they sought again to seize Him, but He escaped out of their hand. And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was baptizing at first, and there He stayed." Now this is a return.

This is where Jesus began. This is where He's first identified. This is where the first disciples join Him.

And if you look at your John chapter 11 handout, you can see that there's a... By the way,

I got this from my DTS professor way back in 1922 when I was there. And you can see this beautiful chiasm. This by the way is from Dr. Bailey, who's now the president of the seminary.

At that time he was just a workman, journeyman professor. But it is a nice illustration of the structure of this passage. And I'll let you analyze that.

And I've given it to you because we're not going to cover it in class. If you didn't get one, we can make more copies later. But there is an anointing by Mary at the beginning and at the end.

Mary is mentioned in verse 2. This is where our account picks up. "...a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha." Now this is sort of an interesting way to identify a town. Why is it identified as the town of Mary and Martha? Well, because Mary and Martha are better known to the audience than Lazarus.

Lazarus hasn't really done anything of distinction. He's not notable yet where we have Mary and Martha known from previous episodes. But it's kind of an interesting question that Mary and her sister Martha are mentioned.

"...it was that Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick." So this is further information. And John assumes that people know this story even though it hasn't happened yet. It hasn't happened yet.

This is future. This is the next chapter. So he's anticipating something that hasn't taken place.

But Mary is well known for this act, but he hasn't actually gotten there. So this is proleptic. This is anticipatory.

"...therefore the sisters sent to him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom you love is sick." 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." Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. This is twice now we're told that Jesus loves Lazarus along with his sisters. So when he heard that he was sick, he stayed two more days in the place where he was.

Jesus loved them, so when he heard he was sick, he didn't come. It doesn't quite follow the way I would tell a story, but John knows what he's doing under the ministry of the Spirit. "...then after this he said to the disciples, Let us go to Judea again.

The disciples said to him, Rabbi, lately the Jews sought to stone you. Are you going there again? 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. But if one walks in the night, he stumbles because the light is not in him.

These things he said, and after that he said to them, Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up. Then his disciples said, Lord, if he sleeps, he'll get well. However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that he was speaking about taking rest and sleep.

Then Jesus said to them plainly, Lazarus is dead, and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, so that you may believe. Nevertheless, let us go to him. Then Thomas, who is called the twin, said to his fellow disciples, Let us go also that we may die with him." Thomas, the son of encouragement.

Well let's take a quick look at what we have seen so far. First of all, there's been a little bit of debate because there is another anointing that takes place around this same time that is recorded by Matthew. In that case, it is at the house of Simon the leper, and it is specifically two days before the Passover.

The anointing here is earlier, the one that is going to take place at the house of Mary and Martha. The one at the house of Simon the leper, the lady is unnamed, and she anoints Jesus' head. Mary specifically is going to anoint his feet.

So they are two different anointings. They are often co-located and combined, and there are people who say, well, it was that Mary who anointed the Lord, and they are saying, well, in either case it would be future. But there are in fact two separate anointings.

But that is still future. When Jesus heard that he whom you love is sick, and of course he knows who they are talking about because the messengers are from Mary and Martha, so they don't have to name their brother. But why would they phrase it this way? One of the things I think that is underestimated and that helps construe a lot of the details in this story is how dire the threat to Jesus' life was.

And to get an idea of that, look at the very last verse of chapter 11. Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a command that if anyone knew where he was, they should report it that they might seize him. This information is given to us after the raising of Lazarus, but they had given.

It was already in effect, and it had been in effect ever since the Feast of Dedication where they took up stones to stone him. They had the evidence they needed. They issued the decree.

There is actually about a three-month gap between chapter 10 where it is the Feast of Dedication and the beginning of chapter 12, six days before the Passover. Remember the Passover by our calendar would be late March, Feast of Dedication mid-December? So the only thing John gives us between the Feast of Dedication in this last year of Jesus' life, last half-year of his life, from mid-December until the end of March, is just the raising of Lazarus. It is somewhere in that span.

And when he picks up in chapter 12, we're in the spring and the beginning of the spring feast cycle. So when Jesus heard it, he said, this sickness is not unto death. Very interesting thing for Jesus to say.

Jesus knows that it is not Lazarus' time to die. How did he know that? I don't know. This is one of the insights he had.

Jesus is prophet, priest, and king. But in his humanity, you know, there's always a question. Did he draw upon his deity or did he do everything in the power of the Holy Spirit? And I tend to favor the latter because Jesus is our example.

We can't draw on our own deity to meet a crisis or to interpret circumstances. Jesus lived his life in the power of the Spirit and in the light of God's Word. And he figured out an incredible amount.

He knew who he was and what he was to do and knew when and how to do it, I think largely based on his intense knowledge of the Old Testament. He confounded the doctors at the age of 12 in Jerusalem. And by the time he was ready for his ministry, he was, I think he was able to discern based on his knowledge of Scripture and the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

I think that is the deity that informed him when he knew their thoughts or he knew. And this is what we are to do. And the great thing is that we don't say, wow, wasn't that great that he was God and he could do this? We should do this as well.

When we see circumstances, we want to seek and find an understanding of what God's purpose is. Jesus knows, and we can't hope to have the advanced knowledge that he had and the advanced means of application that he had. But in our way and by our lights and with our abilities, we can look at circumstances and say, what is God's purpose in this? And Jesus knew that it was not time for Lazarus to die.

And he says, this sickness is not unto death. With that information, Jesus now knows what he is to do. Because he knows that it isn't time for Lazarus to die, he knows that this is for the glory of God.

Was he, how did he know this? I don't know, but he knew it. He knew this was for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it. And Jesus knew that this last great miracle is the one that is going to push the arrest and crucifixion over the finish line.

This is what's going to do it. His statement that he and his Father are one and this raising of Lazarus, this is going to be the last straw and they will actively arrest, they've got enough now to arrest him and put him to death. Now, Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

So it isn't that he was indifferent, it isn't that he, well, people are dying all over, stuff happens, people are sick, I can't run around healing every sick person. He loved them, they were his dear friends. So when he heard that he was sick, he stayed two more days in the place where he was.

Then after this he said to the disciples, let us go to Judea again. The disciples said to him, Rabbi, lately the Jews sought to stone you and are you going there again? The whole reason Jesus is where he is, and we were told that he went to Beth Abara, the place where John had been baptizing at the first, and he's staying out of sight, he's staying away. Even though he knows they're going to kill him and he's got supernatural power, he's staying away, he's exercising wisdom.

When they say they're trying to stone you, are you going to go there again? He says, are there not twelve hours in the day? This is the daylight period. All the ancient civilizations would typically take that daylight and divide it into twelve periods. In the wintertime there are going to be shorter hours and in the summertime there are going to be longer hours, but the hours sort of flexed.

They didn't have Seiko timepieces, they typically measured by the sun. So why does Jesus give this response? Are there not twelve hours in the day? He's already been thinking about the lifespan of Lazarus and he knows that it is not time for Lazarus to die, which is one of the ways he's going to know that he can raise him because it's not his appointed time to die. He also knows it's not his own appointed time to die.

He needs to go and see Lazarus, he's going to do this thing, but he says, are there not twelve hours in the day? Now, who determines the length of the day? This is the day of our lives. When the sun rises, we're born. When the sun sets, we've died.

Who determines that span? It's God. Jesus says, look, there aren't eleven hours in the day. They're not going to take me before the time.

There's twelve hours in the day. And we know Jesus is aware of that. Keep your finger here in John and turn back to Luke chapter 22.

Luke 22 records for us the arrest of the Lord Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. When you look at Luke chapter 22, look at verse 53. What does Jesus say to those who come to arrest him? Have you come out as against a robber with swords and clubs? When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize me, but this is your hour and the power of darkness.

Jesus knows that his twelve-hour day has been completed, and this is the hour of darkness. This is the hour when his power first advent is over. So he is aware.

He's aware of God's time, and he is sensitive to God's timing. And this is something that we want to do as well. As we've seen in previous studies, a delay is an opportunity for

faith.

And Jesus is going to point this out. If one walks in the day, he does not stumble because he sees the light of this world. Jesus has his eyes on the Father.

Jesus knows that he is the light of the world, and he has tasks to accomplish. And this one dealing with Lazarus is one of them. If one walks in the night, he stumbles because the light is not in him.

And those who stumble are those who refuse to acknowledge who he is and why he came. Those who have decreed his arrest are in the night and in the darkness. These things he said, and that's emphatic.

John says, think about what he said. Then after that he said to them, Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up. His disciples said, Lord, if he sleeps, he will get well.

This is especially ancient days without the benefits of modern technology. If you're sick and you're feverish and you're having fits and all kinds of difficulties, when your fever breaks and you can sleep peacefully, that usually means you're on the mend. You're no longer having to struggle.

And so they figure, well, if he's sleeping, the worst of it is over. He's going to get well. Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought he was speaking about taking rest and sleep.

Now why do we have two verses dedicated to this little misunderstanding? Why is this conversation even included at all? Consistently in the New Testament especially, the word sleep is put for death, and there are other times where those who sleep in Jesus is a reference to those who are dead. Why is this figure consistently used for death? Because biblically, what is death? It's a temporary condition, and just like when you're asleep, you eventually wake up. And that idea that it is a sleep means that we'll wake up.

Now, in my view, and you're free to disagree, but the other thing about sleep is you have no cognizance or knowledge of the passing of time. I fell asleep last night. When I woke up this morning, I had no real awareness of the intervening time.

Most of us don't. Sometimes we dream and so on, but typically time passes much more quickly when you're asleep, sometimes sadly so. It seems like I was just working, and I don't really feel rested, and here's a whole other day ahead of me.

And so that bears a little bit on our understanding of the intermediate state. But Jesus says, I go that I may wake him up. And this is a picture of here, resuscitation, which is going to foreshadow resurrection.

So it's, I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, verse 15, in order that you may believe. Try to picture the alternative. What if Jesus had been there? Oh Lord, Martha, Mary, come.

Lazarus is really feeling bad. I think he might die. Jesus lays his hand on him like Peter's mother-in-law, and he gets up and he's all good to go.

There would be no notoriety. This wouldn't excite further aggravation and animosity from Jesus' enemies. And it also wouldn't give Jesus the opportunity to say what he's going to say in verse 25.

I am the resurrection and the life. He that believes in me, though he may die, he shall live. And he who lives and believes in me shall never die.

Do you believe this? And notice Jesus doesn't try to teach this point after Lazarus is raised. You could imagine, oh yeah, Lord, thanks a lot. But Lazarus, you're back.

Oh, my brother. What was that you said, Lord? I missed it. He says it beforehand.

Do you believe? Faith is in that area where things are not visible, when it seems unlikely, when it seems impossible. I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, in order that you may believe. Nevertheless, let us go to him now.

He's waited two full days and now he's going to go. So Thomas sort of cracks wise here. I think this is sarcasm myself.

I don't think Thomas was ready to die with the Lord. I think he thinks this is a really bad idea. He knows the threat.

So when Jesus came, he found that he had already been dead in the tomb for four days. Now, Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away. Why do we have verse 18? Why do we need this geography lesson? Bethany is very, very close to Jerusalem.

What's a typical walking speed for a human being? Three or four miles an hour, maybe? So in a half hour, somebody can walk that distance, especially if they're in a hurry. You think you could cover two miles in less than an hour, certainly. This is proximate danger for the Lord Jesus.

He is under a death sentence. They are actively looking for him. There's a warrant out for his arrest.

He is going very close to Jerusalem. Many of the Jews had joined the women around Martha and Mary. Now, are these women not Jews? What are they, Canaanites, Philistines, Moabites? Who are these women? It says, many of the Jews had joined them.

Who are these Jews? These are religious types. These are sympathizers with the scribes

and Pharisees. Many of them have joined the women to comfort them concerning their brother.

They may be friends and so on, but they're still sympathetic with the whole organized religious thing. That's why they're called the Jews and distinguished from the women who are friends of Mary and Martha. So Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him.

Mary was sitting in the house. Jesus does not go to the house. The mourners do not see him, nor does he go to the tomb.

Why? He goes to a place of meeting that people don't know about. You can see this further. Martha said to Jesus, Lord, if you'd been here, my brother would not have died, but even now I know whatever you ask of God, God will give you.

Look down at verse 28. When she had said these things, she went her way and secretly called Mary her sister. Secretly called? Why? It's dangerous.

It is dangerous for Jesus to be there. The disciples knew it beforehand. Jesus doesn't go to the crowd.

He doesn't go to either of the sites where he would be likely to be found. These Jews can run to Jerusalem and an arrest party can be on their way in no time. Martha knows this.

She secretly, this is the reason even when they sent the message, they didn't use Lazarus' name. The one you love is sick. If this messenger gets caught and squeezed, they don't have a name.

The teacher has come and is calling for you. As soon as she heard that, look at verse 29, she arose quickly and came to him. Jesus had not yet come into the town, but was in the place where Martha met him.

Even in the account it's not described where they met. It's a secret place. This has significance by the way.

This has interpretive and applicational value. They met in a private place. Then the Jews who were with her in the house and comforting her, notice it doesn't mention the women, the Jews who were at the house comforting her, when they saw that Mary rose up quickly and went out, followed her saying, she is going to the tomb to weep there.

They don't know that she's going to meet Jesus. They don't know that Jesus is there. This is a well-kept secret.

So the enemies are not apprised, but there's great, great danger. It is told to us beforehand. It's told us at the end of this chapter.

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. So this is like a stealthy mission. This is a secret operation operation.

There's a lot of security and a lot of code going on here and a lot of subterfuge. Now if Jesus says there's 12 hours in a day and he can't be taken, why doesn't he just walk boldly in and walk back out like he did when he was in Nazareth and they tried to throw him off the cliff or Capernaum or any of the other places where he just walked through the crowd and wasn't taken? It's not the time. Jesus knows the time.

He knows the way because he's in communion with his Father. He's a man of prayer. He has God the Holy Spirit.

He is steeped in the Old Testament Scriptures and he knows God's purpose. This isn't the time for a miracle of passing through the crowd. This is a time for a greater miracle.

So he takes steps and he is prudent. And we can do the same. Yes, God is in his heaven.

Yes, God will supply all our needs. Yes, God will secure us from all harm, but it doesn't mean we shouldn't be prudent. Jesus is careful.

He doesn't endanger himself nor does he endanger those he loves. And God could certainly preserve them, but Jesus takes steps in the human realm. These are non-supernatural precautions that are taken because it is highly dangerous.

One of the applications, if you're a missionary in a foreign land, there is nothing wrong with being careful, with being secretive, with not revealing the truth to those who would actively try to harm you. It is okay to operate in secret and avoid the authorities if they are trying to take you and prevent you from doing God's work. So, Jesus now, for the first time, as we back up a little bit, is going to meet Martha.

Martha, there are runners going back and forth. There are messengers who are carefully and without drawing attention, letting Jesus know what the situation is, letting Martha know what the situation is. Martha doesn't even tell her sister.

Maybe her sister is a little emotional and she doesn't want her giving away the game, and so she goes out. Martha is the more practical, steady one that did the dishes while Jesus was teaching, so she goes out to meet the Lord Jesus. She doesn't tell anyone, and they meet in this mutually agreed place.

So Martha, verse 20, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him, but Mary was sitting in the house. It is not necessarily the time for everyone who knows the Lord Jesus to come out and meet him. This is done with care.

This is done with thought. Martha said to Jesus, Lord, if you had been here, my brother

would not have died. Jesus has already addressed this, hasn't he? I am glad I wasn't there, so that you may believe.

He is going to bring that issue of faith up with Martha as well. Jesus knows God's thinking with Lazarus' illness and Lazarus' death. He knows God's purpose, and because of that, he knows how to act and he knows what to say.

But even now, Martha says, I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you. And she is thinking practically. The emotion of the moment has not kept her from realizing that Jesus can still do something about this.

And remember, this is already four days in the grave for Lazarus. And you look at Martha, why did Jesus love Martha? Why did he love Mary? Why did he love Lazarus? Because they got it. They listened and they paid attention and they grasped at least the hem of the garment of what Jesus was teaching.

And he loved them for that. And he is building on their faith. He is giving them an opportunity to advance.

And you have to admire Martha. Even now, I know that whatever you ask of God, he will give you. Jesus said to her, your brother will rise again, right off the bat.

Now, this is a lot to say. Martha and Mary and Lazarus weren't around on other times when Jesus has raised Jairus' daughter or the man that was on the stretcher being carried out to be buried. They've heard that.

They know the Lord Jesus. They know the disciples. They've heard firsthand accounts of this.

But still, in my case, can Jesus do this? It's one thing to hear of it happening for others and in other places and other times, but what about me? Here's the direct promise, your brother will rise again. So Martha is still thinking. Very emotional time, but she's still thinking.

She says, I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day. This reminds me of prayer life. We had our devotional this morning on ask and it shall be given.

Seek and you will find. Knock and it will be open to you. And sometimes we can have this kind of back and forth in prayer.

We're praying and we're trying to find the light of God's will and pray in keeping with it. And scripture comes to our mind. We say, well, I know this is true.

Is it going to be a far fulfillment? Is this something I've got to be patient and wait for? And that's really the question, isn't it? Well, I know he's going to be raised eventually. I know all things will come eventually. I know in the resurrection all the promises will be

fulfilled.

I was sort of hoping for something sooner. Don't we often pray this way? Well, I know you'll eventually make all things right, but anything in the near term offing, Lord, would really be nice. Jesus said to her, I know you're looking at the resurrection and the life.

You're standing here talking with the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me, though he may die, he shall live. He is affirming her belief in the far term resurrection, right? Though he may die, yet shall he live.

And whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Now, does he mean, well, he just got through saying, though he may die, he will live. But then he says the one who lives and believes in me will never die.

Does that mean you die once and after that the judgment and you'll never die again? Or does it mean if you live and believe in him, you never die? We would say in English, you never really die. Well, what does it mean to never really die? You die, but you don't? Well, I would suggest just in passing, go back to that idea of sleep. If you fall asleep and you wake back up, you don't really feel like you've been gone for four hours or six hours or eight hours or ten hours, however long you were asleep.

Your conscious experience kind of ends at the point that you lose consciousness and resumes at the point that you regain consciousness. And we really don't, even when we dream, 90% of the time we don't remember what it was. We just come back to life.

That's brain housekeeping. And here we are resuming. And there's been this interval that we didn't experience.

And there is the notion that rather than disembodied spirits or is there an interim body and one thing and another, God, we tend to think so sequentially. And there's a chance that in God's economy, what's the point of us kind of hanging around, tapping our foot, waiting for things, absent from the body, face-to-face with the Lord? When is it that Scripture says we're face-to-face with the Lord? When the Lord descends from heaven with a shout, voice of the archangel, trump of God, the dead rise. If they're disembodied, why wouldn't they come back with Him? Well, I think my grandmother was conscious and was in prayer and was thinking about the Lord and fell asleep in Jesus.

And for her, a twinkling of an eye, and here's the Lord Jesus, and She's going to precede us into the air, assuming that it happens while we're alive. If we're dead, we'll precede whoever's still walking around. And this momentary light affliction is replaced with that eternal weight of glory instantly.

That's one way to look at it. And it makes sense of this verse, the one who lives and believes in Me shall never die. You don't experience loss.

You don't experience darkness. You don't experience separation. You don't experience, there's no question of, well, are they peeking down and watching and, you know, is Grandma going through all of my agonies and being disappointed when I fail? And I think it's kind of like us looking at the Old Testament.

Some of that stuff they can catch up on historically. You have plenty of kingdom, a thousand years to catch up on everything you missed while you were asleep. That's my view.

But the one who lives and believes in Me shall never die. The pain of death and the separation of death and the thousand, the rest of the dead live not until the thousand years were finished. We don't go through that.

It's, we close our eyes, we open them, and there's the Lord Jesus. That's how I like to think of it. The one who lives and believes in Me will never die.

From a human perspective, though he may die, he will live. From a personal perspective, from the subjective point of view, we really never die. Do you believe this? She said to him, Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come in the world.

He that is to come. Well, we're going to pause here and take our break, but hold that thought. He that is to come.

Martha says, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world. She doesn't say who has come. This is a technical phrase, the one who is to come into the world.

Why does she say this on the heels of his statements about life and death and resurrection? Well, when we come back from the break, we're going to look at this. We're going to actually be in the book of Hebrews to fully understand what Martha has just said. It's a great, great statement.

What is our application from what we have seen thus far? I would suggest that when there is a delay, when it looks like things are going from bad to worse and Jesus doesn't seem to be intervening, what is the purpose? Jesus knows the purpose for Lazarus' death, and He's saying, I'm trying to get you to see it. This is happening so that you may believe. Martha, do you believe? I haven't raised your brother yet.

I'm telling you I'm going to raise him. Do you believe? It's that time of delay, that time of opportunity for us to trust. There won't be faith in the resurrection.

There is no faith that I know of after the resurrection. Why? Faith is what you hope for. That is our hope.

Our hope is fulfilled. Unless God puts a fresh hope out there, faith is the substance of things hoped for, evidence of things not seen. Now we see through a glass darkly, then face to face.

This is our chance for faith. This is our opportunity to believe when we cannot see, to expect and wait for that hope that is not yet fulfilled. And it makes sense that there are times of trouble and times of challenge that don't immediately resolve.

What is the purpose? Lord, I've been praying about this now and it doesn't seem to be resolving. What does Jesus say? This is happening in order that you may believe. One of the quickest ways, you know, sometimes we pray and pray and pray and God doesn't answer, and it has occurred to me, maybe one of the quickest ways to get that answer is to stop asking and start believing, start trusting.

Once we get it, once we understand it, once we affirm it and we're confident in it and we say, Lord, I know you're going to handle this, I don't even need to ask anymore, then the answer comes. Because if the purpose is for us to believe, if we're believing, it doesn't need to exist any longer. So it's sort of the art of the indirect approach.

Instead of attacking, you know, maybe we need to go around and knock at the back door. Believe. Let's pause here and take our break.