

**CCF Study Notes**  
**Tuesday 7 AM Study**  
**21 March 2006**  
**John Chapter 11**

Before beginning to read from John Chapter 11 let's spend some time in prayer, considering how much Jesus cares for those His own. Let's ask God to:

1. **Show** how much He loves each of us;
2. **Be glorified** in everything that happens to each of us;
3. Let us **Boldly** go wherever God calls us to go;
4. Let us **Believe** God because of His works;
5. Help us to **Wait** for God without wavering through unbelief;
6. Enable us to **Look** to Jesus as our resurrection and life, and
7. **Let** our hearts be broken by the things that break God's heart.

Chapter 12, like chapter 9 is devoted entirely to the incidents surrounding the last of the seven signs around which John's gospel is built. This chapter centers around the resurrection of Lazarus, the events leading up to that resurrection, and the responses to the sign. Jesus could no longer walk openly in Jerusalem, for this sign was the final straw to some people. Jesus had to die! Consider how this issue connects with what Jesus was saying to the people at the end of chapter 10. Who was playing God, and why?

Consider in verses 1-4 who Lazarus, Mary and Martha were and what relationship they had with Jesus. Some people would claim that those who are walking close with Jesus can suffer no harm or trouble. Does this passage support that idea? The love in this passage goes both way, as the account of Mary's anointing Jesus shows. Had Mary anointed Jesus yet when these events took place? Jesus often looks from outside time, where the love we will one day show toward God is seen, and even acknowledged in advance. So if God seems to speak to you of a love that is not yet evident in your life – just love Him with all your heart and look for greater ways to express that love. Jesus knows something you don't yet know!

Jesus held off returning to Judea as long as He could – perhaps because of the danger, and perhaps because the Father had simply asked Him to wait. God's timing is often not our timing. Have you experienced some inexplicable delays on God's part? Have the reasons ever become apparent? Most of us have experienced the blessing of God's answers delayed – answers that would have destroyed us if they came any sooner.

We learn from this account where Jesus likely stayed when He came to the feasts in Jerusalem. The interaction with Martha in verse 17-27 is absolutely wonderful. It is

Martha who receives one the great "I AM" statements of Jesus. Why would Jesus teach Martha about the doctrine of resurrection when she is still mourning Her brother? Isn't this in bad taste? The only true comfort we have in the face of death comes through Jesus Christ. That comfort comes from looking beyond our present sorrow to our future joy.

What does it mean to affirm that Jesus is Messiah? Martha seemed to understand that resurrection and life would come through Messiah. Do we sometimes look to Christ as only our help in this life – but fail to look beyond?

Mary came to Jesus, as did Martha. Mary was not ready to reason with Jesus, but only to weep at His feet. Did Jesus shun Mary or ignore her emotions? It is wrong to think that Jesus is without emotion or that He is unable to feel our emotions. We see from this beautiful account that Jesus enters into the emotions of His own. Furthermore, we hear that groaning within that speaks to the deep compassion and empathy that marked all of Jesus' ministry. It is from that deep empathy that we, with the crowds learn just how much Jesus loves us.

Jesus came with a bold request: "Open the tomb!" Sometimes we, in our limited view of things, are unwilling to comply with Jesus demands. Though the practical one, Martha, complained, the command was obeyed.

Why did Jesus cry out as He did? And why the awkward explanation before crying out?

Many believed. Many did not. And the polarization was such that those who did not believe saw Jesus as a threat. Why was Jesus such a threat to the Chief Priests and Pharisees? And who gave Caiaphas his prophecy? We must be careful with all prophecy to discern where the prophecy comes from and whether it agrees with scripture.

Notice the violent stance toward Jesus and the increased risk that Jesus and His disciples faced. What was Jesus' response to this danger? Jesus was a wanted man – both by believers and unbelievers. Yet Jesus was virtually untouchable to the authorities. And what place was the center of this plot against Jesus? What's up with that? It is sometimes in our "highest" and "holiest" moments that we turn most against God. We need to consider carefully who is directing our hearts when we are angry!

Consider in prayer the wonderful fact that Jesus gave His life that we might escape death and live with Him. Jesus placed Himself in harm's way that we might escape the power of sin. What Love! What grace toward us! What obedience is this, that goes the whole way for us! Let's worship a while before moving on!