You will see the glory of God
John 11:1-44

Introduction

We often have expectations of others and the closer the person is to us the greater those expectations normally are. Out of the following expectations that someone might have which ones do you think might be reasonable for a person to have of a close friend:

- Ringing them for their birthday
- Picking them up at the airport after a holiday
- Lending them their car
- Help them move house
- Lending them a couple of hundred dollars
- Putting them up for a month if they were getting their bathroom renovated
- Minding their kids

We all have expectations of how our close friends ought to respond if we were to ask them for help. Some of those expectations might be very reasonable, some of them might be less so. In the story of Lazarus in chapter 11 of the Gospel of John, we read how Lazarus' sisters sent word to Jesus that their brother was ill. They obviously did so with the expectation that Jesus might have done something. Please read verses 1 to 7 to discover more about Lazarus and his sisters and what Jesus did when he received their message.

Lazarus and his sisters

1. What was the message that was sent to Jesus by the sisters and what do you think they might have been expecting Jesus to do (see also 11:21,32)?

2. Why might it be reasonable for the sisters to have expected Jesus to have done something and what could he have possibly done (11:3,5; c.f. 4:43-54)?

3. What did Jesus do when he got their message?

Think about it

How close was Jesus to this family?

What did Jesus say was going to result from this illness and what do you think he meant by this?

Jesus and the disciples

After two more days Jesus told the disciples that it was time to return to Judea. Judea was where Bethany was located and Bethany was just 3 km from Jerusalem. Please read verses 8 to

16 to discover how the disciples responded when Jesus told them it was time to leave and go back.

4. How did the disciples react to being told it was time to return to Judea and why would they have reacted this way (11:8,16 and see also 10:31-42)?

5. Why did Jesus say that he wanted to go back despite what had recently happened in Jerusalem?

6. Why did Jesus say that he was glad that he had not been there at Bethany with Lazarus?

Think about it

The Jewish people regarded sunrise as the beginning of the day and sunset as the end and no matter when the sunset that was the twelfth hour and midday was the sixth.

What was Jesus pointing out to the disciples when he was saying there was twelve hours of daylight (see 9:1-5; 12:35-36)?

Do you think this has any relevance to how we ought to regard the time that we have (see also 1 Corinthians 7:29-31)?

Jesus and the sisters

By the time Jesus arrived in Bethany Lazarus had already been dead for 4 days having been in his tomb that long. Please read verses 17 to 37 to discover what happened when Jesus met first with Martha and then with Mary, Lazarus' sisters.

7. How did each of the sisters respond when they met up with Jesus? How do you think they were feeling at the time?

8. What did Jesus initially say to comfort Martha and what did she understand him to be talking about?

9. What was it that the sisters needed to understand about the resurrection and why was this so important?

Think about it

How can we face death with real confidence and why (see John 3:36; 14:19; 1 Corinthians 15:56-58; Colossians 2:13-14)?

Jesus and Lazarus

Even the Jews who followed Mary believed that Jesus could have kept this man from dying. But what all of them needed to understand was that Jesus is the resurrection and the life. What would happen at the tomb would show them the truth of what he had been telling them. Please read verses38 to 45.

10. Why did Jesus pray in the way that he did and what happened when he called out to Lazarus?

11. What had Jesus revealed about himself (see also 5:24-30)?

Think about it

Jesus told Martha that if she believed she would see the glory of God. How was God's glory displayed (11:4)?

How are you meant to respond to seeing the glory of God in his Son (see 11:27, 45; 20:31)?

If we believe that Jesus is the resurrection and the life, how do you think we should live our lives now while we wait for that day to come?