

Magnolia Missionary Baptist Church of Beaumont

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Lesson # 7 Conquering the Ultimate Enemy

Devotional Reading: Philippians 3:1-11

Background Scripture: John 11:17-44

Printed Passage: John 11:17-27; 38-44

### **Introduction**

When teaching the little ones, we always introduce the main characters of the story:

- JESUS: the Son GOD (John 11: 4)
- Lazarus: One whom JESUS loved brother to Mary and Martha (John 11: 3)
- Mary: the women who anointed JESUS feet with oil and dried HIS feet with her hair (John 11: 2)
- Martha: The woman who was, distracted after opening her home to JESUS, Mary, her sister sat at JESUS feet rather than help serve (Luke 10:38-42).

John 11:1-5, speaks of the love that Jesus, Lazarus, Mary, and Martha had for one another. It was reported to JESUS that Lazarus was dying and the sisters wanted JESUS to come quickly to save him from death. But JESUS stayed where he was for two more days. In vs. 11-15, JESUS tells the Disciples that Lazarus is sleeping, and HE will go to wake him. The disciples did not understand that HE was referring to the death of Lazarus. And by Jesus not being present for the death of Lazarus and there being witnesses to the death, the disciples and the mourners might believe in the resurrection power of JESUS that could only be, given by God. The question we most often ask is: "Is there anything too hard for Me and GOD?" Can you swim any river or climb any mountain as long as JESUS is our "co-pilot?" It is only when we realize that our only job in this matter is to relinquish all our control, and place all our trust in Jesus, is when we find we don't have to climb the mountain, but the mountain will move out of our way. We do not have to swim that river; I read where GOD parted the Red Sea. This lesson "Conquering the Ultimate Enemy" is not how we conquer it, but to realize that Jesus has already conquered it.

### **A Testimony of Trust**

#### **Read John 11:17-24**

John 11: 17, informs us that by the time Jesus arrived in Bethany, Lazarus had been in the grave 4 days. Custom dictates that the deceased must be, buried the same day that they die. The significance of 4 days is that the Jews believed that even after the body died, the spirit lingered around for 3 days, therefore, by the fourth day they are decomposing and there is no hope of them coming back to life. But the believer knows that death may end the chapter, but it does not close the book. The believers of the Gospel are to believe with their hearts, minds, and souls that death does not get the final word. Mary, Martha, and Lazarus had to have been well-known, highly regarded, and respected in their community because John 11: 19 says, that "many of the Jews came." They came to comfort Mary and Martha in their loss. The sisters were dealing with the reality of death and the nature of grief differently. Mary sat still. Martha, hearing that Jesus was coming immediately ran out to meet JESUS. She admitted, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Jesus told her that her brother will rise again, but not understanding she says I know, on that great resurrection day he will rise. But she failed to understand that right now, after the death of her brother, Jesus had divine authority to "Conquer the Ultimate Enemy."

### **Deity Confirmed**

#### **Read John 11:25-27**

John 11: 25, Jesus proclaims his redemptive power over death, judgment, and the final destiny of our souls. Many times, in the book of John we read JESUS saying I AM:

- I AM the Bread of Life (John 6:35)
- I AM the Light of the World (John 8:12)
- I AM the Door (John 10:9)
- I AM the Good Shepherd (John 10:11,14)
- I AM the Resurrection and the Life (John 11:25)
- I AM the Way and the Truth and the Life (John 14:6)
- I AM the Vine (John 15:1,5)

Martha was, asked the question; do you believe in me? John 11: 26 says, “And whosoever liveth and believeth in ME shall never die. Believest thou this? Her response is one that I have heard from each baptism candidate when they came forward for Baptism, “Yes, I believe Jesus is the Son of GOD.” We must also remember that JESUS has already “CONQUER THE ULTIMATE ENEMY.”

### **An Unexpected Miracle**

#### **Read John 11:38-44**

John 11: 38 states that, “JESUS groaned in himself”.

- Was he disturbed because of the mourners who believed that death had won?
- Or did JESUS see his own tomb in the distance?
- Or was he groaning because he was facing down death?

Whatever the reason, here we are, at a grave site once again. Lazarus has been here for four days, wrapped in grave clothes, napkin over his face and his feet bound. But this time Jesus is officiating. He is not here to bury the dead but to raise the dead, and “Conquer the Ultimate Enemy.”

Jesus waited long enough to travel to Bethany to the tomb of Lazarus for the resuscitation time to pass so that all would know that what was about to happen was more than resuscitation. What Jesus was doing for Lazarus was surely a miracle. Not man’s work, but GOD’S work. It was to be a powerful, wonderful sign of Jesus control over death. JESUS is the giver of Life and can make death behave. It is to be know by all that even death must obey GOD’S Will.

John 11: 41 JESUS prays aloud. With his prayer JESUS suggested that he was, troubled by those around HIM because of their unbelief. His disciples, and other onlookers did not have enough faith for the task at hand, and no one spoke up with words of confidence in what JESUS could do at the tomb. HIS prayer is a public declaration of HIS identity with HIS Father. JESUS came to do the WILL of the ONE who sent HIM. I read the story that when Jesus called Lazarus from the grave, he had to call him by name, because if he had not, all who heard HIM say “come forth” would have gotten up from their graves. You see death no longer had dominion. Imagine the shock of the onlookers. JESUS had to tell them to unbind his hands and feet, let him go. GOOD NEWS: Death cannot overpower the Will of GOD. JESUS has already “CONQUERED THE ULTIMATE ENEMY.”