

ONLY BELIEVE

John 11: 1-46 (selected)

“Jesus said to her, ‘Did I not say to you that if you would believe, you would see the glory of God?’” (11:40)

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In the small town of Bethany, in Judea, lived Lazarus and his two sisters, Martha and Mary, who were friends of Jesus. While He was some distance away, the news came that Lazarus was sick and Jesus told His disciples that they would stay two more days where they were. After the two days, Jesus announced that they would now go to Judea, also stating clearly that Lazarus was now dead.

Arriving at the place of the tomb of Lazarus, Martha said, *“Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.”* (v. 21)

In her discouragement, it seems that Martha’s thoughts were going in the direction of “You were not there when we needed You and You should have been”.

Jesus asked that the stone be removed from the tomb, at which Martha immediately remonstrated that Lazarus had now been dead four days and there would be a stench, even though Jesus had said to her, *“Your brother shall rise again”*. Then were those words spoken by Jesus, *“Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?”* (v. 40)

BELIEVE! Jesus was calling Martha to believe in His word to her. His words had been;

“I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?” (vs. 25-26)

Martha was only seeing Lazarus as dead, having it fixed in her mind that Jesus could heal, but not raise the dead. She thought Jesus could only work in one way, but His message to her was not to limit her expectations by what was

visible outwardly, but to trust in His word with the promise to see the GLORY OF GOD in that situation.

The dramatic words spoken by Jesus at the tomb were, *“Lazarus come forth!”* followed by *“And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with grave clothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, ‘Loose him and let him go.’”* (John 11: 43-44)

Perhaps we, too, sometimes look at one who seems unresponsive to the message of new life in Jesus Christ and see that one as ‘dead’. Does He not say to each one of us “Trust Me – in all things’, trust, pray and rest in a settled certainty of His unfailing faithfulness. In Luke 18:1 we are encouraged that we *“always ought to pray and not lose heart”*. May we see with the eye of faith and see death become life.

Reflecting on the fact that Jesus gave the task of loosing Lazarus to others (verse 46), my first thoughts were, ‘But how, Lord, for You are the One who sets free’. And so it is Jesus who sets free, but how frequently in response to our obedience to faithful prayer. What joy it will be when we see people in glory that we have prayed for!

So, let us not lose heart, continuing on in prayer for others where there seems no outward sign of response, and watch that discouragement doesn’t creep in. Let us ONLY BELIEVE and see the glory of God awaken others to new LIFE in Christ.