

John 11:28-36. Christ Goes to the Tomb of Lazarus.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

Jesus' presence brings joy and comfort to those who mourn, and he delights in causing happiness to his children.

Scripture: Psalm 30:5, Isaiah 53:3, John 11:32, Hebrews 12:2, Revelation 21:4

Topics: "Resurrection Power", "Divine Compassion"

Description

Favell Lee Mortimer preaches on the touching story of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead, highlighting Mary and Martha's grief, Jesus' compassion and tears, and the anticipation of the joyous miracle to come. Despite Mary's overwhelming sorrow, Jesus empathizes with her and the unbelieving Jews, shedding tears and hastening to remove the cause of their grief. The sermon emphasizes the immense joy and satisfaction Jesus will experience on the last day when the ransomed return to Zion, reflecting on the unparalleled happiness that will fill every soul as a result of His sacrifice and love.

Transcript

No other words could have conveyed such joy to Mary's heart as those that Martha whispered in her ear, "The Master has come, he calls for you." Yet her joy was mingled with bitter regrets that she had not heard the welcome tidings before Lazarus died.

Martha called her sister secretly. Perhaps she did not wish that the Jews who sat around should accompany them to meet their Lord, for many of those Jews did not believe in him. The presence of unbelievers is felt to be a painful constraint by those who desire to open their hearts to Jesus. It will be one of the delights of heaven to feel that everything there sympathizes in all the communications that take place between the saints and their Savior.

But these Jews appear to have been much interested in Mary's grief; and when they saw her arise they followed her, thinking she was going to weep at her brother's grave. They little imagined how wonderful a scene they would soon behold. They must have been astonished to see Jesus waiting on the road. Mary then fell down at his feet, and uttered the very same words that Martha had used before, "If you had been here my brother had not died." This was all that Mary could express. It appears that her grief was more overwhelming than her sister's. We do not hear that Martha fell down at the Redeemer's feet; nor that she wept as Mary did. Some spirits are more bowed down by grief than others. The Lord knows the frame of each of his creatures, and what each is able to bear. We are apt to pass harsh judgments upon one

another; sometimes calling those unfeeling who sustain sorrow with composure, and looking upon others as rebellious against God who faint beneath its weight. But the Lord deals gently with the sorrowful--instead of reproving Mary's tears, he shed tears also.

Next to the history of his shedding his blood, this is the most touching, which tells us of his shedding tears. These tears were the tokens of deep trouble within. Before he shed them, it is said that "he groaned in spirit, and was troubled." Though he knew that Mary's grief would soon be assuaged, he felt for her actual sorrow; and not for hers only, but for the sorrow of the unbelieving Jews that accompanied her. There is nothing that so much solaces a mourner as to feel that he does not mourn alone. There is not one who has heard how Jesus shed these tears who ought to think he mourns alone. Even if he does not love the Savior, yet that Savior feels for him, because he is the work of his own hands.

But it was not sympathy alone that he bestowed upon the weeping train; he hastened to remove the cause of their sorrow, saying, "Where have you laid him?" Even we (selfish as we are) have experienced the sweetness of giving pleasure, especially to those we love. But who can conceive the delight the Redeemer felt whenever he caused his children to rejoice! This was the bright color in his sorrowful life; he created more joy than any being has ever done that has dwelt upon earth. How his gracious heart must have glowed with the anticipation of the approaching scene, as he advanced towards the tomb of Lazarus! And now, as years roll on, our Redeemer sees the day approaching which is to be the happiest that ever yet has dawned upon this world. It was a happy day when the foundation of the world was laid, for then the morning stars sang together for joy. It was a happy day when Adam and Eve first beheld this fair creation, and sang their earliest anthem to its great Creator. It was a happy night when the shepherds heard the angels announce the birth of the Babe of Bethlehem. It was a happy morn when the women who visited the sepulcher heard angels say, "The Lord is risen." But no day nor night has yet been seen as happy as that last day will be, when the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads. Of all the happy multitude then assembled, not one will feel so vast a tide of happiness springing up in his soul as the Redeemer himself--as He, who will be the fountain of all the joy flowing in every bosom. Then he will behold the travail of his soul, and be satisfied--satisfied that he left his throne of glory; satisfied that he trod this sorrowful earth; satisfied that he bled upon the cross; satisfied that he loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.

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