



**aletheia**  
CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP  
*February 19, 2023*  
*“Seventh Sign”*

*SS 9:30, Service at 10:30 with King’s Kids.*

News:

**Wednesday Evening Classes 6:30-8:00**

330 N. Somers Rd. (Mail: PO Box 10626) Kalispell, MT 59904~ (406) 755-1776

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People like to think that they will be innocent at \_\_\_\_\_ because they didn’t know. Because their ignorance is not due to a lack of Truth available, but an arrogance that refuses to learn the Truth, they won’t be \_\_\_\_\_ at all.

Question what you think you know. Hold your \_\_\_\_\_ very loosely. If they are correct, nothing can make them untrue. If they are incorrect, nothing can make them true.

**John 10:40–42 ~**

For everyone there will come a point where it is the \_\_\_\_\_ opportunity to follow Jesus.

Many people believed that the Baptizer was \_\_\_\_\_ concerning Jesus (John chapter 1, verses 29, 33, 34, 41, 48).

**John 11:1–5 ~**

Lazarus is short for Eleazar אֵלְעָזָר (ële-ä-tzäř), and Bethany is 1¾ miles east of \_\_\_\_\_.

Martha is Aramaic meaning \_\_\_\_\_. Mary is Greek, but popular with Jews due to its similarity to Miriam מִרְיָם (mĩ-řē-äm) – like the sister of \_\_\_\_\_ and Aaron.

Lazarus and his sisters are main characters for the next two chapters. What we know is that when Jesus was in \_\_\_\_\_, He often stayed with this family.

*Fill out the other side, detach this part of the page, and place it in the offering plate or the prayer/suggestion box in the lobby or with an Elder or Deacon of the church.*

*God Bless You!*

Verse 3 is not merely a notification informing Jesus that His friend Lazarus is ill, it's clearly a plea for Jesus to \_\_\_\_\_. We need to take culture into account when interpreting the Bible and also remember that all Christians across the globe are still one flock even though we have many \_\_\_\_\_ idiosyncrasies.

Love in verse 3 is that it is φιλέω (fī-lě-ō), meaning reciprocal \_\_\_\_\_ love. Jumping ahead to verse 36, the Jews seeing Jesus' reaction, said "See how He loved him!" Again, brotherly \_\_\_\_\_ love, but when the Bible confirms Jesus' love for Lazarus and his two sisters it is ἀγαπάω (ä-gä-pä-ō) – that \_\_\_\_\_ love,

God Agapês us so much that He develops an \_\_\_\_\_ for us as well. If you allow the Holy Spirit to Agapê others through you, your \_\_\_\_\_ for them will grow.

You might think that Jesus doesn't want to be with you when you are sinning, but really it is you who is uninterested in having \_\_\_\_\_ around, while you are sinning (John 14:15). Pushing Jesus and others away is the \_\_\_\_\_ of φιλέω and the reason you do it, is you also do not ἀγαπάω – at least, not enough.

The thing that results in the greatest recognition of God's glory is \_\_\_\_\_. That He would unilaterally provide, at tremendous personal expense, reconciliation while we were still His \_\_\_\_\_.

Jesus is "the Resurrection and the Life" (John 11:25), and that no one can approach the Father apart from Him (John 14:6). That is Salvation for all who \_\_\_\_\_ unto eternal life, which is the greatest thing that demonstrates the immeasurable glory of Almighty God and Jesus our Lord.

### John 11:6–8 ~

It was the Father's intent to use this incredibly sad, but completely natural event, to give the world the \_\_\_\_\_ and final Sign that proved the claims of this Gospel (John 1:4, 5:21, 6:48, 8:12, 10:28&27).

IF life is not in Jesus, Christians are nothing more than pitiable fools. On the other hand, IF life is in Jesus, then every \_\_\_\_\_ is a pitiable fool. It's one or the other.

### John 11:9&10 ~

The gist was that Jesus had more to do before \_\_\_\_\_ fell. What more does He have for you to accomplish before \_\_\_\_\_ falls?

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Write a brief note – detach and place in the offering, or the prayer box, or give it to a Deacon or Elder.

\_\_\_\_\_  
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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_



# lêtheia

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP




lêtheia  
CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

the gospel of  
**JOHN**

ΕΝΑΡΧΗ Η ΝΟΛΟΓΟΣ ΚΑΙ Ο ΛΟΓΟΣ ΕΗΝ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΝ  
 ΘΝ ΚΑΙ ΘΕ ΤΗ ΝΟΛΟΓΟΣ ΕΣΥ ΤΟΣ Η ΝΕΝΑΡΧΗ ΤΙΡΟΣ  
 ΤΟΝ ΘΝ ΠΑΝΤΑ ΔΙΑ ΤΟ ΥΕ ΓΕΝΕΤΟ ΚΑΧΩΤΙΣ

The ARROGANCE  
of IGNORANCE  
is not INNOCENCE

Last week we finished what was Jesus' seventh and final dialogue with the Jews. He will make no further attempt to explain either Himself, or His mission, to those who have already made up their mind.

We saw that personal humbleness is the prerequisite to believing the Gospel, which is the magnificent Message of Christ. As our friend Randy put it concerning the insufficient personal humbleness of the Jews opposed to Jesus, "Little surprise that, having spent a lifetime constructing their status, they couldn't step off of it."

That was precisely their problem. They were so sure of themselves and their understanding of Scripture that they could not even entertain another possibility.

We are the same. We 21st century Americans, with our omnipresent electronic devices which are constantly connected to the worldwide web and all the social media content vomited out onto it, are perhaps the most openly opinionated people to ever draw breath. Most of us eagerly spout off our opinion on topics upon which we have no education, training, or experience, as though we are experts on the matter.

We are absolutely certain in our own mind about so many things and just like the Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, and Zealots before us, we are almost always wrong as well.

It is an ignorance based on arrogance. People like to think that they will be innocent before the Judgment because they didn't know. In truth, they are not innocent at all, because their ignorance is not due to a lack of Truth available, but an arrogance that refuses to learn the Truth that is available.

Everyone in this room presently holds opinions (plural), that you believe are immutable facts, that you are wrong about. I could give examples, but it would only serve to annoy and alienate you. Neither I, nor the Lord, want to drive you away. I make this point for a few reasons.

1) First, I want us to identify with the Jews in order to apply the lessons that they failed to learn to ourselves, so that we don't continue to make their mistake.

2) Second, I want you to more clearly see why Jesus spent so much time debating people who were never going to agree. The reason why is... love. Jesus repeatedly discoursed with His opponents in an effort to give them every opportunity to come around.

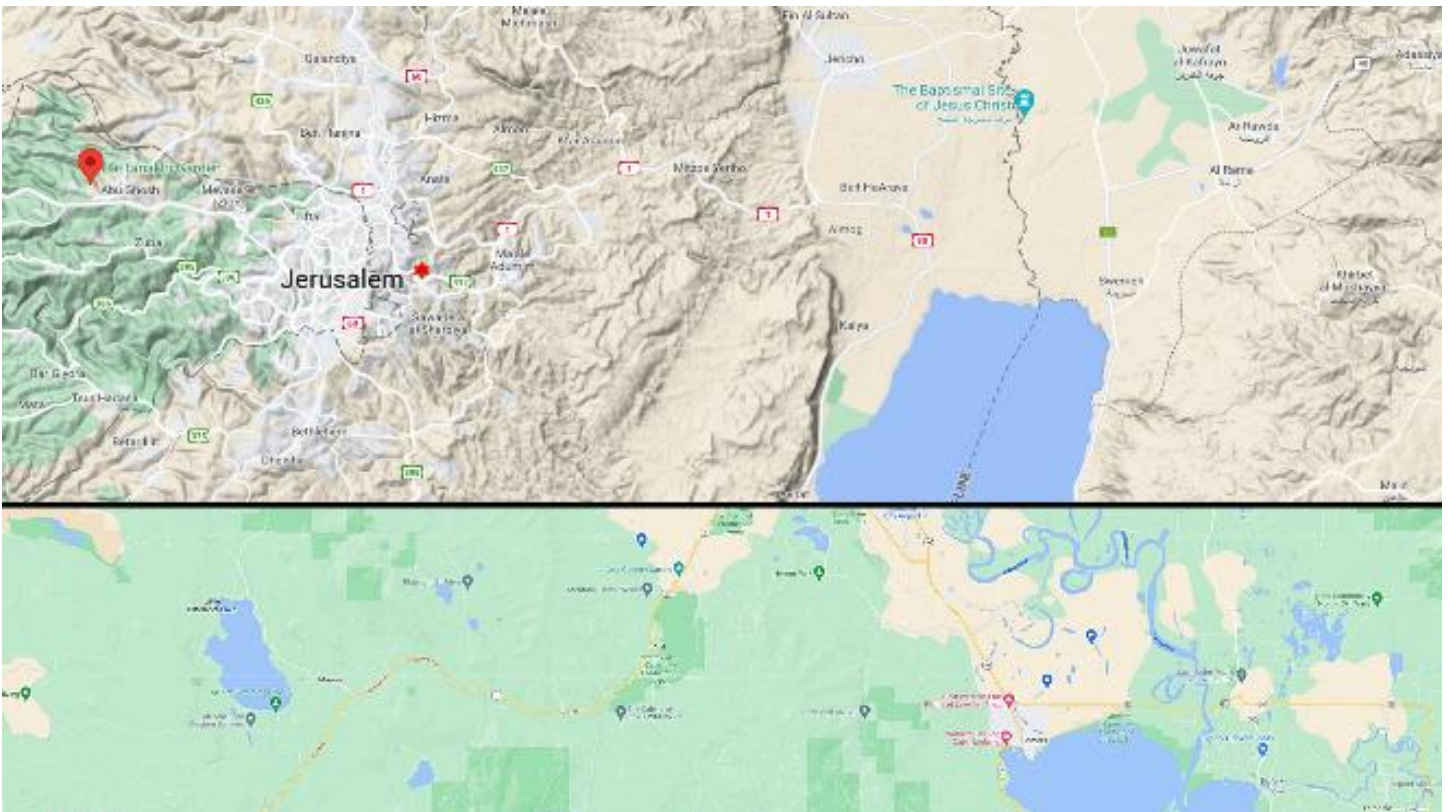
3) Third, I want you to realize that eventually it's over. There will be a final time that God tries to get you to turn... Man, I hope we do it before our opportunities cease.

4) Fourth, these concepts apply to both initial Salvation and to our ongoing Christian life.

5) Fifth, I want all of us to carefully examine ourselves. I said last week that if you thought that pride is not a problem for you, it was only because you were too blinded by pride to see it. Well, being opinionated is directly connected to arrogant pride.

Question what you think you know. Hold your opinions very loosely. If they are correct, nothing can make them untrue. If they are incorrect, nothing can make them true.

The Jews held their opinions firmly, and because of it, they were unable to even consider Jesus' claims. They tried all the more to murder Him.



John 10:40–42, 40And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was first baptizing, and He stayed there. 41Many came to Him and were saying, “While John performed no sign, yet everything John said about this man was true.” 42And many believed in Him there.

I said that for everyone there will come a point where it is the final opportunity to follow Jesus. This was it for the Jews. Jesus left the province of Judea and went to “the place where John was first baptizing.” The almost universally accepted location is about 6 miles southeast of Jericho, and about 23 miles by road from Bethany. Roughly 25 miles by road to the Temple in Jerusalem.

It was within the province of Perea under the control of Herod Antipas. As a sidenote, D.A. Carson, a well-respected Baptist Theologian, argues for a location more than 100 miles away in Herod Philip’s domain northeast of the Sea of Galilee. Carson’s rationale is unconvincing. Far better to go along with the consensus view on this one and stay with the traditional spot.



Many people came out to the old haunts of John the Baptist to see Jesus. In their discussions among one another they came to the consensus that the grasshopper-eating Baptizer was correct concerning Jesus.

Remember, way back in chapter 1 of this Gospel, when he called Jesus, “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” And when he said of Jesus, “this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.” And when He declared of Jesus, “this is the Son of God”. Further that John’s disciple Andrew was just as correct when in that same opening chapter, he called Jesus “the Messiah, (the Christ)”. And that Nathanael of Cana was also spot on when he proclaimed to Jesus, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel” (John chapter 1, verses 29, 33, 34, 41, 48).

These three verses transition us into a new section of the Gospel. Jesus’ public ministry was over, and it ended in abject failure, or so it seemed. The reality was “many believed in Him there.”



John 11:1–5, 1Now a certain man was sick: Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. 2And it was the Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. 3So the sisters sent word to Him, saying, “Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick.” 4But when Jesus heard this, He said, “This sickness is not meant for death, but is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it.” 5(Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister, and Lazarus.)

Lazarus is short for Eleazar אֱלֵעָזָר (ěle-ä-tzär), named after the High Priest, the son of Aaron and nephew of Moses. Bethany is one and three quarters (1¾) mile

east of Jerusalem, on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, along the road to Jericho.

Martha is of Aramaic derivation and basically means noble. Mary was an extremely common Greek name and was often used by Jews in the first century due to its similarity to the Hebrew name Miriam מִרְיָם (mǐ-řē-äm) – like the sister of Moses and Aaron.

Verse 2 clarifies which Mary and further links the family members. What do we know about the family and Jesus' connection to them?

First, Luke shares a parable told by Jesus about a rich man in Hades and a poor man in “Abraham’s bosom.” The poor man is named Lazarus. That fictional man has nothing to do with the real-life Lazarus – it was a parable formed for rhetorical purposes. A parable that, unfortunately, is frequently misunderstood and misapplied, but that’s a problem for another day.

Our Lazarus and his sisters are main characters for the next two chapters, so we’ll be seeing a lot of them in the coming weeks. It is possible that the incident told in Luke chapter 7, is related to this family, but again, we’ll

get there when we discuss the anointing in the next chapter that John alluded to here.

What we know for sure is that when Jesus was in Jerusalem, He often stayed with this family. They were His disciples, and they were His friends. He cared for them deeply.

In that vein, verse 3 is not merely a notification informing Jesus that His friend Lazarus is ill, it's clearly a plea for Jesus to help. Their message specifically calls attention to the "love" that Jesus has for Lazarus.

The message may seem a little odd. They bring up Jesus' love for Lazarus, but don't make any request. We would do the opposite. We wouldn't presume to mention the Jesus' love for Lazarus. That would seem a bit forward, perhaps rude, but we would make a specific request of Him, like "please come as soon as possible."

Culturally, they would see making such an explicit request rude, but stating the known relationship was not. For them, this was the normal way to make such a request. It all amounts to the same thing but illustrates

the sometimes very subtle cultural differences between us and them.

That's a reminder that we need to take culture into account when interpreting the Bible and a reminder that all Christians across the globe are still one flock even though we have many cultural idiosyncrasies. The way we westerners do church and the way we worship, and the way we share the Gospel, is not the only way, nor is it the better way, it's only our way.

What's interesting about love in verse 3 is that it is φιλέω (fī-lě-ō), meaning reciprocal friendship love. Jumping ahead to verse 36, which follows the shortest verse in the Bible, "Jesus wept," the Jews seeing Jesus' reaction to the scene, said "See how He loved him!" Again, brotherly friendship love, but when the Bible confirms Jesus' love for Lazarus and his two sisters it is ἀγαπάω (ä-gä-pä-ō) – that unconditional love,

I've talked about the differences in the Greek words that we translate as love many times. It's been a while since I described them with percentages. So here it is again...



Agapê = 100% from the lover and 0% from the object.

Erôs = 0% from the lover and 100% from the object.

Philia = 50% from the lover and 50% from the object.

Speaking ideally, Agapê is a love that is 100% from the lover and 0% from the object. The lover chooses to love regardless of how the loved person acts and so, the lover is acting selflessly to elevate the other.

Erôs is a physical love that is 0% from the lover and 100% from the object. The lover is acting selfishly to elevate themselves.

Philia is a 50-50 deal of give and take, where both parties love equally. Both parties require a certain reciprocity in the relationship. It is neither selfless, nor selfish, but is also both selfless and selfish.

What's interesting is that both the Jews and the sisters observe and comment on the bond of friendship between Jesus and Lazarus. What the narrator of the incident observes is the perfect love of Agapê that Jesus has for both Lazarus and his sisters.



That's fascinating. God Agapês all of us so much that something similar to a Florence Nightingale effect takes place. That is a reference to the very real phenomenon where a caregiver develops an affection for the person under their care.

Let me be blunt. There are a lot of Christians, some of them in this room, that you do not like. I'm going to give you the benefit of the doubt and say that you love

them... in theory, but you do not want to hang out with them.

There are a whole host of reasons to be sure, but the point is, you do not φιλέω them. Here's the Truth... If you allow the Holy Spirit to Agapê them through you, by ministering to them. You pray for them daily, you see it as your mission to bless them and follow through, you start actually loving them as your Christian brother or sister, I guarantee that your affection for them will grow and if you stay the course, it will grow into a true φιλέω.



God Agapês us so perfectly, that He actually has real affection for us – He actually wants to spend time with



us. Jesus stands at the door of your heart and knocks. That sentiment from Jesus Himself has nothing to do with Salvation, but everything to do with fellowship. Jesus wants φιλέω – friendship. He literally wants to be your friend and that tango... takes two.



You can apply this Biblical principle to every relationship that exists, including the marital relationship. Quit trying to change your spouse into someone you think that you would like better and accept them as your friend as they are. The way you do that is to work diligently and intentionally to genuinely Agapê them, with the Agapê only God can give to you, and before you know it, you will be friends.

Look, the reason we don't like people, is because we don't truly love them. You and God can get that straight. It's what Jesus said in another way, with His statement, "If you love me you will obey my commandments" (John 14:15). If you Agapê Jesus, you will develop an affection for Him as well – a desire to be His friend – a desire to share His company - a desire to obey Him which is the same as rightly relating to Him. You might think that Jesus isn't interested in hanging out with you when you are sinning, but that's the wrong way around. What really happens is you are uninterested in having Jesus around, while you are sinning.

You choose to act selfishly serving your own appetites at the expense of others and the first consequence is pushing Jesus away. The second consequence is pushing others away. Both are the opposite of φιλέω and the reason you do it, is you also do not ἀγαπάω – at least, not enough.



We cannot always trace  
God's hand but we can  
always trust God's heart.

Charles H. Spurgeon

quotefancy

We get Jesus' reaction in verse 4. It's stated as a fact that has three parts. 1) First, "This sickness is not meant for death," is often misconstrued. It does not mean that God gave Lazarus a life-threatening issue simply because He wanted to show His power in Jesus. On the other hand, it is also not the case that Lazarus was supposed to die (and stay dead at that time), and God changed the preset timeline.

What is intended is that due to sin, physical life on planet earth is chock-full of tragedy, pain, suffering, and tribulation, of all kinds. Further, that God is in absolute control of all things and so it is within His Will that evil exists.

That means that there is a point and purpose of good to it all, even though it grieves God and vexes us. Beyond all of that, before He began to create, God had already determined when and how He would intervene in the course of events in order to reveal to us His love for us.

The greatest intrusion into our reality was the incarnation of the Word, Jesus. This chapter will describe perhaps the most significant intervention of Jesus in the affairs of man during His sojourn here.



God's glory is His  
goodness.

Henry Ward Beecher

quotefancy

2) The second part is that it will be for God's glory. The thing that results in the greatest glory of God, that we

are privy to, is Salvation. God's glory is actually a fixed thing that simply is what it is. In other words, if no person, animal, angelic being, or any other creature ever gave God a second thought, it wouldn't change His glory in actuality. He is glorious whether it is recognized or not. Now, beyond that though there is the recognition of glory by others. The thing that causes the greatest recognition of God's glory is the Salvation that He unilaterally provided at tremendous personal expense while we were still His enemies.

3) That brings us to the third part which is "that the Son of God may be glorified by it." What is "it"? The point of this chapter is to publicly demonstrate beyond a shadow of a doubt that Jesus is "the Resurrection and the Life" (John 11:25), and that no one can approach the Father apart from Him (John 14:6). That is Salvation for all who believe unto eternal life, which is the greatest thing that demonstrates the immeasurable glory of Almighty God.

Therefore, Jesus, the One through Whom Salvation is granted, is glorified as the Savior in the supernatural raising of Lazarus.



*My Friend,  
Jesus*

Verse 5 offers us a parenthetical confirmation of the basis for their plea. Jesus did, in fact, love Lazarus and his sisters. As we saw it was an Agapê resulting in a genuine reciprocal friendly relationship. I want to add two points here.

1) First, the reminder that the friendship love of relating to one another, is impossible without both parties being actively involved. As I said it is ideally a 50-50 deal, but in practice, it is rarely that equal. For us to be friends with Jesus, we must participate, but obviously He brings more to the relationship than we do. He's okay with that, which sort of brings me to my second point.

2) What was it about the company of Lazarus, Martha, and Mary, that Jesus enjoyed? Why was He their friend – what was so special about them? Honestly, nothing... we will see that they were far from perfect people. The real difference between them and the Jews was their acceptance of Jesus' Agapê for them and their willing participation with Jesus relationally.

Well, if you Agapê Jesus with the Agapê the Holy Spirit has given, and from that desire to be the Lord's friend and act on that desire, He will be your friend too (John 15:15).

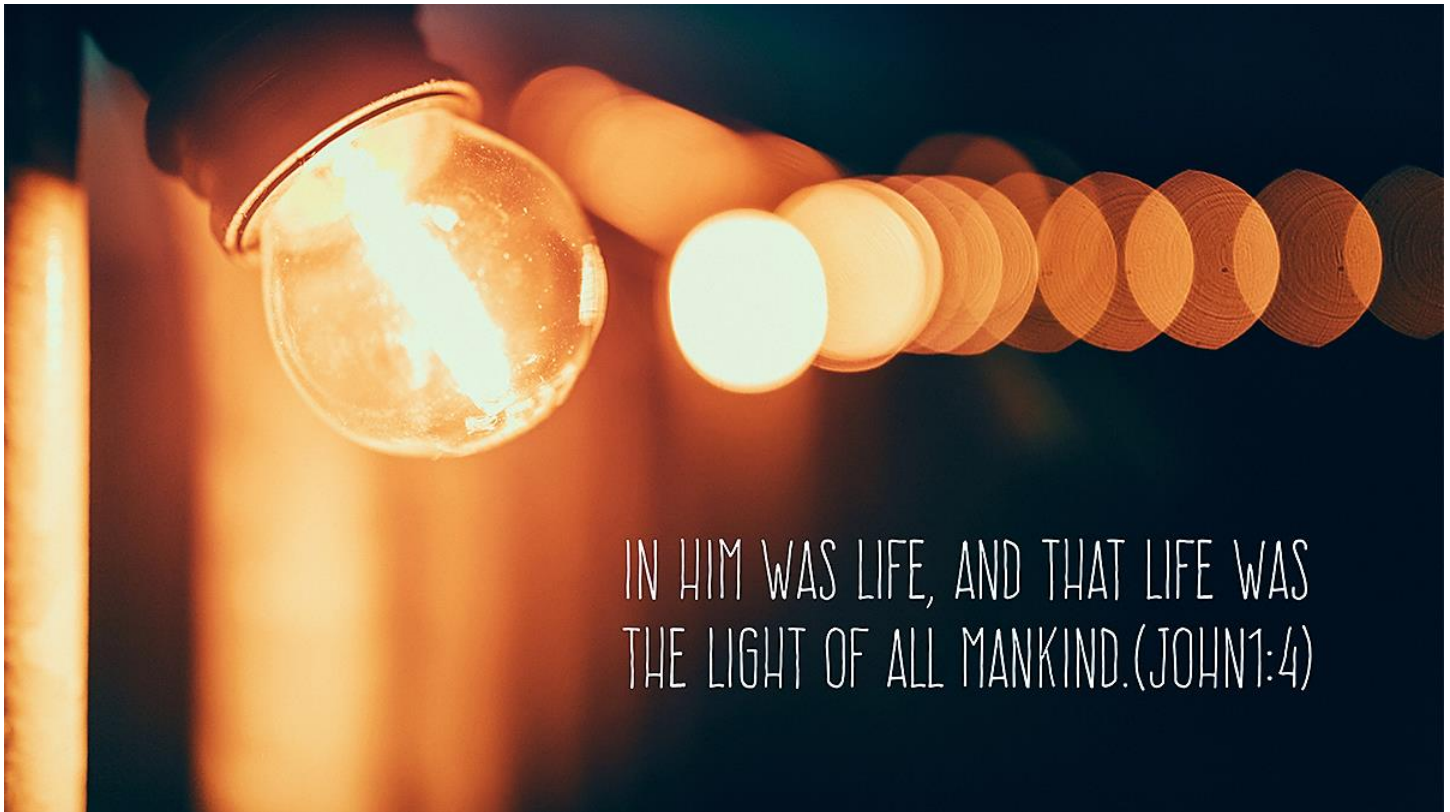


The note about Jesus' love softens what comes next... John 11:6–8, 6So when He heard that he was sick, He

then stayed two days longer in the place where He was. 7Then after this He said to the disciples, “Let’s go to Judea again.” 8The disciples said to Him, “Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone You, and yet You are going there again?”

Jesus received word and then intentionally delayed two days where He was. Without the confirmation that Jesus did love Lazarus, delaying would seem uncaring, insensitive, and even callous. There has been all manner of ridiculous speculation as to why Jesus waited so long. It includes such blasphemous ideas as Jesus was unable to actually sympathize with humans – so He really was cold and calculating. As well as the claim that it took two days for Jesus to build up enough courage to go back to Judea where the Jews wanted to kill Him!





All of it is unnecessary because the answer is right there in the text. It was the Father's intent to use this incredibly sad, but completely natural event, to give the world the seventh and final Sign that proved the claims of this Gospel. The pronouncement in the prologue of the first chapter "In Him was Life," meaning Jesus exists as the life force (John 1:4). Along with Jesus' own words, like those in John 5:21, "For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes." Along with John 6:48, "I AM, that which I AM, I exist as the Bread of Life." And, of course, in our previous chapter, "My sheep listen to My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give them eternal life, and they will

never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand” (John 10:28&27).

I can't delve into it, but the prologue declares that the Life generating and sustain force found only in Jesus is the “Light of mankind. And the Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not grasp it.” Then in John 8:12, Jesus said, “I AM the Light of the world; the one who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.”

Jesus is the life generating and sustaining force of Almighty God, which has repeatedly been made clear in the Gospel thus far. This seventh Sign, especially the way I personally count it, is the crescendo of God's revelation to mankind fully proving that all-important claim.

IF life is not in Jesus, Christians are nothing more than pitiable fools as the Apostle Paul concluded in I Corinthians 15:19. On the other hand, IF life is in Jesus, then every non-Christian is a pitiable fool. It's one or the other.

# Seven Signs

2:1-11	4:46-54	5:1-18	6:1-14	6:16-21	9:1-41	11:1-44
Water to wine	Son healed	Lame man at Pool	Feeds 5,000	Walks on Water	Blind man sees	Lazarus raised

What did I mean about counting the Sign the way I do? Traditionally, most people see this chapter as the seventh sign of John's Gospel. Others combine the "Feeding of the Multitude" and the "Walking on the Water" Signs into a single Sign making the Lazarus thing the sixth Sign. They do that because they believe that the Resurrection of Jesus, must be the seventh Sign.

I personally take this Sign of life for Lazarus together with the remainder of this Gospel, Jesus' Passion, His bodily Resurrection, and His supernatural Ascension, as the seventh Sign inclusively. It is the Sign of absolute control and perfect dominion over death,

which must include the cause of death as well, which is sin. Only in Him is eternal Life, because only in Him is there the forgiveness of sin.



After the two extra days, Jesus told His disciples “Let’s go to Judea again.” It proved to be an unpopular idea. His plan was met with stiff resistance. His disciples were understandably fearful of what would happen if they returned to the stronghold of their enemy. Mostly for Jesus, but certainly for themselves as well.

It was a reasonable fear from a purely human perspective. Wouldn’t you expect these disciples to have had a more supernatural outlook by this point? I mean, after nearly three years in active ministry with

Jesus and being participants in all the Signs to date wouldn't you imagine a little more faith? Well, how long have you been with the Lord? How spiritually do you respond when faced with a material problem now?

As my good friend Jerry Wabschall used to say, "People are remedial." He was right, we need constant reminders, and repeated instruction, as the Bible confirms (Philippians 3:1). It's always so easy to see Christian immaturity in others yet fail to see it in ourselves.



Jesus answered their fears with a cryptic proverb, John 11:9&10, 9Jesus replied, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks during the day, he does not

stumble, because he sees the light of this world. 10But if anyone walks during the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.”

The reason it seems weird is because we’re not familiar with what was a familiar proverb to them back then. Plus, Jesus added an intentional double entendre – or double meaning that further complicates it for us.

The basic proverb simply means that the thing that needs to be done (whatever it is), needs to be done while you can still get it done – while the opportunity is still there – when you can still see what you’re doing.

The simple meaning is almost identical to our saying, “Make hay while the sun shines,” or, “Strike while the irons hot,” or the Latin, “Carpe diem” – seize the day. In this case, it would mean that Jesus must fulfill His earthly mission in the allotted time remaining.

The double entendre is the added comment to the light of day being the “light of this world,” and its relationship to the darkness of night stated as the “light is not in him.” Jesus definitely added a spiritual dimension to the proverb and so it changed its meaning slightly to fit the supernatural element present in Jesus’ mission.

Jesus is the “Light of this world” and it is only by His Light that we see. Those who stumble in the darkness do so specifically because they do not possess His Light in them.

The gist was that there was still time for Jesus to do more. In fact, since He was following the Father’s plan precisely, there was still time to accomplish the entire mission set before Him before darkness fell.

The extrapolated lesson for us is that, like Jesus, we have a God-assigned mission to complete and a finite time to “Git-R-Done.” We don’t know how long we have and so the only thing to do is follow Jesus’ example and accomplish all that He has for us each and every day? What does He have for you today?



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Jesus is "the Resurrection and the Life" (John 11:25), and that no one can approach the Father apart from Him (John 14:6). That is Salvation for all who believe unto eternal life, which is the greatest thing that demonstrates the immeasurable glory of Almighty God and Jesus our Lord.

### **John 11:6–8 ~**

It was the Father's intent to use this incredibly sad, but completely natural event, to give the world the seventh and final Sign that proved the claims of this Gospel (John 1:4, 5:21, 6:48, 8:12, 10:28&27).

IF life is not in Jesus, Christians are nothing more than pitiable fools. On the other hand, IF life is in Jesus, then every non-Christian is a pitiable fool. It's one or the other.

### **John 11:9&10 ~**

The gist was that Jesus had more to do before darkness fell. What more does He have for you to accomplish before darkness falls?

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Write a brief note – detach and place in the offering, or the prayer box, or give it to a Deacon or Elder.

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_