



SPORTS IN FOCUS

The Resurrection and the Life
John 11:1-54

READY

- What, if any, fears or distresses about death do you have?
- What have you learned about Jesus so far that keeps you from worrying about these fears?

SET

Context of John 11:1-54

At the beginning of chapter 11, Jesus is standing in the shadow of the cross. His time in Jordan has ended. His death on the cross is only a few days away. The scene changes from hatred and rejection (10:39) to an unmistakable and blessed witness of the glory of Christ. The hatred could not diminish Christ's glory as displayed through the resurrection of Lazarus. This miracle is the most dramatic sign in the Gospel of John and is the capstone of Jesus' public ministry.

Keys to Text *Mary and Martha*: This is the first mention of this family in John. It appears that they were good friends of Jesus and that He had stayed with them several times. In Luke 10:38-42, Jesus came to their house for dinner. Martha was so busy doing many things supposedly for Jesus' sake, but Mary was sitting humbly at Jesus' feet. *Caiaphas*: The high priest was the supreme religious head of his people. He controlled the temple and no doubt profited from the corrupt merchandising that was taking place there.

GO

Read John 11:1-54

1. What evidence in chapter 11 leads you to believe that Jesus had an especially close relationship with Lazarus and his sisters?
2. Why do you think the text describes Jesus as "groaning" and "weeping" over the death of Lazarus if Jesus knew that He was going to bring Lazarus back to life?
3. What do we learn about Jesus' humanity from this passage? About His divinity?
4. As the Pharisees plotted to kill Jesus, what was Caiaphas' unwittingly profound remark (vs. 50)?
5. In what ways did Jesus' raising of Lazarus foreshadow future events?
6. Clearly Lazarus and his sisters enjoyed an intimate friendship with Jesus. What do you think is the secret to that kind of relationship with Christ?
7. How does Christ's statement that He is the "resurrection and the life" change the way you view death?

SPORTS IN FOCUS FRIENDSHIP

Friendship is when someone comes alongside another person for mutual support and encouragement. Pastor Chuck Swindoll teaches that there are four crucial truths pertaining to friendships: (1) Friends are essential, not optional. (2) Friends must be cultivated; they're not automatic. (3) Friends impact our lives; they're not neutral. (4) Friends come in four classifications, not one. They are: acquaintances, casual friends, close friends and intimate friends. Only with intimate friends do you have a deep commitment to mutual character development. This appears to be the relationship that Jesus had with Mary and Martha. What friends do you know who are grieving the death of a loved one? How specifically can you pray for them and encourage them?

The miracle's primary purpose (Lazarus being raised from the dead), however, was not to restore him to life, or to comfort his grieving sisters. Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, first and foremost, so that He and the Father would be glorified.