

A Relationship Like No Other

John 11

Introduction:

1. Life is all about relationships. They are what really matter. Nobody on their death bed says, “I wish I had worked at the office more.”
2. Too many people discover this truth too late. Often, it takes some type of terminal illness or catastrophic event to wake them up to the reality that what matters most in life are the relationships that we have with others (i.e. family, friends, neighbors, fellow church members, co-workers, etc.).
3. And the most important relationship for every person is their relationship with Jesus Christ. The knowledge of God, inner peace and joy, and satisfaction in relationships are predicated upon your personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
4. Jesus Christ will bring true meaning and purpose to your life. It is so crucial that every person establish a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
5. Why is this? The story we began studying last week of Christ’s miraculous resurrection of Lazarus reveals to us why it is so important.

First, because Jesus’ love is personal.

1. Ever heard somebody say, “I just love everybody”? And while that is good, it is a very general, broad statement. God desires that we love people on a personal, individual basis, regardless of their blemishes, faults, failures, and inconsistencies.
2. Did you know that Jesus loved this way? Let’s see this in our text. vs. 1-3, 5, 36
 - Notice how personal the love of Jesus was toward Lazarus. He loved him deeply.
3. When you enter into a relationship with Jesus Christ, you enter into a love like you could never imagine.
 - It is a love that sees beyond who you are to who you can be.
 - It is a love that does not hold past sins and mistakes against you.
 - It is a love that freely gives grace and forgiveness.
 - It is a love that reconciles.
 - It is a love that comforts.
 - It is a love that is unconditional and not performance-based.
 - It is a love that is rooted in truth, not lies and distortions.
4. When you come to know Christ, you experience His love. His teachings tell you how to love, and His life demonstrated how we ought to love (Ephesians 4:32; 5:2, 25). Instead of using people and seeing what you can get out of them, He teaches you how to truly love people and how to express love toward others.
5. Jesus is a relationship builder because His love is so personal. Guys, we struggle with this whole thing of being relational and showing love, but we should be thankful because Christ teaches us how.

Second, because Jesus' compassion is real.

1. Ever heard it said, "Grown men don't cry"? The greatest man who ever walked this earth wept and cried. It is here in our text.
2. This is a very touching story. When Jesus came on the scene, it was a very somber and sobering atmosphere. Obviously, Lazarus was a young man who had been overcome by some sudden illness and died four days earlier. People were grieving.
3. Notice what happened when Jesus arrived. Let's look at verses 32-36. What compassion! This is our Savior! He didn't come on the scene barking orders and telling people, "Dry it up and have faith!" No, He stood there and wept with them. My mind goes to Romans 12:15.
4. You might be thinking, "But Pastor Dan, didn't Jesus know what He would do in resurrecting Lazarus?" Yes, the Bible indicates that He knew exactly what He would do.
5. Then why did He cry? As Jesus wept, it was not a hopeless, faithless weeping of despair. His weeping was about the entire situation. It was weeping of compassion.
6. His dear friends had been through a week of torture; their friend got sick and had now been dead for four days, but Christ knew it had to be that way. Still, I believe He hurt for them.
7. Also, I believe He wept because He was watching firsthand what man's disobedience, rebellion, and sin had brought to earth – death, sorrow, weeping, travail, misery, and pain. Jesus wept over that reality as He witnessed how sickness ravaged His friend's body and how death had seized him.
8. Jesus was and is so compassionate. He is now at the right hand of the Father interceding for us (Romans 8:34). Because Jesus took on our humanity, He is a good and faithful intercessor. He walked in our shoes, cried our tears, and felt our pain. He knows what we are going through. Hebrews 4:15-16; 2:18
9. No matter how adverse your circumstances, Christ understands how to comfort and sustain you through every trial. When you know Jesus, it is a relationship like no other.

Third, because Jesus' wisdom is divine.

1. If I asked Deniece, "What is for supper," and she responded, "We are going to have some shortening, flour, baking soda, a pinch of salt, and some buttermilk," I would say, "What kind of menu is that? That's nasty." But then, when I get home and discover nice, hot, fluffy homemade biscuits, I would discover she knew exactly what she was doing.
 - Jesus was accused many times in this chapter for showing a lack of wisdom. His actions are constantly questioned (vs. 7-8, 16, 21, 32, 37).
 - But when all the ingredients were mixed together, the outcome was glorious.
3. Jesus had divine wisdom, knowing what was best in the situation.

- Common sense said, “Lazarus is sick; let’s go heal him.” But Jesus waited two days, and Lazarus died.
 - Then the disciples were like, “Common sense didn’t say that, it said, “Don’t go back into Judea. Don’t you remember? They tried to stone us last time we were there; besides, Lazarus is dead anyway.”
 - However, unconcerned with self-preservation, Jesus went.
 - Naturally speaking, we would say, “Roll the stone away? He has been dead four days. It’s hopeless.”
 - But at Jesus’ command, they rolled it away, and the greatest miracle in history happened. vs. 39-43
4. What am I saying? Jesus was God in the flesh (John 1:1, 14; 1 Timothy 3:16). His wisdom far surpasses what our eyes can see. When you know Jesus, your relationship with Him provides you all of His divine wisdom, and it lives inside of you. 1 Corinthians 2:16; Colossians 2:3, 9-10
 5. Jesus Christ can take all the ingredients in your life and mix them together to work for your good and for God’s glory. Romans 8:28

Fourth, because Jesus’ power is limitless.

1. They say, “It’s not what you know, but who you know.” There is indeed a lot of truth in that.
 - **Illustration:** Getting pulled over for running a red light.
2. There is nobody (past, present, or future) with greater power than Jesus Christ.
 - It was demonstrated in this chapter – Lazarus had been dead for four days!
 - Jesus himself conquered and overcame death. Romans 1:4
3. After His resurrection, Christ appeared to His disciples and declared, “ *...All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.* ” **Matthew 28:18**
4. If the saying is true that it’s all about who you know, I would want to know Jesus Christ!

In Conclusion:

1. But here is what is incredible. Just as His power is limitless, His love and compassion are immeasurable. According to Ephesians 3:19, His love is beyond knowledge.
2. Often, people who hold great power and authority are arrogant, belligerent, cocky, and self-serving; but Christ is all-powerful, yet He is loving and compassionate.
3. Think about this, He is weeping at Lazarus’ grave one minute, and the next, He is raising up Lazarus, who had been dead for four days. What a Savior!
4. Do you know this Jesus as your personal Savior? When you know Him, it is a relationship like no other.