

**JOHN 11:1ff.**  
Rome Georgia  
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**Review of John 10** – The teachings of Jesus on Himself as the **Good Shepherd** center on His relationship to the sheep.

Warren Wiersbe summarizes these teachings thusly:

He has a **loving** relationship, because he has **died** for the sheep.

He has a **loving** relationship because he **cares** for the sheep.

He has a **lasting** relationship because He keeps his sheep and **not one is lost**.

**John 11:1-11**

<sup>1</sup> Now a certain *man* was sick, *named* Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.

<sup>2</sup> (It was *that* Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)

<sup>3</sup> Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, **behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.**

<sup>4</sup> When Jesus heard *that*, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

<sup>5</sup> Now **Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.**

<sup>6</sup> When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.

<sup>7</sup> Then after that saith he to *his* disciples, **Let us go into Judaea again.**

<sup>8</sup> *His* disciples say unto him, Master, **the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?**

<sup>9</sup> Jesus answered, **Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.**

<sup>10</sup> **But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.**

<sup>11</sup> These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.

Whenever someone comes to me and says "**preacher, do you believe that God answers prayers?**", my automatic thought pattern is to assume that they have not spent much time practicing the art of prayer. They are either unsaved or unskilled. This may sound hyper-critical, or judgmental to some of you. Nevertheless, if a person has an established relationship to God the Father through Jesus Christ His Son, and they have spent time in the Word and in prayer, two things would be obvious to them:

When we pray:

1. God hears our prayers.
2. God will answer our prayer, not according to our limited and selfish will, **but according to His good pleasure and unlimited wisdom.**

Did you catch that?

Not according to our expectations and earth bound solutions, but according to His Good Pleasure.

**Is . 55:8** " for my thoughts are not your thoughts neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts higher than your thoughts."

Often when we pray, we approach God with a preconceived notion of what the answer to our prayer is. This is not necessarily a wrong or bad idea. **But God is not limited in His choice of solutions to the feeble reasoning's of man.**

See **Isaiah 55:10**

<sup>10</sup> For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater:

In **Jn. 11** we have a story which concerns a **petition that was brought before our Lord.**

**John 11:1 - 6** Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha . . . .

**Bethany** is on the East side of the Mount of Olives. Jesus is across the Jordon river in **Bethabara**, about 20 miles away. According to **John 10:40**, he has returned to the place where He began his ministry when he was Baptized by JTB. Now, as his public ministry draws to a close, he returns again to the place where it all began.

**v. 6** almost **sounds like Jesus was apathetic with regard to Lazarus.** We might think that He should have dropped everything to rush to the aid of His friend.

Communication being what it was in those days, it is **very likely that Lazarus was already dead by the time that Jesus got the message.**

- It was about a days journey from **Bethany** where Lazarus was and **Bethabara** (see **10:40**) where Jesus was. Jesus waits 2 more days, then departs for Bethany (a day's walk away), arriving on the fourth day after Lazarus' death.

**(Jesus never hurries, but He is never late.)**

He both **HEARD** the PETITION and He **ACTED** on the PETITION. **Not in the eyes of men, but in the will of the Father.**

As often as not, God's answer may DIFFER FROM THAT WHICH WE ASKED OF HIM:

**Moses** asked to be permitted to **cross** the Jordon; God gave him permission **only to VIEW** the land of promise. **Deuteronomy 3:23-27**

<sup>23</sup> And I besought the LORD at that time, saying,

<sup>24</sup> O Lord GOD, thou hast begun to shew thy servant thy greatness, and thy mighty hand: for what God *is there* in heaven or in earth, that can do according to thy works, and according to thy might?

<sup>25</sup> **I pray thee, let me go over, and see the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain, and Lebanon.**

<sup>26</sup> But the LORD was wroth with me for your sakes, and would not hear me: and the LORD said unto me, Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto me of this matter.

<sup>27</sup> Get thee up into the top of Pisgah, and lift up thine eyes westward, and northward, and southward, and eastward, **and behold *it* with thine eyes: for thou shalt not go over this Jordan.**

When the **Jews in the wilderness** lusted after the fleshpots of Egypt and complained loudly **God answered** by giving them the flesh, but He also gave them **LEANNESS OF SOUL**.

**Psalms 106:14 (KJV)** <sup>14</sup> **But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert.** <sup>15</sup> **And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.**

**Paul** requested that the THORN BE REMOVED from his flesh, God's answer was the **GRACE TO BE ABLE TO ENDURE IT**.

**II Corinthians 12:8** For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

**MARTHA AND MARY** DESIRED THAT JESUS COME AND **HEAL LAZARUS**, JESUS DELAYED, - - - -YET HE RAISED LAZARUS FROM THE DEAD!

WHY? **SO THAT THERE MIGHT BE GLORY BROUGHT TO THE NAME OF GOD!**

IT IS **NOT "MY WILL"** BE DONE THAT WE SHOULD PRAY. BUT RATHER **"THY WILL"** SHOULD BE OUR PLEA!

Yes, there would have been glory to the name of God if Lazarus had been healed. Mary and Martha would undoubtedly have preferred to forgo the 4 days of weeping and sorrow that followed the death of their brother. They prayed for that which they felt would bring glory to the Father.

But were it not for the actions of Jesus regarding Lazarus death, we may have never heard of this man called Lazarus. He is **mentioned only here and in chapter 12**. Yet, his story is one of the most famous accounts in all of human history!

Many of the sick that Jesus raised are unnamed and unrecorded. **BUT THE NAME OF LAZARUS IS SYNONYMOUS WITH THE HOPE OF THE RESURRECTION THAT EACH OF GOD'S CHILDREN SHARES.**

**GOD'S ANSWERS ARE NOT ALWAYS EXACTLY WHAT WE PRAYED FOR, BUT THEY ALWAYS SERVE TO BRING GLORY TO HIS NAME!**

**SOLOMAN prayed for wisdom** - God gave him **Wisdom, Riches, Honor, and Long Life.** **I Kings 3:7-14. II Chron. 1:10-12.**

In **Acts 12:5 & 15**, the **disciples prayed for PETER**, and much to the astonishment of the **people praying**, God delivered Peter out of jail and to the front door!

**Acts 12:5** Peter therefore was kept in prison: but **prayer was made without ceasing** of the church unto God for him.

**Acts 12:13-15.** And as **Peter knocked at the door of the gate**, a damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda. And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in, and told how Peter stood before the gate.

**15. And they said unto her, Thou art mad.** But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, It is his angel.

**God hears our prayers and He answers our prayers! Frequently, we are astonished at the answers we receive.**

As we read the biographies of great men of faith and see how God supplied their every need, we are **often tempted to attribute God's blessings in that individual's life to their personal love for God.** This is a **partially correct** observation. Certainly we must both Love and obey our heavenly Father if we are to see His hand at work in our lives.

**But God's response to us and His answering of prayers for our own good is not based so much on our love as it is in HIS LOVE.**

In **John 11:3 and 5** the **LOVE OF JESUS FOR LAZARUS** is amply established. **Petition was not made to the Lord based on Lazarus' love for the Lord, but rather on the Lord's love for Lazarus.**

THEY SAID "LORD, **HE WHOM THOU LOVEST IS SICK.**"

**"It is not my weak and faltering allegiance to Him that calls forth His attention, BUT HIS PERFECT LOVE FOR ME, that is my constant strength and hope."**

**Philip P. Bliss**, the hymn-writer, had been singing the familiar song "**Oh how I love Jesus**"\* one day when he contemplated the truth expressed in **Romans 5:5** "And hope maketh not ashamed; **because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost** which is given unto us." (*\*written in 1855 by Frederick Whitfield*)

It is not nearly so much **MY love** for Him as it is **HIS Love** for me that determines the outcome of the vicissitudes of life. AS true as the words of "**Oh how I love Jesus**" are, there was still a feeling of **guilt within Mr. Bliss** regarding the **lack of the song to express the love of Christ for us.** With this in mind **he wrote another song** which we also sing and enjoy: (**JESUS LOVES EVEN ME**)

I am so glad that our Father in Heav'n  
tells of **HIS LOVE** in the book He has given  
Wonderful things in the Bible I see  
this is the dearest, **THAT JESUS LOVES ME."**

(see **Then sings my Soul** p. 177 written in **1870**– song inspired by **Romans 5:5.** Also **Amazing Grace** p. 58.

**OUR GREATEST COMFORT IN LIFE OR IN DEATH IS NOT THAT WE LOVE HIM, BUT THAT HE LOVED US."**

**I John 4:9-10** In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. **HEREIN IS LOVE, NOT THAT WE LOVED GOD, BUT THAT HE LOVED US AND SENT HIS SON TO BE THE PROPITIATION FOR OUR SINS."**

OUR RELATIONSHIP TO GOD BEGINS WITH AND IS SUSTAINED BY HIS LOVE FOR US

**Thot: The true measure of God's love is that He loves us without measure!"** db 4-24-75.

GOD HEARS OUR PRAYERS AND HE **ANSWERS OUR PRAYERS**; BUT HE **HEARS WITH THE EARS OF GOD AND HE ANSWERS WITH THE ACTIONS OF GOD**, AND HE BASES HIS ACTIONS, NOT IN OUR REASONINGS, BUT UPON HIS RIGHTEOUS WISDOM AND THE COUNCIL OF HIS WILL.

BUT YOU SAY, I HAVE PRAYED, AND GOD HAS NEITHER HEARD NOR ANSWERED.

*"IF A TREE FALLS IN THE WOODS, AND NO ONE IS THERE TO HEAR IT, DOES IT MAKE A SOUND.?"*

OR MORE SIMPLY, WE DON'T ALWAYS SEE GOD WORKING BECAUSE WE ARE STANDING IN THE DARK!

BECAUSE **YOU** DO NOT RECOGNIZE GOD'S ANSWER, DOES NOT MEAN HE HAS NOT ANSWERED!

**V .8-10** ; His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?

**9.** Jesus answered, **Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. 10. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.**

**The darkness and the night were illustrations of the difference between walking in the will and out of the will of God.**

Cf. **I Jn.1:5-7** . This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that **God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.**

**1Jn 1:6** If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

**1Jn 1:7** **But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another**, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Just because we walk in the center of God's will, this does not mean that we will have no problems. (**David** in **I Sam. 23:1-14.**) (**Victory over Philistines at Keilah - BUT peril at the hand of Saul** –delivered the city – but they would then have delivered David into the hand of Saul. all in 14 verses.

"Jesus power and obedience to the Father were displayed, **but this event led to His death**, (cf. 11:50-53) which was His true glory." bkc.

48. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation. 49. And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, 50. Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. 51. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation;

**JOHN 11:53** THEN FROM THAT DAY FORTH THEY TOOK COUNSEL TOGETHER FOR TO PUT HIM TO DEATH.

Regardless of what we do as unbelievers, we are like those who stumble about in darkness. We will never be able to achieve our full potential until we begin to "walk in the light." This is how God designed us, to walk in fellowship with Him.

"In the spiritual realm, when one lives by the will of God, he is safe. Living in the realm of evil (darkness) is dangerous. As long as He followed God's plan, no harm would befall Him until the appointed time. bkc. Jesus is in the world as "light". **Jn. 1:4-7 8:12, 9:5.**

Notice that **when we walk in the light**, even though **our actions may not live up to the expectations of others**, yet we are able to minister more abundantly for God and to maximize the glory brought to His name. ergo: raising from dead is more glorious than being healed.

### **Ephesians 5:2**

2 And walk in love, **as Christ also hath loved us**, and **hath given himself** for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour.

### **Revelation 1:5-6**

<sup>5</sup> And from Jesus Christ, *who is* the faithful witness, *and* the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. **Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,**

<sup>6</sup> **And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.**

### **Ephesians 5:25**

25 Husbands, love your wives, even **as Christ also loved the church**, and **gave himself** for it;

**Galatians 2:20** I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, **who loved me**, and **gave himself** for me.