

"The One You Love Is Sick" (John 11:3)

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[0 : 00] Why don't we turn our Bibles to John chapter 11. And I'm going to just briefly read this passage and then share a few brief thoughts.

! John chapter 11. And I'll just be reading verses 1 to 4. Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.

This Mary whose brother Lazarus now lay sick was the same who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair. So the sisters sent word to Jesus, Lord, the one you love is sick.

When he heard this, Jesus said, this sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it.

I wonder if you've had this message before, a message received. Maybe the message, oh, so-and-so's cancer.

[1 : 04] It's come back. Oh, she's in hospital again. Whenever each of us get that kind of message, the one you love is sick.

It can rock our world, can't it? What do we do next? I love our church. I love all of you. I'm so grateful that we can explore difficult topics like this.

And so I think before we get into kind of the Q&A; part of the service, I just wanted to share very briefly from the story that we just heard of. Did you notice, right? The sisters sent word to Jesus, Lord, the one you love is sick.

Not going to go through the whole narrative. It's actually the whole chapter of John 11 that you really see how Jesus reveals his glory, like he says in verse 4. How he, this story actually sits between two groups of men who are arguing about who Jesus is and, you know, who exactly is he?

Why did he come to earth, right? You see that with the disciples beforehand, right, at the start of the chapter, and then you see that with the Pharisees at the end. I just want us to zoom in, though, for today into how the two women talk to Jesus, right?

[2 : 18] We heard about them, Mary and her sister Martha. And I want us to zoom in too briefly how these two have opposite responses to this question, the one they love being sick, right?

And I want us to see how Jesus responds in different ways to their grief. Despite, actually, both Martha and Mary saying exactly the same thing to Jesus.

You skim down further, and when they want to bring this news of their brother Lazarus being sick to Jesus, notice what Martha says to Jesus in verse 21. I'll read it out for you.

Lord, if you'd been here, my brother would not have died. And then later on, chapter 11, verse 32, Mary to Jesus, Lord, if you'd been here, my brother would not have died.

It's identical, isn't it? Word for word. Both Martha and Mary journey with their sick brother, and sadly it ends, at this point in the story, in death. And they both have the exact same response, exclamation to the Lord Jesus.

[3 : 25] How did Jesus respond, though? Have a look again, verses 23 to 25. And what you'll see is that to one troubled soul, Martha, Jesus taught her.

And yet to another troubled soul, Mary, verse 32 to 36, what does Jesus do? We see two of the shortest verses in the Bible, right?

Verse 35, Jesus wept. Part of being followers of Jesus means listening and learning from Jesus. How he teaches sometimes, but how he just sits and weeps with people sometimes.

And we can't do this on our own. We are not our own redeemer. Only Jesus is. And we certainly need wisdom, right? Not from ourselves to know when to do which. And so that's why Jesus shows us the way.

He is the certified counselor, in a sense, who shows us there's a proper time and place to teach and encourage, and a proper time and place just to sit and weep.

[4 : 36] And because he's our perfect counselor, he knows the proper time to teach us and to actually feel the things he feels with us. Jesus is always the best person you and I can turn to for our troubled souls.

Because listen again to verse 4, right? When he heard this, right, the news about Lazarus being sick, Jesus said, This sickness will not end in death.

It is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it. Whatever you wrestle with and struggle with, anxiety, depression, a past trauma, a sadness you can't get rid of, whatever your situation.

Verse 4, I think, is true too. God has a plan for it not to end in death, but it would bring God's Son glory through it. Do you believe this?

Could this be possible even in mental health and struggles of the soul? Well, we see that Jesus himself knows our mental health.

[5 : 44] He knows our sorrows. And actually, as he raises Lazarus from death, he points the way to how he will one day raise you and I from death, from all our sorrows and troubles.

Because he entered death himself. He went to the cross. He became the man of sorrows for us. Do you believe this? May it then be for God's glory, even as we struggle, even as the ones we love are sick.

So, let's pray. Father, we thank you for Jesus, the one who brings us joy and hope, but the one who also comforts us in our sorrows. When loved ones are unwell, struggle with terrible situations, would you remind us that only Jesus is the perfect counselor.

perfect counselor. We pray all these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Okay. I'd love to invite now Eva and Philistice again to come on up.

So, while we kind of rearrange chairs and that sort of thing, feel free to chat with the person next to you. What's one thing you would say to someone you love who is sick or not say? Have a chat about what we just heard and think about that together.

[7 : 03] Help me.