

# Jesus-Based Hope for the Holiday Season

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## Series: Living the Good Life (Gospel of John)

### Jesus-Based Hope for the Holiday Season

#### [John 11:1-57](#)

-I'd like to show you from [John 11](#) how much GREATER hope God offers us through this next scene in Jesus' earthly ministry than the fleeting thrills the world has to offer during the holidays.

-Jesus offers an eternal hope that far supersedes the commercial bits of modern nostalgia.

-We'll see 4 encouragement-filled truths that I hope will point your heart to the truest joy God has to offer this holiday season.

#### **1. God can use even the hardest of trials to point us to hope** **([John 11:4](#), [15](#))**

*-(4) 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...(15) And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him.*

-God's intention for this intense trial: *for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby...to the intent ye may believe...*

-2 grace-dependent faith response questions to ask in our hard situations:

1) Lord, are You working through this situation to do something beyond my immediate view? If so, please help me to trust You to do so.

2) Lord, is your grace enough for my feelings about this situation? If so, please help me to meditate more on Who You are than on how I feel.

#### **2. No problem is beyond God's power to solve. ([John 11:17](#), [38-44](#))**

*-(17) Then when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already...(38) Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days. Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.*

-Lazarus had died and by the time Jesus got to Bethany, Lazarus had been dead 4 days.

-Physical decomposition is a natural part of the human experience, but is certainly not a pleasant one for those still living—painful reminder of the finality of death.

-To Martha and those around her, the death of Lazarus was final.

-To God, not even death was an obstacle for His miraculous power!

-While, we get a glimpse here of the resurrection power God would ultimately display in bringing Jesus back from the dead after dying on the cross, I think a nugget of hope is contained in this raising of Lazarus: no problem is too hard for God to solve the way He sees fit.

-How might we process this principle in a way that gives us hope during the holidays?

1) The resurrection of Jesus is the greatest hope-giving truth there is—for because of His resurrection, we have a valid hope of eternal life!

2) Because no problem is too big for God to solve, we can entrust our problem to Him—no matter how overwhelming it is.

### **3. Fear of \_\_\_\_\_ is a sad excuse to reject Christ. (John 11:45-48)**

*-(45) Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him. But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done. Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. 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.*

*-[John 3:16](#), For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

-Believing on Jesus alone brings the incredible hope of eternal life to the believer.

-However, there are many who, for various reasons, choose NOT to believe on Jesus.

-The greatest hope there is comes in knowing Christ—don't put it off!

-Santa apparently brings toys, but Jesus brings eternal life!

### **4. God can use anybody/anything to accomplish His plan. (John 11:49-53)**

*-And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death.*

-Caiaphas gets a "lightbulb" moment and says, "Guys! Let this Jesus rise up and take the full brunt of the wrath of the Romans. They'll kill Him and spare the rest of us!"

-Little did he know, Caiaphas was speaking truth—Jesus WAS going to die at the hands of the Romans and not just the Jewish nation would be spared from wrath, but ALL who would accept this substitutionary payment for themselves would be spared—only not from political or international fury, but from the just wrath of God for the sins of the human race.

-Let this encourage you in at least one of two ways:

1) God accomplished your redemption from sin—rejoice in it!

2) Be careful of interpreting God's plan merely based upon perceived circumstances—rest in Him!

Close:

4 Truths that lead to hope during the holidays:

1. God can use even the hardest of trials to point us to hope.
2. No problem is beyond God's power to solve.
3. Fear of circumstances is a sad excuse to reject Christ.
4. God can use anybody/anything to accomplish His plan.

\*Ask God to give you a hope-filled perspective shift this holiday season.