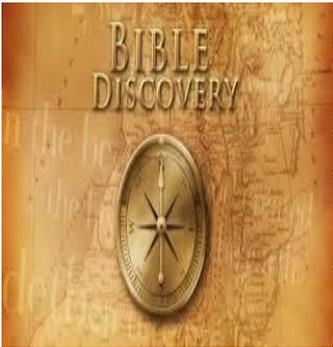


## When Jesus Wept (He Wept for Us)



Jesus is coming! Jesus is coming! Maybe that's the shout of the crowd who first saw Jesus finally coming down that long and dusty road leading to Bethany. Perhaps only silence and wonder met Jesus thinking He'd come too late. Lazarus was dead – no one could do anything for him now! Jesus knew their thoughts, felt their pain. Jesus gave way to tears seemingly moved by his deep love and compassion for his friends. Seeing their pain moved Jesus to feel compassion to the point of *'groaning in the spirit.'* It reminds us our empathy often moves us, in the words of the Apostle Paul, to *"weep with those who weep."* [Romans 12:15] It means we experience each other's pain, we sense loss and emptiness in the midst of such drastic change. But how far does our compassion reach? The word used in the Greek for compassion literally means, "To suffer with someone" – to get into their shoes and feel what they feel, experience what they experience. Author Regina Franklin comments, "If narcissistic self-love is an effect of the fall, then we must understand what Jesus meant when He identified loving ourselves as the key to loving others [Romans 13:8-10]. Not referring to *eros* (passion), *phileo* (brotherly love) not even *storge* (family affection), Christ commands us to live out God's *agape* love, and in the words of C. S. Lewis, 'Agape is all giving, not getting.'" How appropriate then that Jesus sets the example of showing such compassionate sympathy for the bereaved by sincerely shedding tears even though He was about to raise Lazarus. To Jesus, raising Lazarus from death was like a father waking his child from a nap so there was no reason for him to be pained over Lazarus' death itself.

Part of the calamity for Martha, Lazarus' sister was Jesus' delay. Was it out of fear because when He'd last been in Judea as we're told above in verse 8, *"the Jews tried to stone Him"*? She didn't understand the delay, believing as she said to Him, *"If you had been here, my brother would not have died"* [vs. 21] In a way I agree with Martha; if Jesus was present when Lazarus was dying, His compassion would've led Him to heal His friend. But that would have limited the revelation of who Jesus is. The miracle of healing would've been passed with the many other miracles of Jesus – but raising a man from the dead – now that would be noticed and no one could've done it but God which was exactly our Heavenly Father's intent! The Father wanted these witnesses to know Jesus was HIS - the Son of God. Our Heavenly Father was publicly declaring His Son Jesus was *His Sent One*; telling all of us that Jesus and the Father had the same will in all things. Only the one true God could've performed such an awesome and breathtaking miracle, and through this miracle the Father and the Son were glorified, and many believed.

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Father was  
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*His Sent One!***

The tears of Jesus also means our God *"does not willingly afflict or grieve the children of men"* [Lamentations 3:33]; that even though Jesus always brings His Father glory, having told his disciples when they first heard of Lazarus being sick, *"This sickness will not end in death; no, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it."* [John 11:4] Sometimes, we suffer affliction and grief, but our God doesn't take delight in such things. Rather Jesus is sympathetic and compassionate with those who grieve; those who feel pain, and those who experience loss. As *"the image of the invisible God"* [Colossians 1:15] through Christ at the tomb of Lazarus, we get a glimpse of just how He really feels in our affliction and grief. Always beyond the wonder of the miracle is the focus of God's glory demonstrated through His Son Jesus. Wrapped in the call to Lazarus to rise up is God's call to us to turn around, to return to the intended relationship with the Father, to know Jesus and accept His compassion and bring God glory. I don't think it's too great a leap to suggest our Lord wept not only for the sake of those who grieved for Lazarus, but for mankind's misery as a whole.

Have you ever stopped to consider that Jesus wept over the calamity of sin? It wasn't intended we should live the way we do! When God created man in the Garden of Eden it was for the express purpose of fellowship

with God. It was so man would have dominion over the world God created for him. It was to enjoy the beauty, the peace, the joy within the garden with the cool breezes, the bountiful harvest, the abundant love all found in the creator. But Satan, with his crafty lies persuaded Adam and Eve that God couldn't be trusted. They had been told not to eat of a single tree but then they thought they could get away with it. From the disobedience of Adam and Eve directly against God, all humankind have known the weakness called sin.

**Though mankind should have known death - the penalty for sin - swiftly and eternally, God was merciful!**

Even then, though mankind should have known death - the penalty for sin - swiftly and eternally right then, God was merciful – shutting us out of the garden, giving us time though enduring sin's horrific destruction. The Apostle Paul confirmed: *"Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned"* [Romans 5:12]. Yet, saving us from our most desperate place of damnation, Jesus showed His great compassion as He gave His life dying in our place. It was in just the right time God sent His Son Jesus into the world to destroy the devil's work. As Jesus stood outside the tomb of Lazarus, He knew He was about to deliver death its deathblow as He would go to the cross, die for our sins, and rise from the grave that we might never fear death, that we might be restore to God's fellowship, that we might have life eternal!

Don't miss the fact sin grieves God deeply. He can't abide in its presence. In His holiness God is totally separate from us in our sinful state. We're reminded by Paul, *"the wages of sin is death"* [Romans 6:23]. Because of sin, in death we're consumed – it took Lazarus and left his sisters in grief. Though raised to bring God glory, Lazarus would again know the reality of physical death – each of us have continued to experience such grief – but praise God thanks to Calvary we're no longer tasked with death's dark sting.

Did Jesus weep because He knew the cost our sin had cost throughout the ages? Did Jesus weep understanding the great cost He would pay to purchase not only Lazarus' short reprieve but our everlasting lives? Nowhere is this more evident than when our Lord enters Jerusalem shortly before He's crucified. Our Lord cried, *"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not have it"* [Luke 13:34]. As our Lord approached Jerusalem thinking of all those lost souls we're told, *"He saw the city and wept over it"* [Luke 19:41]. Jesus cried in anguish over the future of that city. A future that in less than 40 years, in AD 70, would have more than 1,000,000 of her residents die in one of the most gruesome sieges in recorded history.

But there's also a note of difference we learn from Jesus. Jesus wept for those who grieved at the grave of Lazarus – but not without hope. Whereas the tears Jesus poured out over Jerusalem were for those who were eternally lost. Our Lord wept differently because the ends were entirely different. Today, we can join Martha, Mary, and Lazarus each receiving eternal life through their belief in the Lord Jesus Christ, or follow most of Jerusalem, follow the crowd, who didn't believe and lost their life for all time. It's still true today as...



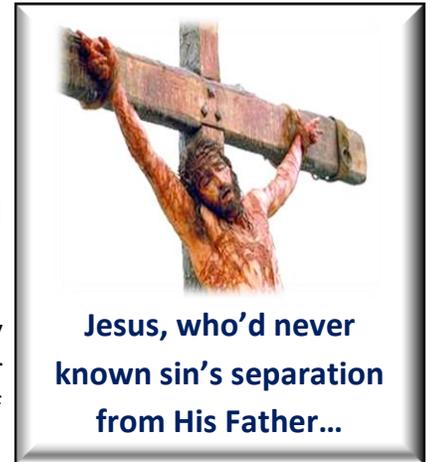
***"Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me will live even if he dies'"***

[John 11:25].

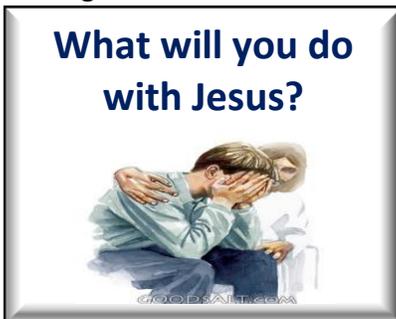
Do you ever weep? That's a crazy question; of course you do. The strongest of us, even the strongest of men, shed tears. In fact, we've finally accepted that to hold back on sorrow, to fail to cry, is unhealthy. In the book of Psalms, David, the great King of Israel, wrote of asking God to put his tears in a bottle. [Psalm 56:8] David wanted to know God remembered his tears, his grief, and his sorrow. It reminds me of the times the events in my life have brought me to tears. Now, I don't know if God keeps our tears in a bottle, but I do believe God sees our tears and hears us when we cry. Anyway, what are some of the reasons why you cry? Certainly we

are saddened at the passing of a loved one, but we also cry when we injure ourselves, when our children are hurt, when we see injustice, even when we're beyond ourselves in a task – have you ever been so exasperated over failure that you sat down and wept? What a football game sometime and at its end you'll see 300lb defensive tackles hanging their heads, crying because despite their best, they've come up short – they've lost.

When Jesus wept, knowing the great cost demanded of Him, I don't think it was due to considering the horrific death He'd endure thus ensuring us God's gift of grace. No the most horrific part wasn't the crucifixion, as unimaginable as that was. I believe when Jesus wept what Jesus most dreaded was his Father's wrath! In being separated from God with the weight of sin – the sin of the whole world being placed squarely upon his shoulders, Jesus, who'd never known sin's separation from His Father, not only became Lazarus' sin, and our sin, but was torn apart from God, cast into the midst of evil's darkness, shunned and shamed, knowing the full wrath of God. "...stricken by God, smitten by Him and afflicted...pierced for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities..." [Isaiah 53:4-5] Bearing His love on our hearts, weighing the cost of sin, seeking him with all our heart, do we dread God's wrath?



As Jesus stood outside the grave of Lazarus, as Jesus wiped the tears of Mary and Martha, bringing them joy at the return of their brother, have you ever considered Jesus must have known that act of kindness He showed would lead the religious leaders to finally take action to put him to death? Giving Lazarus life in effect sealed the fate of Jesus. Death wasn't the end of Lazarus' sickness. Jesus used Lazarus' death "*for the glory of God.*" This demonstrates Jesus has the power and ability to bring our loved ones back to life and health in the coming new world. But it also shows us His great love was extended to us even while He knew the cost it would bring to Him in saving us from sin. Yes, and we're told, "*While Jesus lived on earth, he prayed to God and asked God for help. He prayed with loud cries and tears to the One who could save him from death, and his prayer was heard because he trusted God. Even though Jesus was the Son of God, he learned obedience by what he suffered.*" [Hebrews 5:7-8] In the midst of it all He cared for you and me! So then, what will you do with Jesus?



***Have you received Him as Lord and Saviour?***

May we, as we consider how Jesus wept, not only find resolve to weep and reach out with empathy for others, but also continuously give thanks to God for His wonderful Son, Jesus, thanking Him for calling us out from sin, thanking Him for setting us free and giving us eternal life, praising our Lord and Saviour for loving us so much that He willingly took the blame, and having conquered sin sat down with the Father as our intercessor to strengthen and direct us in our lives today bringing us His agape love so that we too might show compassion for others.

If you've never said **YES** to Jesus and no to sin and eternal separation from your Heavenly Father who loves you very much, take the time to surrender your heart. You don't need any special words, no fancy prayer. Begin simply by saying you're sorry for your wayward living, you want Jesus to be your Saviour and ask Him to come into your life. I assure you He will. If you would like to discuss this or just let us know you've said yes to the Lord Jesus Christ, then give us a call or drop us an email. We'd love to hear from you.

**Blessings,**  
**Pastor Dave**