

HER FAITH — — HIS POWER

WOMEN WHO TRUSTED GOD
AND CHANGED HISTORY



Mary and Martha - John 11

The account of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead is a doorway through which we enter the bigger story of Jesus' ultimate triumph over death. In this story, we see Jesus demonstrate his power over death while also ministering to Lazarus' two sisters, Mary and Martha, at their time of greatest need.

Jesus Has Power over Death

When Jesus was told that his close friend Lazarus was dying, he delayed four days before traveling to Lazarus' home. Why did he wait so long? Jewish tradition judged that a person was not truly dead until after four days. So we learn that Jesus' hesitation allowed him to fully demonstrate his power over death by dramatically raising Lazarus.

When Jesus finally arrived, Lazarus' two sisters, Martha and Mary, took center stage. We know from an earlier encounter in Luke 10:38-42 that these two sisters were very different. Type A Martha was always busy doing and controlling everything. Mary, however, had a milder personality and was always seen worshipping Jesus at his feet.

Both Mary and Martha must have waited frantically for Jesus to arrive, because they rushed out and greeted him with the same statement, but at different times and in very different ways. How each sister greeted Jesus and how he responded to each gives us great insight into both Jesus' power and his individual love for each of us.

Martha Wanted Control

As Jesus approached their home, Martha was the first to run out and meet him. And, in typical Martha fashion, she confronted him with this statement: "If you had been here, my brother would not have died." (John 11:21) Martha faced a situation over which she had no power, so she needed to know that Jesus was in control.

Jesus replied to her with the ultimate power statement, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will never die." (John 11:25). Jesus answered Martha's desire to fix the situation by telling her he is the only solution. Only he has power over life and death. Then he asked her, "Do you believe this?" "Yes, Lord," she replied.

Mary Needed Comfort

Minutes later, Mary approached Jesus and fell at his feet, weeping. She said the same thing Martha had said. *"If you had been here, my brother would not have died."* But Mary's personality and her demeanor of kneeling and crying tell us she was not seeking control or resolution, as her sister had. She needed comfort and understanding.

How did Jesus react to her? Did he tell her something to demonstrate his power over death as he did with Martha? No. Just the opposite. John 11:35 tells us, *"Jesus wept."* Imagine that. The Son of God, the one who holds life and death in his hands, cried. The text says his heart was deeply moved, and he sobbed.

How Does Jesus Answer Us?

Jesus knew Martha needed to understand he was in control, and Mary needed to know he cared. What do you need from Jesus today? Here are two lessons that really jump out at me from this encounter with the Son of God:

Jesus meets us where we are. Jesus never tries to squeeze us into a one-size-fits-all mold. As He did with Mary and Martha, God loves us as unique individuals, and He invites us to go on a life-changing journey with Him, meeting us where we are right now.

Jesus cares and has the power to act. God is not only all-loving. He is also all-powerful. Jesus not only understands what we need, but He has the power to act if we allow him.

What do you need today? Do you need a reminder that God is in control and has the power to meet your needs? Or do you need to feel uniquely loved and understood by your Savior? You can know both truths when you draw closer to Him.



Joy For Your Journey,
Andy Raub
andy@andyraub.com