

**Life in His Name – Part 28**  
**Jesus First, John 11:45–12:11**  
Crosspoint – Dave Spooner – Sept. 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023

**Intro:**

- The focus of this message is on the value and worth of Jesus, which forces us to ask ourselves the question, what does Jesus mean to me? I pray that God would speak through me today and open our hearts and minds to hear what He is saying through our text. We will pick up the story where we left off last week and continue through the chapter break using the results of the raising of Lazarus as our bookends.
- If you were with us last week, you will remember Jesus' powerful claim. He said, **“I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die” (John 11:31 NIV)**. He said this in the context of being at the tomb of His good friend Lazarus, who had been dead for four days. He proved His words were true by raising Lazarus from the dead. As you can imagine, this was powerful and undisputable evidence of the authenticity of Jesus's claims.

**John 11:45-48 NIV**

**Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him. 46 But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. 47 Then the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin.**

**“What are we accomplishing?” they asked. “Here is this man performing many signs. 48 If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our temple and our nation.”**

**Jesus must be your greatest treasure.**

- Many of the Jews who had not previously believed in Jesus, after seeing what Jesus did, believed in Him. The purpose of displays of God's supernatural power is to bring people to put their faith in Christ. And many here did this. However, some of them quickly went down the road two miles to Jerusalem to tell what Jesus had done and how people were responding.
- The chief priests and the Pharisees called together the whole ruling council called the Sanhedrin (like our congress) to formulate a response. Jesus was continuing to overcome their resistance to Him. They feared that everyone would believe in Him if they did not do anything immediately. And by their own words, they revealed what they treasured most and what they treasured more than Jesus—their religion and their nation. We, too, today can fall into the same trap.
  - If your love for “your religion” is greater than your love for Jesus—you're a pharisee and in danger of hell.
  - If you love “your church” and your position in it more than you love Jesus and your position in Him—you are a pharisee and in danger of hell.
  - If your allegiance to “your country” is greater than your allegiance to Christ—you're a pharisee and in danger of hell.
  - If your passion for “your candidate” is greater than your passion for the King—you are a pharisee and in danger of hell.

- Jesus’s promise is greater. Jesus’s power is greater. Jesus’s position is greater. Christianity without Christ is hollow, and death without Jesus is final. Jesus is greater than all powers, and all leaders, and all nations. Never surrender what is of greatest importance for that which is less. How important is Jesus to you? Is Jesus your greatest treasure? What would you give up Jesus for? People do this all the time. And Jesus said:

**Matt 10:37-39 ESV**

**Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. 38 And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. 39 Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.**

- If you are trying to find your life and identity outside of Jesus, you will lose your life. But if you lose your life for Jesus, if being in Christ is your primary identity, you will find and have life.

**John 11:49-53 NIV**

**Then one of them, named Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, spoke up, “You know nothing at all! 50 You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish.”**

**51 He did not say this on his own, but as high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation, 52 and not only for that nation but also for the scattered children of God, to bring them together and make them one. 53 So from that day on they plotted to take his life.**

**Jesus died in our place and made us one.**

- It is indeed better for one man to die than the whole nation to perish. God planned and provided for our salvation by becoming that man. Jesus became sin for us so that we may become the righteousness of God. The love of God seen in the sacrifice of Jesus satisfies and shields us from the justice and wrath of God due to us because of our sin. This is why we must be found in Jesus because of our belief in Him, and why the better plan was for Him to die on our behalf.
- His power, position, and promise are better, greater, and far superior than any other. In Christ, God provides for our greatest need and gives us a new heart and eternal life in return. And He did that for the Jewish nation and for all the scattered children of God. And in Christ, we are one nation, one family, one people, one flock with one faith, one savior, one Lord. We are all equal in Christ because we are loved equally in Christ.
- By the way, we white folks who are presently the majority in our nation will likely be the minority in the kingdom of God based on world population and gospel penetration. Jesus, by His blood, “ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation” (Rev 5:10 ESV), and we are just one of those. Expand your mind to embrace the kingdom reality that is beyond your present vision. Treasure Christ greater than any other identity and embrace all of God’s children of every nation.
- The Sanhedrin then determined to take Jesus’s life. And because of this:

**John 11:54-57 NIV**

**Therefore Jesus no longer moved about publicly among the people of Judea. Instead he withdrew to a region near the wilderness, to a village called Ephraim, where he stayed with his disciples.**

**55 When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, many went up from the country to Jerusalem for their ceremonial cleansing before the Passover. 56 They kept looking for Jesus, and as they stood in the temple courts they asked one another, “What do you think? Isn’t he coming to the festival at all?” 57 But the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that anyone who found out where Jesus was should report it so that they might arrest him.**

- These verses set up the rest of the book of John. There is high tension, anxiety, and anticipation during the week of the Passover, which by the way, was the celebration of the “passing over” of the angel of death because of the shed blood of the spotless lamb.

#### **John 12:1-8 NIV**

**Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. 2 Here a dinner was given in Jesus’ honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. 3 Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus’ feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.**

**4 But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, 5 “Why wasn’t this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year’s wages.” 6 He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it.**

**7 “Leave her alone,” Jesus replied. “It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. 8 You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me.”**

#### **Jesus must be your primary focus.**

- This family's primary focus and first priority was to honor Jesus. They valued Him more than anything and anyone. In this instance, they threw a special dinner in His honor, and they honored Him with a lavish gift of great value. They used this expensive perfume to honor Him with a precious sacrifice from their lives for the precious sacrifice of His life. Mary poured this perfume on His feet that walked in the dust and dirt of this world. She used what was most clean and precious to her appearance to wipe His feet. The “least of Jesus” is worthy of the best of us. Everyone in the room was blessed by the fragrance of her worship of Jesus. This is a powerful and precious moment.
- However, one person strongly objected to this—Judas Iscariot, the betrayer. Even though Judas followed Jesus, he did not do so because he loved Jesus. He did so because he loved that he could profit from Jesus. Judas saw Jesus as a means to an end. Judas used Jesus to get what he wanted. He used Jesus to get money. Mary valued Jesus over all things. Judas valued Jesus to get things. Sadly, the spirit of Judas is alive and well today in those who use Jesus for their own personal profit.
- Jesus told Judas to leave Mary alone because what she was doing was in accordance with the plan and mission of God. He said that there will always be many people who have needs, but

she acknowledged and ministered and honored Him first above all others. You must remember that your ministry and relationship *to Jesus* is more important than your ministry *for Jesus*. Do not abandon your love of Jesus for your service for Jesus (see Rev. 2:1-7). Focus on loving Him and following Him first, and then from that place, turn and be His hands and feet in the world.

### **John 12:9-11 NIV**

**Meanwhile a large crowd of Jews found out that Jesus was there and came, not only because of him but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. 10 So the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus as well, 11 for on account of him many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and believing in him.**

### **Jesus' work in your life is a powerful witness.**

- Not only were the chief priests looking to kill Jesus, they also planned to kill Lazarus because many people were turning to Jesus because of him. How absolutely tragic is this? Not only did they plan to kill the Messiah, but they wanted to eliminate those whose life witnessed to and pointed others to Jesus. The work of Jesus in your life is a powerful witness to the life of Jesus to the world and can draw others to believe in Jesus. Do not underestimate the power of Jesus in your life to draw others to Him. Your story is part of the greater story of Jesus. Tell it to honor Christ and draw people to Jesus.
- I have invited a person to tell her story, which is similar to Lazarus's story of being dead and made alive again.
- Testimony of Jamie Weldon.

### **Conclusion**

- Will you believe in Jesus, who in Him, and Him alone is "the resurrection and the life?" Who promises to resurrect all those who believe in Him?
- Is Jesus your greatest treasure? Do you love Him more than anything and anyone? Do you look to honor Him more than all others? Is He your first focus? Never exchange Him for anything or anyone else, ever.
- Use your story as a witness to expand His glory in the lives of the neighborhood and the nations.
- Prayer people and prayer

### **Ending Song: Power in the Blood**