

Sermon: Your Faith Can Grow

John 11

What do you need to happen in order to grow up in your faith? Or, to come to faith in general?

1. You need a crisis where God does not give you what you want. (11:5-6)

When I look at the study of regular man in modern society...we consistently pursue three big things...Ease, Comfort, Pleasure. We do all we can to avoid losing anything that upsets the balance of our little trinity. But for those that call themselves Christians, God wants to move you beyond a casual understanding of life and what he does to show himself to us.

When God allows crises to occur in your life, you can be confident...he is at work doing far more than you likely can imagine.

2. Your limited understanding of God's nature needs to be exposed as you face ultimate questions.

Jesus response to the disciples was contrary to their thought..., as if it never dawned on them...SO THE WORKS OF GOD MIGHT BE DISPLAYED

It was the Apostle Paul who tells us the that Jesus is "the image of the invisible God" [Col:1:15] and that "in Christ the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily" [Col 2:9]

We want a God that serves our needs...not the God of scripture that comes to give us what we actually need...deliverance from sin and death.

When we look at Jesus, we find that when we are locked up in how we think, He takes us to places to show us more. And ONLY IN SEEING THE MORE, DO WE GROW UP IN OUR FAITH...from easy belief in a God that looks for no commitment...to a faith that can face the deepest pain and loss and know that God is faithful even as we face our lowest moments

3. You can substantially grow as you face disappointment and loss.

What does your history say about how you process disappointment and loss? Have you grown more humble as you discovered that life is not yours to control? Or do you demand control (as if you had something to do with you arriving here)

When we face loss or pain your faith will not be stagnant...it will move...

- a. By getting harder or getting more tender.
- b. By wrestling with what you really believe about Jesus - his humanity and divinity

When Jesus speaks to Martha, we get a glimpse that Jesus wants us to grow up. He comes to show us more. He comes to challenge us...to shake us from our limited views of who He is.

Don't miss this:

1. Jesus claims to be the giver of life even in the face of death. There is a debt we must all pay, death. And, it is right here that Jesus shows us that he is able to give life, even in the face of death. He is claiming to be God.
2. Jesus shows us that he identifies with our pain and is angry at the havoc sin and death brings us [read vv 33-35]. Why is Jesus angry (deeply troubled)? It is not at Mary and Martha, but at the spectacle and searing pain of loss that is ours...all of ours. So Jesus comes to bust up a funeral.

And as Lazarus comes out...see the care of the savior in the little details...help him get out of those death wraps v44.

4. Your life can be transformed by seeing the glory of God instead of only your perception of personal happiness.

Do you believe...does your life show that you actually do? WE can talk the talk...but does your life walk your talk.

Jesus went to Bethany to give life back to a friend and in so doing, tipped the scales according to John. In verse 53, we see it...bringing Lazarus out of the grave put him in it. Lazarus to life assured Jesus to death.

This is the climax of the gospel...Jesus, doing battle with death...showing us who he truly is, that he came to give life. He is the resurrection and the life.

Do you believe this? This is the gospel...Jesus giving himself for you...angry at what sin and death does to us all, calling us decisively from our dead-end lives to see the glory of a better life through faith in him.