



The Difference A Death Can Make **John 11:11-16**

And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him (John 11:15—KJV).

And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, so that you may believe; but let us go to him (John 11:15—NASB).

For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him (John 11:15—NRSV).

When Jesus learned that Lazarus was ill, He could have healed Lazarus or raised Lazarus from the dead before he was buried without speaking a word, for when Jesus was in Cana of Galilee without needing to travel to Capernaum He had healed an official's sick son (John 4:46-54). Jesus knew that Lazarus would die, and He also knew that Lazarus' illness would not lead to death; that is, to death as an eternal separation from God and all who love God. Before Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, He promised His disciples and all who will follow Him, "everyone who lives and believes in me will never die" (John 11:26). Jesus was not glad that Lazarus died, for Jesus knew the grief that Lazarus' sisters (Mary and Martha) would suffer, though only for a brief time. Jesus was glad because He knew that He would raise Lazarus from the dead and return him to the family that loved him. Jesus loved Lazarus and his family, and He knew that when He raised Lazarus from the dead the Father and He would be glorified and honored by

those who witnessed Lazarus coming forth from the tomb alive; then, many would be influenced to believe in Him as the resurrection and the life. Jesus was glad when He thought of all the good that He would bring to many people after He proved He could raise the dead. Jesus was glad that His disciples would be with Him when He raised Lazarus from the tomb, for He knew that most of them with faith in Him would die as martyrs.

Thinking Further

1. Why do you think Jesus called Lazarus their friend? What does it mean to you to think of yourself as a friend of Jesus?
2. How can someone become a friend of Jesus?
3. Why do you think Jesus referred to or compared Lazarus' death to being asleep? How does that comparison make you feel?
4. Why was Jesus glad that He was not in Bethany to heal Lazarus?
5. What did Thomas say to encourage the other disciples to go with Jesus? Would his words have encouraged you to go with Jesus?