

Worth Celebrating // Part 3

Introduction:
This week Bob continues a new series called '**Worth Celebrating**' with the message for **Week 3.** There are areas of our lives worth celebrating even in the midst of tough circumstances. The joy that we find is not of ourselves or in our circumstances, but in Jesus and the grace He has given us.

Other than birth, is there a topic more personally impacting for everyone of us than death? Do you believe that there is something in death that is **Worth Celebrating**?

Questions:

1. How do you react to the statement from Bob that 'Death can be worth celebrating even in the midst of grief and loss'? Do you agree with that, disagree or are you not sure?

2. As you look at the story of Lazarus to help us see God's perspective on death, why do you think that Jesus remained where He was for two more days after He was told that Lazarus was sick? Why do you think Mary and Martha sent word to Jesus that their brother was sick? **John 11:1-7**

3. What two things did Jesus keep His focus on no matter what He was doing? Why was this a critical teaching moment regarding darkness and light for His disciples? Is it difficult to keep those two things in mind as you deal with loss and grief? **John 11:8-16**

4. Why is it significant that Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days when Jesus arrived in Bethany? What did Mary and Martha expect from Jesus since He was only about two miles away when they sent for Him? From a strictly human standpoint, how did this situation look? **John 11:17-19**

5. How did Jesus respond to Martha's statement 'Lord…if you had been here, my brother would not have died'? What did He say to shift her focus from a possible future hope, to the present source of hope and eternal reality? **John 11:20-27**

6. Given that Jesus already knew what was going to happen with Lazarus, is it surprising to you that Jesus wept when He came to the tomb? Why do you think that Jesus wept? With all the miracles and healing that Jesus had done, did Mary, Martha and the others present really believe that Jesus could raise Lazarus? **John 11:35-39**

7. Why is it important that Jesus thanked God ***before*** He told Lazarus to come out, before the answer to their pain and heartache was visible? How is thankfulness an act of faith that acknowledges God's power and goodness, even when you're surrounded by sorrow? How can you know that Jesus operates beyond human limitations? How does this truth provide you with a hope worth celebrating? **John 11:40-44; John 14:6; John 11:25-26; 1 John 5:13**

Key takeaway: ***Humans see death as something to be avoided as long as possible; God sees it as something to be anticipated. Humans see it as a gloomy, dark night; God describes it as a glorious new day. Humans see death as the end of the journey; God sees it as the beginning of the best journey of all. Death's a time to anticipate hearing our Master say, Well done, good and faithful servant…Enter into the joy of your lord. (Matthew 25:21)***

Summary:

- Death can be worth celebrating even amidst grief/loss
- The one you love is sick, so just wait two more days…
- God is the Light, the dark is when we take our eyes off His Word
- Lazarus had been in the tomb 4 days, 4th day spirit is gone
- Jesus as the resurrection & the life, believes will never die

- Jesus knew what was happening, would happen, yet Jesus wept
- Jesus did what only He could do, providing absolute victory; Jesus operates beyond human limitations.