

The Gospel of John Part 56: Martha: A Flourishing Faith

John 11:17-27



John 11:17-27 So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days. 18 Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about fifteen stadia away; 19 and many of the Jews had

come to Martha and Mary, to console them about their brother. 20 Martha therefore, when she heard that Jesus was coming, went to meet Him, but Mary was sitting in the house. 21 Martha then said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. 22 But even now I know that whatever You ask from God, God will give You." 23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." 24 Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." 25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, 26 and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die—ever. Do you believe this?" 27 She said to Him, "Yes, Lord; I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God, the One who comes into the world."

1) A Faith that Flourishes Goes When Others Stay. When Jesus arrives in Bethany, Martha hears He is coming and immediately goes out to meet Him, while Mary remains seated in the house among the mourners. Martha's actions reveal an important characteristic of flourishing faith: it moves toward Jesus in moments of pain rather than staying static. Grief and disappointment often tempt us to isolate

ourselves from God and His people. Yet Martha demonstrates that faith seeks Christ even when emotions are heavy and circumstances are unresolved. Today, we can understand that faith need not wait until life makes sense before pursuing Christ. It actively seeks Him in suffering, trusting that His presence is better than remaining consumed by sorrow and despair.

2) A Faith that Flourishes Hopes When Circumstances Change. Martha's words reveal both grief and hope: "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died." Lazarus had been dead four days, and from a human perspective the situation was beyond repair. Yet Martha still expresses confidence that God can work through Jesus. Flourishing faith acknowledges pain honestly while continuing to trust God's power and purposes. This is not a call to blind optimism, rather, it is confidence rooted in the character of Christ even when circumstances grow worse. In our day, hope must continue despite our circumstances. Our confidence cannot rest in favorable outcomes, but in the Savior who remains sovereign over every outcome.

3) A Faith that Flourishes Confesses When Doubts Arise. When Jesus tells Martha that Lazarus will rise again, she responds with a traditional belief in the future resurrection. Jesus then redirects her attention from an event to a person and says, "I am the resurrection and the life." In this moment, Martha is challenged not merely to believe in an event, but to believe fully in Jesus. Flourishing faith openly confesses who Jesus is even when doubts and unanswered questions remain. In our lives, the antidote to doubt is standing firm of the truth of who Jesus is and what He promises. Christ is our anchor in the storms of life and when we confess the truth about Jesus, we can endure seasons of doubt and discouragement.