

The Gospel of John Part 57: The Ministry of Jesus in Our Grief

John 11:28-37



John 11:38-46
And when she had said this, she went away and called Mary her sister, saying secretly, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you." 29 And when she heard it, she

got up quickly and was coming to Him. 30 Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha met Him. 31 Then the Jews—who were with her in the house and consoling her—when they saw that Mary rose up quickly and went out, they followed her, thinking that she was going to the tomb to cry there. 32 Therefore, when Mary came where Jesus was, she saw Him, and fell at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died." 33 When Jesus therefore saw her crying, and the Jews who came with her also crying, He was deeply moved in spirit and was troubled, 34 and said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see." 35 Jesus wept. 36 So the Jews were saying, "See how He loved him!" 37 But some of them said, "Could not this man, who opened the eyes of the blind man, have kept this man also from dying?"

1) Jesus Offers Hope Through Encouragement. Mary's grief had become paralyzing. Unlike Martha, who immediately went out to meet Jesus, Mary remained in the house because her sorrow had weakened her ability to move forward. Yet, Jesus did not leave her isolated in her pain but sent for her to come to Him. In that moment, Jesus gently

encouraged Mary to rise and move. This is often how Jesus ministers to believers who struggle during seasons of grief. Sorrow can leave us spiritually exhausted, emotionally overwhelmed, and uncertain how to proceed. But Jesus graciously calls us toward Himself through His Word, His Spirit, and His people. Christ offers hope-filled encouragement to help us take the next step in faith.

2) Jesus Brings Healing Through Expression. When Mary finally reached Jesus, she poured out the pain that had been weighing on her heart. Her words reveal deep sorrow, confusion, disappointment, and longing all at once. But, Jesus did not rebuke her for speaking honestly. Instead, He received Mary's expression of grief openly. Many believers wrongly assume that faith requires emotional restraint, but the Bible teaches otherwise. Jesus welcomes the honest expression of grief from wounded hearts. Healing often begins when pain is brought into the open before Christ. Like Mary, grieving believers can learn that faith is not pretending everything is fine; faith is bringing every burden, question, and emotion honestly before the Lord who listens with compassion.

3) Jesus Gives Comfort Through Empathy. As Jesus watched Mary weeping and observed the sorrow surrounding her, He was deeply moved and He wept. Even though Jesus knew Lazarus's resurrection was moments away, He still entered personally into the grief of those He loved. This reveals the compassionate heart of Jesus toward hurting people. Jesus does not stand distant from our suffering; He draws near to us in it. His tears remind us that divine strength is joined with divine compassion. Believers experiencing grief can find comfort knowing that Jesus fully understands sorrow and responds with empathy. When our faith feels weak and unsteady, Christ does not abandon us, but He shares in our pain which can comfort us in His loving presence.