

Text: John 11:1-16

Subject: Evangelism

Focus: "I am the resurrection and the life" John 11:25

INTRODUCTION

1. The language used by the Lord Jesus Christ

- a) He used figurative language
- b) Some reasons He used figurative language so extensively
 - i) Literal language can be so limited
 - ii) There are aspects of faith and life that literal language cannot fully express

2. Examples of Figurative Language

- a) "This sickness is not unto death,
but for the glory of God" John 11:4a
- b) "Are there not twelve hours in the day?" John 11:9a
- c) "If anyone walks in the day
he does not stumble" John 11:9b
- d) "But if one walks in the night,
he stumbles" John 11:10a
- e) "Our friend Lazarus sleeps,
But I go that I may wake him up" John 11:11

THE LACK OF COMPREHENSION BY THE DISCIPLES

1. The Disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ

- a) They did not fully understand Him
- b) They misunderstood Him at times

2. Their understanding

- a) Literal approach
- b) Lack of depth

THE DEATH OF LAZARUS

1. Death described as “sleep”

“Our friend Lazarus sleeps
But I go that I may wake him up” John 11:11

2. Misunderstanding of what the Lord Jesus meant

“Then His disciples said, “Lord, if he sleeps he will get well.” John 11:12

a) Sleep was taken literally

“If he sleeps, he will get well” John 11:12

b) There was a misunderstanding of what the Lord Jesus meant

3. Clarification

“However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep.”

John 11: 13

a) Death was described as “sleep”

b) The natural sleep is “rest”

FURTHER EXPLANATION

¹⁴ Then Jesus said to them plainly, “Lazarus is dead.

¹⁵ And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe.
Nevertheless let us go to him.” John 11:14-15

1. Plain statement

“Lazarus is dead” John 11:14

2. Depth of Understanding needed

“And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe.
Nevertheless let us go to him.” John 11:15

a) For your sakes

b) I was not there

c) That you may believe

d) Nevertheless, let us go to him

3. Still poor understanding

Then Thomas, who is called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples,
“Let us also go, that we may die with Him.” John 14:16

a) An opinion of Thomas expressed

b) This was uttered to the Disciples

c) His heart was in the right place

i) He was prepared to go to Judea

ii) He knew that the Jews wanted to stone the Lord Jesus

iii) He supported the Lord’s decision to go to Judea

iv) Some of the Disciples were doubtful about this decision
of the Lord Jesus to go to Judea

“Let us go to Judea again” John 11:7

d) “Let us also go, that we may die with Him.” John 11:16b

i) Thomas was not afraid to die for the Lord Jesus

ii) He was willing to die with Him

e) Problem

This was NOT what the Lord Jesus was saying to His disciples!

CONCLUSION

1. The challenge to understand the Words of the Lord Jesus Christ

2. The problem of a lack of understanding was very real

3. Significant texts that highlighted the lack of understanding:

a) Poor understanding (in general)

Mark 4:13

“ And He said to them, “Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables?”

b) A hardened heart

Mark 6:51-52

⁵¹ Then He went up into the boat to them, and the wind ceased. And they were greatly amazed in themselves beyond measure, and marvelled.

⁵² For they had not understood about the loaves, because their heart was hardened.”

c) How is it you do not understand?

Mark 8:13-21

¹³ And He left them, and getting into the boat again, departed to the other side. ¹⁴ Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, and they did not have more than one loaf with them in the boat. ¹⁵ Then He charged them, saying, “Take heed, beware of the ^[b]leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod.”

¹⁶ And they reasoned among themselves, saying, “*It is because we have no bread.*”

¹⁷ But Jesus, being aware of *it*, said to them, “Why do you reason because you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive nor understand? Is your heart ^[c]still hardened? ¹⁸ Having eyes, do you not see? And having ears, do you not hear? And do you not remember? ¹⁹ When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments did you take up?”

They said to Him, “Twelve.”

²⁰ “Also, when I broke the seven for the four thousand, how many large baskets full of fragments did you take up?”

And they said, “Seven.”

²¹ So He said to them, “How *is it* you do not understand?”