

Living Lent | Day 34

Do You Believe?

“Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.”

John 11:45 KJV

Encouragement for the Lenten Journey:

The book of John is often referred to as the gospel of belief. The BIG story nestled in this eleventh chapter of John is the death of Jesus’ dear friend, Lazarus. The BIGGER story is his resurrection after being in the grave for four days. The BIGGEST story is about Jesus Christ, the One Who restored Lazarus to life. The Bible declares that Jesus “cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth” (11:43, KJV). The next verse proclaims, “And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes....” One writer said, “It was electric!” No doubt it was!

The verses following this story describe the people’s reaction to the miracle; but in reality, it is their response to Jesus Christ. Some believed, but others including some religious leaders opposed Him and sought to destroy Him. As it is today, Jesus and His miracles call for a response – belief or unbelief.

Not only does the miracle challenge us to faith in Christ, but also it reveals how deeply He cares for each and every one of us. In responding to Mary and Martha’s dilemma, Jesus wept (11:35) and groaned (11:38)! These were signs of great grief. You have a burden – Jesus cares! A heartache – Jesus cares! Reflect on the words of the hymn “What a Friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear” (Author, Joseph Scriven). We may not literally see Him as the disciples did, but He is there – all the time and in every place.

I remember with fondness the time my parents left their home in Ohio and moved to East Tennessee to a children’s home to become house parents to eight rambunctious boys. Wow! What a challenge! I was asked to speak in their chapel services and was thrilled when some of these young men and their friends believed

on Christ.

Another sweet memory occurred one Christmas when our son and his wife announced that they had applied to foster to adopt. It was surprising because they already had four children and one of them had special needs. They convinced us that it was God's leading and indeed it was. Just a few months later, they received a call asking, "Will you take a ten-month-old baby boy?" They said, "yes," and then they went through all the steps and adopted him. They named him Judson after the first American foreign missionary, Adoniram Judson. What a delightful addition he has been to our family!

God is such a big God! A caring God! A loving God. He's a God Who can raise the dead, answer our prayers, meet our needs, and change our lives!

Do you believe?

Contributor and Contributing Body of Christ

The Reverend Dann and Mrs. Brenda Patrick have served the Lord in full-time Christian ministry for 45 years, spending 33 years as Senior Pastor of Faith Church in Goldsboro, NC. Throughout their ministry, they have reached out to children through Faith Christian school and various community programs, specifically designed for the unfortunate of that city. They continue to be engaged in local church ministries, and to support Morningstar Children's Home, recognizing and having experienced residential Children's Homes like Morningstar and the blessings of fostering to adopt children in their own extended family.

Reverend Patrick is involved in teaching foreign pastors in such countries as India, Moldova, China, Romania, and Cuba, always leading people to strive to be like Jesus. Mrs. Patrick is originally from Southeast Georgia and they both find peace and solace from continuing to visit the area, including the Golden Isles. Morningstar Children's Home is the beneficiary of financial support but most importantly, the prayers of these committed servants of God.

*It takes a lot of everything to **create home and healing** for the foster children, our neighbors, served at Morningstar Children's Home.*

We invite you to join others in giving \$1 per day during Lent to help support the needs of the children.

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