Good Morning Pine Ridge brothers and sisters. Yesterday we looked at a blind man and a blind word. One received his sight when he had not even asked for it and didn’t even know who was giving it to him. But he then saw clearly. The world around this man could see but could not see truth. They were truly blind.

The next miracle is our friend Lazarus, who really plays a supporting role. He is the extra who comes on in the end and has no speaking part. But Lazarus is dead and everyone is weeping as only mid-easterners can weep. They were so used to weeping over death that people walked two miles from Jerusalem to share in this grief. Note especially that even Jesus weeps. This would not have been the first funeral that he attended and wept at.

This scene that John paints so poignantly for us, answers one of the questions we all have. What does God feel about out tragedies? Does He ignore them; tolerate them; cause them? What role does He play in this vale of tears?

After stressing twice that Jesus loved this family, John portrays Jesus as weeping for Lazarus. And it must have been more than the ordinary weeping in support of a loved one who has lost someone. That is because the other weepers marvel that Jesus must truly have loved Lazarus. Where is God in our pain? He is weeping with us.

As important as that issue may be to us, the main story is found in the dialogue between Jesus and Martha. Martha is grieving. But most of all, she is confused about the role of Jesus in her life and the life of her family. So when Jesus returns, she abandons any other obligation she might have to family and guests and goes immediately to Jesus. She says, “Jesus, where were you when I needed you?” She softens that with, “I still know who You are and I trust you – I just don’t understand!”

Jesus tells her that He is the resurrection and the life that she desires; and, that in believing in Him, she (and therefore Lazarus) will never die. Obviously Lazarus has died, and people who look to a resurrection will also die physically. Jesus is talking about eternal life after death, and Martha understands this.

But Jesus still presses the point with the question, “Do you believe this?” To anyone reading this passage the question is both pointed and personal, “Do you believe this?” The whole message of this gospel is, “Do you believe this?”

Martha answers perfectly for anyone about to see Jesus crucified. “Yes, Lord; I have believed that you are the Christ, the son of God.” She was about to see another death. This time it would be Jesus’ death. And she would not understand how this death could happen or what it would mean to her. Her only hope would be that she had believed.

In times of deepest grief, which is just where she was right now, the hope of the resurrection of the dead to life immortal is what Jesus gave her. Lazarus rose. Jesus shall rise from that tomb to conquer death for ever. Hallelujah! He arose!

In Christ Pastor EA