

Title: All Or Nothing - Book 11:1-16

Read:

¹⁻³Aman was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. This was the same Mary who massaged the Lord's feet with aromatic oils and then wiped them with her hair. It was her brother Lazarus who was sick. So the sisters sent word to Jesus, "Master, the one you love so very much is sick." ⁴When Jesus got the message, he said, "This sickness is not fatal. It will become an occasion to show God's glory by glorifying God's Son." ⁵⁻⁷Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, but oddly, when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed on where he was for two more days. After the two days, he said to his disciples, "Let's go back to Judea." ⁸They said, "Rabbi, you can't do that. The Jews are out to kill you, and you're going back?" ⁹⁻¹⁰Jesus replied, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Anyone who walks in daylight doesn't stumble because there's plenty of light from the sun. Walking at night, he might very well stumble because he can't see where he's going." ¹¹He said these things, and then announced, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep. I'm going to wake him up." ¹²⁻¹³The disciples said, "Master, if he's gone to sleep, he'll get a good rest and wake up feeling fine." Jesus was talking about death, while his disciples thought he was talking about taking a nap. ¹⁴⁻¹⁵Then Jesus became explicit: "Lazarus died. And I am glad for your sakes that I wasn't there. You're about to be given new grounds for believing. Now let's go to him." ¹⁶That's when Thomas, the one called the Twin, said to his companions, "Come along. We might as well die with him."

Think:

All or nothing, that's what it takes to follow Jesus. In this passage the disciples have decided to go back with Jesus to Judea, where they fully expect to die. Now that's commitment, but that's what it takes to follow Jesus. I hope and pray that you never have to put your life on the line, to follow Jesus, but there are plenty of people around the world who do. But whether you have to put your life on the line or not, you will have to make some decisions in your life because of your Christian faith. Being a follower of Jesus is not a wimpy option. It might be a decision at school, where you have to choose not to follow the crowd and instead stand up for the person being bullied. It might be a decision to remain pure and say no to sex before marriage, when your mind is saying yes. It might simply be the fact that you choose to go and worship your God, Sunday morning, rather than stay out all night Saturday getting drunk with your mates. Whatever the choices you have to make in life, you need to understand that your God will give you all that you need to choose the right path. I really do pray, that you never have to give up your life to follow Jesus, but that you do live your life, to follow Jesus.

Pray:

Father we pray for those around the world, in prisons and in danger, because they refuse to denounce their faith in you. Please Father, comfort them and where possible free them. Lord, I also pray that you give me the strength to make the right decisions in my life when I am put on the spot. Amen.

Action:

Find out more about persecuted Christians by going to, opendoors.org. Then you can join people in praying for them. Bye for now.