

Martha of Bethany Discussion

Remember that these monologues are essentially historical fiction, based on the Scripture but filling in plausible subjective details, both emotional responses and motivations. Your first task is to decide if they are reasonable.

We are not told in Scripture that Lazarus was chronically ill but there is no indication that he ever married and we do know that he lived with two sisters. It seems reasonable to assume that there was a reason for this.

John 11:5 states: "Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus." He often went to Bethany. Is it interesting that Martha is mentioned first?

Is it surprising that Jesus had friends other than his disciples?

What do you think of Martha's complaint about Mary not taking her share of the work?

If you were Martha, would you have considered Jesus answer satisfactory?

Do we sometimes grumble about the role we are given in the Lord's service?

Can you empathize with Mary and Martha's anxiety when Jesus did not come?

What were they missing? Can we learn to remember that when things seem to be going wrong, God is always "up to something?"

What was Martha thinking when Jesus said, "Your brother will rise again?"

Do we sometimes miss the full meaning of what God is doing because of our expectations? Is this what it means to have "little faith?"

Imagine being there when the stone is rolled away and Jesus calls out. What would be going through your mind if you were there?

We are not told the specific reactions of the disciples to the raising of Lazarus but prior to coming to Bethany, Thomas had said, "Let us also go that we may die with him." But of the crowd, John 11:45-46 says: "Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, put their faith in him. But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done."

Compare the reactions of the sisters, the crowd and the Pharisees to the raising of Lazarus.

What does the incident of Mary anointing Jesus feet teach us?

Is it surprising that Jesus would say, "You will always have the poor among you?"

What does it reveal about Judas?

Were Martha, Mary and Lazarus in danger because of their relationship with Jesus?

Does it appear that they have “hospitality ministry?”

If you experience a miracle, is there a responsibility that goes along with it?

Do you think it would have been a challenge for the family to share this story and deal with the consequences?

Do you have a story to share?