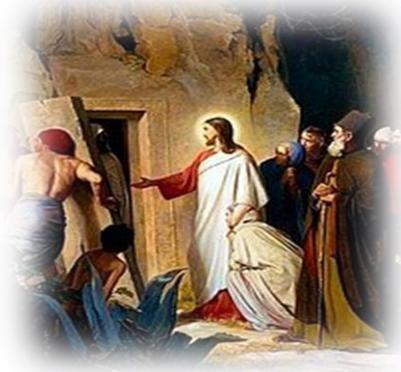


## **Background Information for John 11**



In what has been widely known as the “penultimate sign” of Jesus’s divinity in the gospel of John, one might also argue that this is also the greatest revelation of the glory of His humanity as well. In this scene our Lord weeps (Jn 11:35), groans (Jn 11:33 and Jn 11:38), and rebukes his apostles for their stupidity (see Jn 11:8-14). The weeping and groaning reveals an internal struggle of our Lord. He knows that the miracle that He is about to perform is virtually a signing of His own death warrant. Jn 11:45-54 sees Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin reach a boiling point in regard to Jesus because of this scene. The humanness of His sadness and indignation serve to help illuminate His divine power to raise Lazarus. Does not the emphatic “Lazarus, come out!” remind the reader of a parent calmly but defiantly commanding a child to come out of his or room after a tantrum. Nevertheless, the words as mundane as “come out” pronounce the triumph of grace and life over sin and death.

Try to put yourself in the shoes of Lazarus’s sister Martha. She loves Jesus and believes in Him to an extent. She believes that He has power to raise Lazarus from the grave at “on the last day” (Jn 11:24), but she her faith stops there. Jesus tells her “I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” (Jn 11:25-26). Martha answers in the affirmative. Her faith rises to another level. She in effect moves from being a Christian deist, which simply believes that Jesus is God, and becomes a true Christian. True Christians believe that the Son of God “is coming into the world” and is with us in our human misery. Christians believe that Jesus is living and active in the here and now. His grace lives inside every baptized soul. His resurrection is not merely on the last day but is available for all of those who believe in Him and surrender their lives to Him.