

I didn't actually preach all of this, but these are some of the notes I had made for a talk from this morning's service.

Haydon

**Fear** of Lazarus and family. I've spoken to several people this week who are scared. I imagine everyone I speak to in the week to come will be scared too.

I've often wondered, do we pretend that Jesus didn't get scared? Take today, He has complete confidence that God hears him all the time and makes the point of saying at the end of the story that he's talking to God out loud so that others might hear and believe, but I just wonder, when he heard God say 'do this, go this way' as so often happened, or in this case, 'don't rush, it'll be fine in the end. I'll get the glory', humanly, what went through Jesus's mind? He had a mind like yours and mine. He made the choice over and over again to trust His Father, because He knew that even when it was all deeply confusing and troubling, His Father never let Him down. Not once, not ever.

We read more than once in this passage that Jesus knew exactly what was going on and that God was going to be glorified. Can we trust Him in the calm and the storm? He was able to trust God because He knew Him. He spent time with Him. He listened to Him. He acted in obedience to what God asked Him to do and so God was glorified and so was Jesus - the Son of Man. This is possible for us - we are to be like Jesus and do even greater things than He did, He said, because God is in us, with us and through us by the Holy Spirit, just the same as the Spirit was with Jesus who, remember, laid aside His majesty to be the perfect man to save humanity and invite them (us) into relationship with God.

It seems to me that Jesus was sad and angry for two reasons:

1. That He had made it clear He was the Messiah but no-one recognised Him (apart from, in this story, Mary and Martha).
2. His friend was dead. However, the moment of sadness and anger here, natural as it was, soon passes as Jesus knows that He will raise Lazarus, people will recognise Him for who He is and follow, praising God and giving their lives to Him.

I think the bigger sadness and anger is at people's unbelief and lack of trust in God. Mary and Martha both recognise Jesus for who He is ('I have always known that you are the Messiah' says Martha) and so they are promised that they will see the things of the kingdom and the glory of God.

Don't we want that?

Recognise Jesus as Messiah, as saviour, trust in God and follow God. For people who do that, the things of the kingdom, signs of the glory of God, are never far behind.

If we're Christians we don't just think and say things, we're changed. Different people. New creations. Christ is in us, the hope of glory. This is the same Jesus whose Father never once let Him down. We have the same Father. Jesus calls us His brothers and sisters. Our Father never lets us down. Not once. Not ever. Other things conspire against us. Illness, worry, money trouble, relationship trouble, even things relating to Church let us down, sometimes dreadfully so, but our Father. No, not Him. He doesn't ever let us down.

To rise. something has to die. Lazarus. Jesus. Are we willing to die to ourselves? Our way of life is going to change. What are we willing to let go of so that God can you have His way in our lives?

We are all scared and angry. Today's reading repeats that Jesus was angry and makes it perfectly clear, abundantly clear, that Jesus wept. If He wept. It's ok to weep. He weeps with us when we weep. He hears your weeping and your passion for things to change. He also weeps for every single one who has gone away or astray, living life their own way and ignoring His perfect love, offered freely and ours to take if we would just accept that we need it. Will you accept it today?

What I'm praying in all of this alongside praying for all we know and love to receive mercy, is that God might be glorified, for the kingdom to come and for for the glory of God to be seen in such a way that no one could deny that it is the power of God and the love of God which is at work here. The Earth is the Lord's and

everything in it. Cast your cares on Jesus. He will be with you every step of the way. Cast your fear on Jesus. He will be with you every step of the way, even and especially through the step of death, something that He went through for you, for me and for everyone who has lived, is living and will ever live. His light is the light of the world, the light in our darkness, the light to shine on the things that scare us and make us recognise that even though pain and suffering are part of this life they're nothing compared to the love that God the Father has for each and every person. And the beauty is that none who have been given to Jesus will be lost. Not one. So again, cast your cares upon Jesus. Cast your fear upon Jesus. Cast every worry you've got upon Jesus and choose to put your trust in Him today. He will see us through to wherever the other side of this time in our history is for each one of us.

Amen