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Devotion for March 4th, 2022

*"Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it."
- John 11:38*

I hope and pray that by now some of you have become curious as to where we get our texts for these thrice-weekly devotions. For those who have as yet to figure that out, they come from a section of the LSB hymnal appropriately titled, "Daily Lectionary." It begins on page 299 and 304. It's a great resource for an annual Bible read through which might be a great thing to take up during the season of Lent. Remember the purpose of giving something up or starting something new in this season is to create a spiritually healthy habit of some sort.

As for today's reading, it's from [John 11:38-57](#) and it's full of so much meat that one could feed off of it for weeks without going any further. The verse that I've selected to focus in on comes quite literally on the doorstep of the climax of an event in Bethany when Jesus was called by some friends, Mary and Martha, because their brother is dying.

At first the Lord delayed leaving when word of His friend's illness reached Him. How often have you wondered about something exactly like that when faced with some life crises? You've prayed about it a few times, fretted about it a lot, and nothing seems to happen. You think to yourself, "Perhaps God doesn't care," or worse, "Does He really exist?"

For His part Jesus reveals the reason for His delay and it was not at all what others thought. The disciples assumed He wouldn't be going because Judea had become a dangerous place for them. Word was out that the authorities were looking to capture their teacher and have Him put to death. That, however, would not deter Jesus. In fact, He came for this reason and the time for the end was at hand. As He made that final journey to Jerusalem, He wanted to do so in a way that left no doubt as to who He was, the Christ, the Son of the living God.

During His two-day delay Lazarus had died and now He stood at the door step of His friend's tomb. After some discussion the stone was rolled away from the tomb (this was how people were normally buried in that part of the world), and Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" Of course you know what happened next as many Jews there believed in Jesus on the spot.

Ironically, this great miracle would be the last straw with the High Priest Caiaphas making the last prophetic statement that, "it is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish."
([John 11:50](#))

Indeed, it was and indeed that man Jesus did die for others to have life, you other included in that group. Praise be the Holy Name of Jesus forever. Amen.

*God's blessings,
Rev. Kevin Loughran, Senior Pastor
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