

# THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS

## THE LESSON: JOHN 11

Jesus' life was characterized by prayer. The Gospel narratives tell us that he prayed continually. He prayed at significant moments, such as at his baptism, before choosing the twelve disciples, and in the garden of Gethsemane. But he also regularly withdrew from the crowds that surrounded him to spend time in quiet solitary prayer.

One thing that stands out when we look at Jesus' prayer life is gratitude. Jesus took time to thank his Father for who he is and for what he has done. It's noteworthy that before he performed many miracles, Jesus gave thanks.

Gratitude also comes up elsewhere in the Gospels. On one occasion Jesus was approached by ten lepers with the words, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us". He sent them to show themselves to the priests and on the way they found that they had been healed. One of them returned, "praising God with a loud voice" and "fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks". This became a teachable moment, when Jesus pointed out the gratitude of this one healed man as an example against the other nine who did not "return and give praise to God" (Luke 17:11-19).

In a moment we'll look at the narrative of the raising of Lazarus in John's Gospel. Lazarus, Mary and Martha were a family living at Bethany who were very dear to Jesus and there are several stories in the Gospels that tell us about them. In this particular story, take note of how Jesus is feeling, and then consider the first words he speaks in prayer.

## AT-HOME CHALLENGE

Write a simple prayer of thanksgiving to say each morning this week. It can be something as brief as, "Thank you God for this new day".

In the evenings, take some quiet time to review the events of the day with a grateful spirit. Choose five things specific to the day that you can thank God for.

- AND/OR -

Take some time to pray through this collect, pausing to reflect after each phrase.

*Almighty God, who hast given thine only Son to be unto us both a sacrifice for sin, and also an example of godly life: Give us grace that we may always most thankfully receive that his inestimable benefit, and also daily endeavour ourselves to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

(COLLECT FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER, BCP PAGE 191)

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## JOHN 11: **THE FATHER HEARS**

<sup>1</sup>Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha... <sup>3</sup>So the sisters sent to him, saying, "Lord, he whom you love is ill..." <sup>17</sup>Now when Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days... <sup>32</sup>Now when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet, saying to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." <sup>33</sup>When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled. <sup>34</sup>And he said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." <sup>35</sup>Jesus wept. <sup>36</sup>So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" <sup>37</sup>But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?"

<sup>38</sup>Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. <sup>39</sup>Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, by this time there will be an odor, for he has been dead four days." <sup>40</sup>Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?" <sup>41</sup>So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. <sup>42</sup>I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me." <sup>43</sup>When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out." <sup>44</sup>The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go." <sup>45</sup>Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what he did, believed in him...