

## Jesus Wept, An Easter Message

It is the easiest verse in the Bible to memorize, with it being the shortest.

***“Jesus wept.” (John 11:35)***

Though short, this one verse raises many questions.

Why was Jesus’ weeping?

He was God in the flesh.

No matter what challenges He faced He knew how all of this would end.

He would be victorious.

He would overcome death.

He would provide salvation to the world.

So why the tears?

Let’s zoom out of this two-word verse to gain a fuller context of what was happening that brought Jesus not only to tears but to weeping.

Towards the end of Jesus’ ministry, his dear friend Lazarus had died.

Lazarus, the brother to Mary and Martha, was dead.

Jesus was very close to this family.

Mary was the woman who anointed Jesus’ feet with ointment and wiped them with her hair ***(John 11:2)***.

Martha had previously welcomed Jesus into her home, although she was distracted at the time. ***(Luke 10:38-42)***

The sisters were very sorrowful at the passing of their brother, though early on they still had hope.

They knew Jesus personally and knew of the miracles He could perform.

Healing the sick and giving sight to the blind.

Surely, He would raise their brother from the dead.

Once word got to Jesus about Lazarus’ death, the Bible tells us He waited two more days before he headed to Judea to see Mary, Martha, and to deal with Lazarus.

As the days passed the sisters lost hope.

Jesus had not come soon enough.

As their hope for their brother's resurrection faded, their grief grew more and more.

Reality set in that their brother was gone and there was nothing anyone could do about it — not even Jesus.

Once Jesus finally arrived:

***“Martha said to Jesus, ‘Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.’” (John 11:21)***

When Jesus met with Mary she came to the same conclusion:

***“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.’” (John 11:32)***

At this point, people had gathered with Mary and Martha as they mourned the loss of their brother.

When Jesus heard their words and saw the sadness of the people around Him, the Bible tells us He became very moved and wept.

The two-verse highlights the fact that the writer wants us to pause here for a moment.

This weeping was not something to gloss over or ignore.

It was intentional and packed with meaning.

So why the weeping?

Here are three reasons why *“Jesus wept.”*

### **1. Jesus wept for the pain of his friends.**

He saw the suffering of the people and the pain death causes.

Jesus deeply cared about Mary, Martha, and Lazarus.

Although He already knows this happened to glorify God and that in a few minutes Lazarus would return to them, He felt their pain.

He was empathetic to their loss.

When you genuinely care about someone, when they hurt, you hurt.

Jesus’ weeping here shows His true care and love for us.

God never takes our pain lightly even if He knows He will restore everything we’ve lost.

Like a good Father, He doesn’t enjoy seeing us in pain any more than we enjoy seeing our own children suffering pain, even if He knows that pain will lead to a greater good.

One of the greatest gifts we can give someone who is hurting is our presence and sharing in their suffering.

There is a Swedish proverb that says: “Shared joy is a double joy. Shared sorrow is half sorrow.”

Jesus wanted to take on their pain, reminding us that no matter what hurts or pains we face in life, Jesus is right here with us.

He’s not afraid to meet us in our despair and darkness.

He’s the first one to meet us in our valleys.



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***“Jesus wept”***, because those He loved wept.

## **2. Jesus wept for their lack of faith.**

The second reason ***“Jesus wept”*** was because of the lack of faith He saw around Him.

When Jesus first told His disciples, they would head back to Judea, they reminded Him that the last time He was in Judea He was almost stoned.

They were operating in fear and not faith.

As they attempted to discourage Jesus from returning to Judea, Jesus responded: ***“Then Jesus told them plainly, ‘Lazarus has died, and for your sake, I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.’ So Thomas, called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, ‘Let us also go, that we may die with him.’” (John 11:14-16)***

Jesus intentionally waited to go to Lazarus to bring God glory once Lazarus was raised from the dead.

Still, the disciples planned to go to Judea with Jesus to die with Him.

As we’ve already read, once Jesus reached Judea, Mary and Martha warned Jesus that it’s too late.

Lazarus had been dead for days.

There is no way, they believed, he can come back to life.

When Jesus told Martha that He would still raise her brother, she reasoned: ***“Jesus said to her, ‘Your brother will rise again.’ Martha said to him, ‘I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.’” (John 11:23-24)***

Martha believed Lazarus would one day rise again, but not that day.

Jesus reminded her: ***“Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?’” (John 11:25-26)***

“...He knows it’s our faith that leads to our salvation, peace, and joy.”

Jesus wanted the people to believe in Him.

Still, they seemed to be focused on whether Jesus got to Judea on time.

They were concerned with Jesus’ timing being too late as well as the fact that Lazarus was probably starting to smell (**John 11:39**).

Jesus was grieved because all the answers to their needs were right in front of them, yet they seemed to miss it.

They seemed to miss the power of Jesus.

This lack of faith made Jesus weep because what He truly wants from us is our faith.

***“And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.” (Hebrews 11:6)***

There were not many people who impressed Jesus, but the few who did all had one thing in common: a bold faith in Him.

Jesus wants us to believe in Him – not to make Himself feel better – but because He knows it’s our faith that leads to our salvation, peace, and joy that we can only find in Him.

### **3. Jesus wept for his coming suffering.**



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**Jesus wept** because Lazarus's death and resurrection reflected His.

Jesus knew within a short time He too would die and be placed in a tomb.

He knew He would ultimately overcome death and rise from the dead just like Lazarus, but He also knew it would be an extremely difficult road to walk.

Closer to His death Jesus prayed:

***“And he said, ‘Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.’ (Mark 14:36)***

He didn't want to die on the cross, but He did want to glorify His Father.

We may sometimes weep in this fallen world, but in Jesus, we have a greater hope. **Psalm 126:5-6** tells us:

***“Those who sow in tears shall reap with shouts of joy. He who goes out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him.”***

Jesus had to suffer; He had to endure the pain.

He had to weep so that one day we don't have to.

**Revelation 21:4** encourages us in this hope:

***“He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”***