

## An Angry Lord at the Death of a Friend

### Scripture Reading — John 11:17-36

*[Jesus] was deeply moved in spirit and troubled.*  
—John 11:33—

When faced with the death of their brother Lazarus, both Mary and Martha said the same words to Jesus: “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” They may well have said something like that (several times) to each other earlier. Was that a simple, elegant statement of faith? Or were they complaining to Jesus?

Jesus tried to answer Martha, but she didn’t really understand what he was getting at.

Jesus didn’t even attempt a reply to Mary. Instead, we get a glimpse into his heart, and we see an emotional Lord and an angry Savior. Seeing Mary and her friends weeping, Jesus “was deeply moved in spirit and troubled”—and the word for “deeply moved” means “angry.” What would Jesus be angry about?

Some suggest that Jesus foresaw his own approaching death and was shaken by that. But most interpreters understand Jesus’ anger to be evoked by the effects of death and its power to destroy someone he loved. God loves life; God brings life into existence in beautiful ways. Death destroys what God creates and loves. And here, confronting death, Jesus was indignant, angry.

Aren’t you glad we have a God who gets angry at what kills us?

### Prayer

*Thank you, Creator God, for being emotionally involved in what we do and in what is done to us. Thank you for getting angry at whatever does us harm. Help us to work against such things also. In your name, Amen.*

**Devotion topics:** [Bible](#), [Books of the Bible](#), [Gospel of John](#)

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