**Reflections-04-02-17**

Purpose, Faith, Dying to Self

*“What’s your purpose?”*

John 11:1-45

1. Do you a personal mission statement? If you do, what would it be?
2. It appears from our biblical text that Jesus’ purpose was not to prevent people from dying, but rather that people “believe” in the Son of Man i.e. Jesus. Does that surprise you? Why or why not?
3. Jesus walks back into the lion’s den (Judea) where he was almost stoned. His disciples thought this was a terrible idea because of the danger. Would you describe yourself as someone who always plays it safe?
4. Thomas said, “Let us also go, that we may die with him (Jesus)”. Do you think that you would be willing to die for Christ’s sake?
5. Dying can happen in many different ways physically, emotionally and spiritually. Do you agree that one must “die” in order to live?
6. Do you think that everyone has a purpose? What do you think most people would say if they were asked the question of “what is your purpose?”

**John 11:1-45**

11Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. 2Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. 3So the sisters sent a message to Jesus,\* ‘Lord, he whom you love is ill.’ 4But when Jesus heard it, he said, ‘This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God’s glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.’ 5Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, 6after having heard that Lazarus\* was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

7 Then after this he said to the disciples, ‘Let us go to Judea again.’ 8The disciples said to him, ‘Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?’ 9Jesus answered, ‘Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world. 10But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them.’ 11After saying this, he told them, ‘Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him.’ 12The disciples said to him, ‘Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right.’ 13Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. 14Then Jesus told them plainly, ‘Lazarus is dead. 15For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.’ 16Thomas, who was called the Twin,\* said to his fellow-disciples, ‘Let us also go, that we may die with him.’

17 When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus\* had already been in the tomb for four days. 18Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles\* away, 19and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. 20When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. 21Martha said to Jesus, ‘Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. 22But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.’ 23Jesus said to her, ‘Your brother will rise again.’ 24Martha said to him, ‘I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.’ 25Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life.\* Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, 26and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?’ 27She said to him, ‘Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah,\* the Son of God, the one coming into the world.’

28 When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, ‘The Teacher is here and is calling for you.’ 29And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. 30Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. 31The Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. 32When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, ‘Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.’ 33When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. 34He said, ‘Where have you laid him?’ They said to him, ‘Lord, come and see.’ 35Jesus began to weep. 36So the Jews said, ‘See how he loved him!’ 37But some of them said, ‘Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?’

38 Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. 39Jesus said, ‘Take away the stone.’ Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, ‘Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead for four days.’ 40Jesus said to her, ‘Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?’ 41So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upwards and said, ‘Father, I thank you for having heard me. 42I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.’ 43When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, ‘Lazarus, come out!’ 44The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, ‘Unbind him, and let him go.’

45 Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.