

John 12:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.

Analysis

The chief priests' motive: 'because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.' Lazarus' resurrection was converting people, draining the leaders' authority. The phrase 'went away' suggests abandoning former allegiance to embrace Jesus. This demonstrates miracles' evangelistic power when coupled with testimony. The leaders fear losing constituents more than fearing God. Their plot reveals that institutional religion often opposes genuine spiritual awakening when it threatens power. Ironically, killing Lazarus would create a martyr, strengthening rather than weakening testimony.

Historical Context

The religious leaders derived authority from popular support. Mass defection to Jesus threatened their political and religious power base. This explains their desperation.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does institutional religion react when spiritual awakening threatens its power?
2. What does the leaders' fear of losing followers reveal about their true priorities?
3. In what ways does authentic testimony inevitably threaten false religion?

Interlinear Text

ὅτι	πολλοὶ	δι'	αὐτὸν	ὑπῆγον	τῶν	Ἰουδαίων
Because	many	that by reason	of him	went away	G3588	of the Jews
G3754	G4183	G1223	G846	G5217		G2453
καὶ	ἐπίστευον	εἰς	τὸν	Ἰησοῦν		
and	believed	on	G3588	Jesus		
G2532	G4100	G1519		G2424		

Additional Cross-References

John 11:45 (Faith): Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.

John 12:18 (Parallel theme): For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle.

Acts 13:45 (Parallel theme): But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.