

Lazarus and the  
Uncertainty of  
**MORTALITY**



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## MONDAY – The Power of the Living God



**John 11: 14-15 (NIV)** *So then He told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead, and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.”*

Jesus knew His friend Lazarus was seriously ill. Jesus also knew what no one else did: God would raise Lazarus from his grave. All this time Lazarus’s sisters were imploring Jesus to come and heal their brother. Instead, He waited till Lazarus died. Why? To show God’s power over death.

Lazarus probably didn’t appreciate Jesus’ delayed arrival. With his life slipping away, Lazarus may have wondered, “Where is Jesus? Why doesn’t He come?” But Jesus’ mission was not about His friends’ timeline. It was about God’s. God’s timing is always right. And here, to demonstrate His dominance over death, Jesus waited till everyone could be absolutely sure that Lazarus was dead.

Now, Jesus’ intentional delay does not mean He was insensitive to grief. He too “... *was deeply moved in spirit and troubled,*” (John 11: 33) and He wept. While people then and now may reason that He wept because of Lazarus, it was surely even deeper than that. Jesus wept because death is still our enemy. Far from being insensitive about death, Jesus came to this earth to take on the curse of death for us. And His purpose in all of this was God’s glory, so that we might believe in God, and in His power, through Jesus, to cancel our sin and give us new life forever in His presence.

**Reflection:** Do you believe in this Saviour?



**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, we know You care because You came to die for our sake. Thank You for the promise of new life forever. In Your name, AMEN.

YouTube video: **Lazarus Is Raised from the Dead**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sfvzTm1mOCQ>

## TUESDAY – Putting our Lives in Jesus’ Hands



**John 11: 43-44 (NIV)** *When He had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face.*

Many biblical scholars see the raising of Lazarus as the seventh and final “sign” or miracle in the book of John, and—as we can see—Jesus had saved the best for last.

Even though Lazarus has been dead for several days, Jesus pulls him back from death’s grasp and restores him to life. All it took was a command from Jesus. The voice that spoke creation into existence now calls Lazarus out of the darkness of death and into the light of life again.

In our sceptical, postmodern era, this may seem like a story that’s been embellished by John to help “sell” people on the idea of following Jesus. But this miraculous story **is real**. Like the other signs in the book of John, it is meant to point to the deeper truth about Jesus and His ministry.

Lazarus’ resurrection points us to the hope of resurrection and new life that we have in Christ. What Jesus did for Lazarus is also a promise for all who believe. In Jesus there is no enemy - not even death itself - that can defeat us. If we are in Christ, we will have eternal life and victory over death, no matter what we face today.

When we have times in which we are struggling, anxious or afraid, we can look to Jesus and remember His promises of life forever with Him. Nothing is too big, and no problem is too difficult for Jesus to overcome. Not even death itself.

**Reflection:** In these times of Covid-19 uncertainty, when we are anxious and afraid, are we remembering to put our trust and lives into Jesus’ hands?



**Prayer:** Father, when things are difficult and I feel discouraged, give me hope. Help me to trust in Your power to bring me into life forever with You. AMEN

YouTube Video: **Bill & Gloria Gaither - My Name Is Lazarus [Live] - Greater Vision**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PNsLT1BxUto>

## WEDNESDAY – Doubts about Faith



**John 11: 21-22 (NIV)** *“Lord,” Martha said to Jesus, “if You had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know that even now God will give You whatever You ask.”*

We are familiar with the story of Jesus’ raising Lazarus from the dead. However, when reading it again, it is interesting to note the unspoken ways in which all of the other characters (the disciples, Martha and Mary, and the rest of the Jewish community) reveal their uncertainties and doubts to Jesus, even while turning to Him in their hour of need.

The disciples together seem to be questioning why Jesus will not rush to the ailing Lazarus and Mary appears to blame Jesus’ absence for Lazarus’ death. Yet in spite of these uncertainties, all these people turn to Jesus in this time of trouble. Even though most of them appear to believe that Lazarus is beyond Jesus’ help, they continue to look to Him.

Doubts about questions of faith do not mean we are faithless. Nor does doubt exclude us from a faithful relationship with God; we can still be in deep, meaningful relationship with God in Jesus Christ, even with our doubts and fears.

We are challenged to follow Jesus and to bring our troubles, questions and even our anger, to Him, so that we might be healed.

**Reflection:** Are you allowing your possible doubts about faith to drive a wedge between you and Jesus?



**Prayer:** God of the healing Christ, help me to understand that I do not need to lay down my doubt or my questions, my hurt or my fears, to follow You. Reassure me that I can bring them when I step forth to meet You and that You will receive me however I come. AMEN.

YouTube Video: **Son of God movie, Lazarus raised from the grave.**  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vpMVm\\_cJBuo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vpMVm_cJBuo)

## THURSDAY – Trusting in Jesus



**John 11: 9-10 (NIV)** *Jesus answered “Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Anyone who walks in the daytime will not stumble, for they see by this world’s light. It is when a person walks at night that they stumble, for they have no light.”*

Have you ever been through a dark crisis? I am sure that, like the rest of us living through the Covid-19 pandemic, you are going through one now.

There are 3 important lessons about how to hang on in times of crisis that we can learn in the story of the raising from the dead of Lazarus.

**Lesson 1: God's timing is always perfect.** He is never early, never late, but always on time. In reality, God's timing grows our faith, as we are forced to wait and trust in God and it makes certain that He, and He alone, gets the glory and praise for seeing us through the bad times.

**Lesson 2: God's ways are not our ways.** God has eternal perspective! He knows the past,

present and future. By not healing Lazarus immediately, Jesus wanted to stretch the faith of His disciples. Knowing that God's ways aren't our ways means we have to put all our faith and trust in His ways.

**Lesson 3: God always has the final say.** No matter how terrible and impossible the situation appears, God will see you through, as He alone has the final say. Lazarus was dead for 4 days and Jesus raised him from the dead. In the same way he will take what has died in you and raise it from the dead!

**Reflection:** To re-emphasise Tuesday's reflection question - Do you believe and trust Jesus enough to put your life into his hands?



**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, when all is darkness and we feel our weakness and helplessness, give us the sense of Your presence, Your love, and Your strength. Help us to have perfect trust in Your protecting love so that nothing may frighten or worry us, and make us see Your hand, Your purpose and Your will through all things.

YouTube Video: **Jesus Calls Lazarus Out Of His Grave**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ct6whNNApmA>

## FRIDAY – God’s Timetable



**John 11:5-6 (NIV)** *Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days.*

Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, but, according to this story, Jesus intentionally refrained from going to Lazarus’s bedside when he was gravely ill. Jesus told the disciples that Lazarus’s condition was to be used for God’s glory. Apparently, Lazarus’s death was intended as a staged display of God’s power. Lazarus would die, Jesus would raise him from the dead, and God would be glorified—all according to plan!

Whatever we make of this story, there is an inexorable truth that we have to grapple with. Our timetables and God’s timetable are different. What we want and how God responds to these desires can be wildly divergent. We are not in control. God is in control and He operates according to His divine plan.

However, the results of His actions are always good. We cannot know when God’s Spirit will move in our lives, but we can trust that when that Spirit does move, we will experience blessing beyond our wildest dreams.

In one sense, all of us who believe in Jesus are like Lazarus. With the exception of those who will be alive when Jesus returns, all of us will one day die and Jesus will be glorified as He resurrects our bodies all at the same time! So when you get to heaven, you’ll have something to talk about with Lazarus when you see him.

**Reflection:** What area of your life do you need to hand over to God’s timetable?



**Prayer:** Lord God, it is a cliché to be sure, but this story reminds me anew that You are God, and I am not. You will do what You will do, when You want to do it. You are in charge, I am not. My job is to try to be patient, trusting that when You do move, the dead will be raised, hope will be restored, and my sadness will be replaced with joy. In Jesus’ name, I pray. AMEN.

YouTube video: **Karen Peck & New River - Four Days Late [Live]**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=se7yAkqu3Ek>