

Day 1
September 3



Pray | Give your struggles of today to Jesus.

Jesus is the friend who sometimes delays.

In today's society, we live fast-paced lives and want immediate gratification. Think about the things that are a staple day to day: microwave ovens, drive-through fast food, online shopping, using credit cards, even coffee makers with pods for that perfect quick cup. We want what we want when we want it. Unfortunately, we also apply the "I want it now" mentality to God. But God moves according to his own timetable and plan. God gives us what we need when we need it. He provides and accomplishes his will when he sees fit. God knows not only *what* is best but *when* is best.

In this passage, we see that Lazarus was sick to the point of death. His family was concerned, wanted him to live, and knew the person capable of making that happen was Jesus. They sent for him, but he chose to delay.



Read | John 11:1-7



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

Lazarus' family wanted Jesus to know about his sickness and do something about it right now. Jesus, however, had a different plan and delayed his visit by two days. When have you called on Jesus and have not received an immediate response? Did you continue to have faith in his plan or start to lose hope?

Jesus knew how things would turn out, but he wanted his friends to trust in God. Trust begins with believing that God knows our situation and cares about us. Where in your life do you need to let go and trust God?

Verse four says, "...so that the Son of God may be glorified through it." When you find yourself in times of trouble, do you complain and get upset, or do you reflect on the situation, pray, and use these struggles as opportunities to glorify God?

Day 2
September 4



Pray | *Ask to see Jesus' plan through your struggles.*

Jesus is the friend who is our life.

By the time Jesus arrived to see Lazarus, Lazarus had been dead for four days. Both Mary and Martha knew that Jesus had the power save Lazarus if he wanted. Not only could he give life, but he could renew life as well. Part of trusting in God means we believe that he knows what is best for us. God knows our actions, thoughts and intentions; he understands why we act the way we do, and he loves us regardless.

The words Jesus spoke to Martha are true for us today. Jesus is still the resurrection and the life. When we trust that he died for our sins, we are given everlasting life. No matter how much it seems we are waiting on the Lord here and now, everlasting life already belongs to us. Jesus is life.



Read | *John 11:17-27*



Reflect | *Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:*

Lazarus' family knew Jesus well. They were his followers and his friends. They had seen what he did for people who needed healing, knew that Jesus had the power to heal, and trusted him even though he delayed his visit. Reflect on instances this week where you have seen Jesus at work in your life or for other people.

Put yourself in Martha's place. Martha had a deep faith, and her response is one which God would want from us. How would you have reacted in this situation? What would you have thought about your friendship with Jesus? How do you view your friendship with Jesus when he delays in answering your prayers?

Jesus said, "The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die" (John 11:25b-26). How does Jesus' statement alter your view of life and death?

How does knowing the power of Jesus to raise the dead impact the way you live your life? What is the difference between seeing Jesus as the giver of life and seeing Jesus as life itself?

Day 3
September 5



Pray | Thank Jesus for sacrificing for us so we can have eternal life.

Jesus is the friend who conquers death.

Usually around tax time we hear that old saying, “The only two things guaranteed in life are death and taxes.” From the perspective of humanity, death is final. There appears to be no way out of death and no power that can stop it. Thoughts of death throw people into a state of denial, and when it visits their family or friends, the circumstance can overwhelm people. Due to how unpleasant and powerful death seems, people often avoid talking or thinking about death, and they think death has the last say.

As followers of Jesus, however, we know this is not true. In God’s Word, we see that Jesus has power over everything, including death. We are able to live because he died, having paid the penalty of our sin for us. In the context of what Jesus has done for us, our only responsibility is to surrender our life to him so that he can become our life.



Read | John 11:25-26



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

Think about what Jesus meant by identifying resurrection and life with himself. When you think of your own death, what do you really believe about your resurrection? In that light, how do you regard your death?

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die" (John 11:25-26). Do you believe this? Spend some time in prayer, committing your life to living for and with Jesus.

Jesus was sent here to teach us how to live our lives for God. Jesus suffered and died for our sins so that we can have eternal life. Take a step out in faith; whom will you share the good news with this week?

Day 4
September 6



Pray | for guidance in helping someone in grief.

Jesus is the friend who grieves, the friend who cares.

The normal reaction to the loss of a loved one is grief. Jesus was not immune to it either. He loved Lazarus, and he loved Lazarus' sisters as well. Jesus not only grieved his friend, Lazarus, but he also wept over Mary and Martha's grief. In Romans 12:15, the Bible tells us to "rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep." Here we see Jesus living out this command.

Jesus not only grieved over the sadness of the scene, but he also felt anger and grief over the consequences of sin and death in our world. We do not experience life the way God originally intended it, and as God's image-bearers, our grief over sin and death reflects his hatred of sin and death. The good news is that grief is not Jesus' last word or action in this passage.



Read | John 11:28-37



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

Jesus cries when he sees Mary and her friends. His expression of grief shows God's compassion for people who suffer. What are some practical ways we can grieve with those who grieve?

Jesus was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. Jesus wept. What is the significance of this? Does this make God seem weaker or stronger?

Jesus was in the presence of his friends when they were grieving, just as he is with you. Reflect on a time you were grieving. Did you look to Jesus for comfort? Did you recognize Jesus' love and comfort for you?

Day 5
September 7



Pray | for a situation that seems impossible in your life.

Jesus is the friend who resurrects the dead.

We talk often about Jesus having all power. In this passage, we will see his power extend to the unbelievable action of resurrecting someone who was physically dead. He has the power to resurrect both the physically dead and the spiritually dead. This miracle story reveals the goodness and sovereignty of God, the curse of death, and the power of resurrection as well as Christ's compassion toward those in pain. As we trust in Jesus, our powerful friend who conquers death, we bring glory to him in the midst of terrible circumstances.



Read | John 11:38-44



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

Lazarus' family and friends wanted Jesus to "fix" him. Jesus did so on his timeline and according to his plan. Think about something in your life that you want to be fixed. Are you willing to wait and trust God's plan? How can you bring glory to him while you wait?

Jesus brought redemption and resurrected Lazarus in a dark and dirty tomb. Consider a dark and dirty place in your life where he can bring redemption to you. Can you bring God's light to someone who is in a dark place today?

Comparing your spiritual life to the story of Lazarus, are you alive and living with Jesus, or are you dead in the tomb? Is the state of your spiritual life visible to those around you?