

## The Way Forward

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John 11:17-44

In John's Gospel, Christ raises his friend Lazarus from the grave. He is the resurrection and the life. As we wait on God's timing, we are called to believe and work for his kingdom.

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Please open your bibles to the Gospel of John. We will be reading from chapter eleven, starting in verse seventeen about the story of death of Jesus's beloved friend Lazarus.

Now long ago, Lazarus' sisters (Mary and Martha) informed Jesus about their brother's illness. Their expectations were as others expected, Jesus would rise up and treat his friend and impart life. However, the Jesus doesn't the exact opposite of what we expect him to do. He delays for four days!

Let's read together [John 11:17-44](#) about the time when Jesus reaches Lazarus' village.

*Lord, we give you thanks for Word. We pray for our spiritual ears to hear these Scriptures anew and that we believe in your Son who can raise us from our deadness. God, guide through your Holy Spirit. In Christ's name, we pray. Amen.*

Do you remember the last time had to wait on God? When it comes to praying for simple things such as patience, he's always quick at answering that prayer request, but what about other important things that matter to you? We pray for God to do something concerning the things that affects us emotionally, spiritually, and physically.

We pray for God to give us enough to pay our monthly bills. To heal those who we love. And to repair the damage relationships in our households. And after we pray, beg, and plead with the Lord... we become discourage because after many days, weeks and years of asking nothing happens.

The hardest reality we all have experienced is waiting on God. We think we know best for our lives, but in actuality the Lord wants to show us something even greater by making us wait on him. Just like in John's Gospel, Jesus could have shown up after Mary and Martha's request, but instead Jesus waits because he wants to show us God's glory.

What's the God's glory. To raise a man from death's grip and give him new life! As Jesus cried out outside the tomb. "Lazarus, come out." This is the sign of the glory of God. That the Lord has the power and ability to bring a thoroughly dead man back to life.

It's through the Holy Spirit that resurrection comes into existence. The Spirit imparts life and can make dry bones come alive.

Do you believe this? Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life."

But sometimes we want to rush to blaming God when events and circumstances do not align with our timeline and expectations. Look at the sisters. They said that Christ was too late. His timing was wrong and he should of shown up sooner.

Sometimes I feel the same way. I often feel that God should have answered my prayers when I asked him at moments notice. But what if God has something better to show me and you? Often times, God waits so we see if we are going to trust him. It's when we completely trust and confess him as who he is, God begins to do ground breaking actions in our lives.

Look at when Martha, the older sister recognized Jesus' identity. She said, "I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world." If you want to see God's glory, you must confess Jesus as the Christ. Who has the authority over heaven and earth to do all things, even raising the dead.

But before Christ will show the world his Father's glory. He demonstrates his humanity, and love for his friend Lazarus. The sisters are weeping and so he is too.

Jesus knows what it feels like to lose a love one. It hurts him as it has for all us, but death will not have victory. Amen. Because Jesus is greater!

With that Jesus declares what God's glory looks like, "Lazarus, come out."

A risen man, woman, or child is what brings glory to God. You who have died with Christ in baptism and who have been raised with him through faith are God's glory. You are his resurrection project.

That's who the church is... we are the people who are loved by Jesus. He has given us new life by his Holy Spirit and he has called us to live the life of Christ while we serve and love one another.

And while we wait on God, we see there's more to do for his kingdom.

See the last verse. Christ tells the living to "Unbind him, and let him go."

The way forward is to unbind those who are new in the faith. We who are mature spiritually must disciple those who just have been raised to life in Christ.

What God desires is for his resurrected people to unbind those who recently placed their faith in Jesus. Help them leave their tomb of sin. Take them with you. Love them because Christ loved them first.

If we are going find the way forward in this life. We must believe in Christ and aid our brothers and sisters in the faith. This is a day-by-day calling.

Church, find your Lazarus. Love him well and teach him the ways of Jesus. All for God's glory to see a man, woman, and child made alive by the power of God.

We serve an amazing God. Amen. Praise be God.