

“When God Is Late”
When God..., Part 3
November 22nd & 25th, 2018

When you feel God isn't paying attention to what is going on in your life, you don't have to **lose faith** over that

A question we've all asked, “Why doesn't God **do** something about **that**?”

This is a somewhat academic question when it's someone else's pain, but when it's **personal**, it's a **big** deal

John 11:1-2 (NIV) “Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. This Mary, whose brother Lazarus now lay sick, was the same one who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped His feet with her hair.”

John 11:3 (NIV) “So the sisters sent word to Jesus, ‘Lord, the one You love is sick.’”

John 11:4 (NIV) “When He heard this, Jesus said, ‘This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it.’”

Jesus creates a new category for sickness – for God's **glory**

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.”

John 11:7-10 (NIV) “Then He said to His disciples, ‘Let us go back to Judea.’ ‘But Rabbi,’ they said, ‘a short while ago the Jews there tried to stone You, and yet You are going back?’⁹ 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.¹⁰ It is when a person walks at night that they stumble, for they have no light.’”

Jesus is talking about **opportunity**; trusting is a prerequisite to **understanding**

John 11:11-14 (NIV) “¹¹After He had said this, He went on to tell them, ‘Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up.’¹² His disciples replied, ‘Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better.’¹³ Jesus had been speaking of his death, but His disciples thought He meant natural sleep.¹⁴ So then He told them plainly, ‘Lazarus is dead, ...’”

John 11:15-17 (NIV) “...and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him. Then Thomas (also known as Didymus) said to the rest of the disciples, ‘Let us also go, that we may die with Him.’ On His arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days.”

In the first century the Jews believed the spirit of a person hovered over a dead body for three days and would **leave** after three days, then there was no longer **hope** for life on earth

John 11:20 (NIV) “When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet Him, but Mary stayed at home. ‘Lord,’ Martha said to Jesus, ‘if You had been here, my brother would not have died.’”

Martha is saying, Jesus, this is Your **fault**, Your **doing**

John 11:22-24 (NIV) “²²‘But I know that even now God will give You whatever you ask.’²³ Jesus said to her, ‘Your brother will rise again.’²⁴ Martha answered, ‘I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.’”

John 11:25-26 (NIV) “Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies;²⁶ and whoever lives by believing in Me will never die. Do you believe this?’”

John 11:33-34 (NIV) “³³When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, He was deeply moved in spirit and troubled.³⁴ ‘Where have you laid him?’ He asked. ‘Come and see, Lord,’ they replied.”

Even when God could have, should have, would have intervened, God has the ability to enter into your **deepest pain**, even when He chooses to do nothing about your circumstances

John 11:35 (NIV) “Jesus wept.”

It's as if Jesus was saying, I'm not too big, distant, or mighty to understand & feel your **pain**

John 11:36-40 (NIV) “³⁶ Then the Jews said, ‘See how He loved him!’ ³⁷ But some of them said, ‘Could not He who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?’ ³⁸ Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. ³⁹ ‘Take away the stone,’ He said. ‘But, Lord,’ said Martha, the sister of the dead man, ‘by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days.’ ⁴⁰ Then Jesus said, ‘Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?’”

If you continue to believe and follow Jesus, you can catch a glimpse of His glory, even in your most **difficult** time

John 11:42-44 (NIV) “⁴¹ So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, ‘Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. ⁴² I knew that You always hear Me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that You sent Me.’ ⁴³ When He had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, ‘Lazarus, come out!’ ⁴⁴ The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, ‘Take off the grave clothes and let him go.’”

John 11:45 (NIV) “Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, believed in Him.”

There is **nothing** God can’t do – so why doesn’t God do something about that?

The answer is at times we **don’t know**, but here’s what we do know...

- We know He **can**
- We know sometimes He **waits**
- We know we can **trust** Him in the meantime

John 11:40 (NIV) “... if you believe, you will see the glory of God?”

John 11:4 (NIV) “Jesus said, ‘This sickness will not end in death.’”

Some sicknesses **do** end in **death**

John 11:25-26 (NIV) “Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; ²⁶ and whoever lives by believing in Me will never die. Do you believe this?’”

Life on earth is **not** all there is, our life on earth is **preparation** for the next life – eternity

Revelation 21:4 (NLT) “He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.”

Philippians 1:20-23 (NLT) “...And I trust that my life will bring honor to Christ, whether I live or die. ²¹ For to me, living means living for Christ, and dying is even better. ²² But if I live, I can do more fruitful work for Christ. So I really don’t know which is better. ²³ I’m torn between two desires: I long to go and be with Christ, which would be far better for me.”

How we live our life on earth will **impact** what awaits us in eternity; God will reward our **faithful** living on earth in heaven

Revelation 22:12 (NIV) “[Jesus said] Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done.”

2 Timothy 4:7-8 “As for me, the hour has come...; the time is here for me to leave this life. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race. I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord will award me on that day – and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for His appearing.”

My Next Step Today Is...

- I am in a situation where I feel God is “late.” However, I will continue to follow & trust Him
- Today for the first time, I am choosing to become a follower of Jesus
- I/we plan to attend “All About New Hope in 30 Minutes” next Sunday, Dec 2nd after the 3rd service

Next Week: We begin a new message series: “**An Unexpected Christmas.**” Invite a friend!!!