

# LIVING IN THE NOW WITH JESUS

John 11:1-44



Mary and Martha's brother Lazarus, a friend of Jesus, had been unwell for a while, and his sisters sent word to Jesus to inform Him that the person He cherished was ailing. It is remarkable how Mary and Martha did not just state that Lazarus was sick but rather emphasised the love Jesus had for him. They chose their words carefully, as they were conscious of Jesus' affection for them.

Saying that: "the one you love is sick" also indicates that they personalised God's love and recognised their relationship with Jesus as friends. They made the plea from the point of view of someone who was aware that Jesus loved them. We should all do the same. When we make prayers of supplications and petitions, we are more effective in them when we understand the position we are praying from.

No matter what we are facing, it is essential to always keep our hearts focused on God because difficult times can make us forget His goodness and love for us. Knowing God's heart on certain issues helps us to act, respond, and pray accordingly. Knowing that God loves you gives you the courage to make requests. Just like the sisters did, it is important to remind yourself that God loves you, and His love is specifically directed towards you. Continuously tell yourself that God loves you so that your soul can resonate with this truth. The enemy wants you to become discouraged and overwhelmed by the hardships of



life so that you stray from the truth of how God sees you. That is not the attitude a believer should live by; instead, you should be filled with joy and find solace in God's love for you. In times of trouble, you should give thanks to God because His love helps you to overcome.

When Jesus heard of Lazarus' illness, He said it wouldn't lead to death but would bring glory to God. Therefore, whatever situation you find yourself in, remember that God's love is present and that difficult circumstance can become an opportunity for His glory to be revealed. The one who is overseeing everything loves you.

John 11:5-6 speaks of how Jesus loved Martha, Mary and Lazarus, and He stayed two more days out of His great love for them. It is remarkable how after Jesus learned of Lazarus' condition, He stayed a bit longer [2 days], while everyone would have expected Him to hurry and save the day. This shows that any delays you experience do not mean you are loved any less. Therefore, there is no need to compare yourself to others or judge God's love for you based on the delays that you go through. Delays are a platform for God to display even greater glory.

When Jesus arrived in Bethany and encountered Martha, she said that if He had been there earlier, Lazarus would not have died. But Jesus replied by affirming that he would rise again. Martha accepted this but noted that it would occur in the resurrection on the last day. Here, Martha is thinking in two different time frames; in the first, she looks to the past and suggests that the outcome would have been different if Jesus had been present. After Jesus responds, she looks to the future. Jesus replied with: "I AM", which is the present tense; this illustrates that Jesus is in the present. God does not want us to be overly preoccupied with the future, as this can lead to worry and stress. He also does not want us to be excessively fixated on the past, as this can bring guilt and remorse for things that we could have, should have, and would have done.

He desires for us to be in the present moment with Him; that is why the Bible refers to Him as an ever-present help. Hebrews 11 begins with the phrase, "Now faith is...", which implies that trusting in God is something that we do in the present. Therefore, don't delay your prayers when you are praying. Believe that God can act now, as He desires us to remain alive and present in the moment, just as He is.

