



The Lazarus Life | When Jesus is Late • Week Two • February 25, 2018

John 11:1-16

Seasonal Focus: We are in the season of Lent, where for centuries, people across all different faith traditions set aside these weeks for the purpose of deep spiritual reflection, humility, learning, prayer, and placing themselves before God in a way that would shape them.

Opening: If you were writing a job description for God, what would you put down as his number one responsibility? How would you feel if God did not follow through on that responsibility?

Discussion: Read John 11: 1-6. Pastors Dan Meyer and Eric Haskins invited us again into the transformation story of Lazarus.

- In general, why do you think God often times tarries in offering the help needed when He truly loves people and has the power to help? What do you think this says about Him? What do you think this says about us?
- How do you live, when from your vantage point —Jesus seems late in bringing about the good for which you long? How do you live without being destroyed by anxiety, discouragement or despair?
- Why do you think John reiterates in his writing of this gospel, how Jesus loved Mary, Martha and Lazarus? How does this impact the way you receive 'waiting'?
- Where do you typically find yourself in times of waiting: shaking your fist, wringing your hands, crying out to God, tapping your feet, clenching your teeth, opening your hands, receiving Love, surrendering to Love?

Pastor Dan mentioned three key strategies for how we respond when Jesus appears to be late.

#1. View waiting as an essential discipline of spiritual formation – not as a passive experience.

- What do you think 'waiting' can accomplish for your inner life? What do you think you "do" in this discipline of waiting?
- Pastor Eric mentioned, "This Lenten series forces us to wait - to sit with - to realize it's not about us getting through the story but it's about the story getting through to us." What is the posture shift that is described here? How does this feel?
- Pastor Dan expressed that he "sees having to wait actually as a gift. It is one of those everyday sacraments..." What does this reframing of 'waiting' stir in you? Does it help you, bother you, frustrate you, inspire you?
- How do you receive your life...as a grace given or as a possession taken? How do these two different dispositions play out within ourselves and with God?



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#2 Resolve to treat times of waiting as an invitation to trust God.

- How could waiting be purposed as an opportunity to trust that God really does know what He's doing? How would this impact God's glory?
- Pastor Eric defined two words for time given in the Bible: Chronos (chronological time) and Kairos. Kairos depicts a fullness of time...where God is actively present and moving in the world to accomplish His purposes. "Jesus lived in kairos time. He lived actively waiting and anticipating the Father moving and acting." How could this understanding of time fuel anticipation with active looking and listening, during your season of waiting and trusting?

#3. Remember that just because we cannot SEE good things happening, does not mean they aren't.

- Pastor Dan reminded us that "God has sown into the very fabric of winter a mystery like this as a reminder to us all...Spring is coming for you who wait." How does the winter stillness, bareness and coldness encourage you in your waiting?
- Pastor Eric encouraged us to use our imaginations...How could anticipating God being glorified empower you to live with great hope in your season of waiting?

Practice of the Week: Detachment

Detachment nurtures the spirit of trust that is attached to God alone (detaching from our trust in money, resources, reputation, relationships, etc.)

- Name and confess attachments that take priority over God.
- Trust outcomes to God rather than your own capabilities. Refuse to manipulate or control in order to get what you want.
- Listen to the weekly Lent devotionals. Text 'devo' to 630-206-3230

Additional Resources:

The Lazarus Life: Spiritual Transformation for Ordinary People by Stephen W. Smith

Ruthless Trust: the Ragamuffin's Path to God by Brennan Manning

We'd love to hear from you!

If you have thoughts, questions, comments, ideas on how to make these study guides more meaningful for you and your group, please let us know.

We would also LOVE to hear how God is using these Scriptures and study guides in your lives.

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