



Repentance Tabernacle Church

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The On-Time God

Focus Verse: John 11:40 - Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?

Lesson Text: John 11:32-44

Truth About God: God knows exactly what we need.

Truth For My Life: I will trust God to meet my needs however He sees best.

John 11 sets the scene, Lazarus was sick, and his sisters sent a distress call to Jesus. Jesus loved Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. Jesus waited two days before going to see them. Jesus had a plan for his friends whom He loved. His plan could only be accomplished by waiting. Martha did not know and Mary could not yet tell that Jesus is never early, and He is never late. Only Jesus knew that Lazarus's sickness was not a tragedy; it was a catalyst for God's glory. Jesus simply asked His audience to do what they could do: roll away the stone. Then Jesus did what they could not do: raise Lazarus from the grave. Our God is an on-time God.

From this story and others, we understand just because Jesus does not answer our prayer when we think He should does not mean He doesn't love us. Even when tragedy strikes and we feel like our world is ending, it does not mean He doesn't love us. Jesus knows that some things can only be learned in the waiting. Some strength can only be developed by bearing a burden for a while and praying until something happens. Strong faith is built in the waiting. Perseverance and patience are developed in the waiting.

When you are willing to act on your faith and do what Jesus has told you to do. Faith is not about what we feel; faith is about what we know to be true when all evidence seems to point to the contrary. Also, faith is not wishful thinking or "pie-in-the sky" power of positive thinking. Jesus always comes through with His part of the miracle.

Jesus has His own ways of meeting our needs. He knows right where we are, what we are going through, and what we need. At some time, all of us will have to get up and roll a stone out of the way. We will need to take some specific action that demonstrates our faith.

We have a High Priest who is deeply moved by the feelings of our infirmities (Hebrews 4:15). He weeps with those who weep, and He mourns with those who mourn. If all you can do today is fall at Jesus' feet and ask, "Why weren't You here on time?" That is OK. He will sit down in the dust with you like He sat with Mary and weep with you.

The impact of Lazarus's resurrection did not end there. Many of the Jews who looked on that day believed in Jesus; for them it was a witness that led to their salvation. But other witnesses left and reported this astounding miracle to the chief priests and Pharisees. We would expect them to be thrilled to hear about such a miracle, but instead they asked: "*What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation*" (John 11:47-48).

The resurrection of Lazarus became a catalyst that led to the cross. God's timing was perfect. Jesus had told His disciples this miracle would be for the glory of God that the Son of Man might be gloried. They did not realize Jesus' road to glory would lead through the cross to another tomb with another stone. Only this time an angel would roll the stone away to show the empty grave. This time no one would need to loose Jesus; the grave clothes would be laying abandoned. Because as Jesus told Martha, "I am the resurrection, and the life" (John 11:25).

That same message of Jesus still echoes down the centuries to us today. Hear Jesus now as He says: "*He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live*" (John 11:25). Do you want to be alive today? **Are you still waiting on a miracle?** Keep pushing for it. **God is the on-time God.**