



Message 6 - From Death to Life

Warm-up

Discuss times when a parent, coach, teacher, or leader made a decision that did not make sense, but later you understood the reasons for the decision.

Overview

As we conclude the *One to One Encounters with Jesus* series, we discover powerful Truth surrounding the raising of Lazarus from the dead. This sixth and final message reminds us that death isn't only a physical occurrence. Our relationship with God and others, our hopes, and our dreams can all become dead when we stop trusting in God.

Word and Application

Start by **reading John 11:1-44**, the account of the raising of Lazarus from the dead. Today we explore three encounters with Jesus leading up to Lazarus' death and resurrection from the dead. We look at Thomas, Martha, and Mary's reactions when Jesus didn't respond the way they expected. These encounters reveal three *death zones* that steal and distort our faith in Christ.

3 Death Zones

1. Thomas was dead in his doubts.

Read John 11:16. Jesus and the disciples heard the news of Lazarus' severe illness. After warning Jesus of the dangers of returning to Judea where Lazarus lived, Thomas' honest response could be construed as both loyal and skeptical. In either case, he seems to forget *who* Jesus is.

- What can we learn from Thomas' response in this passage?
- **Read John 14:5-6, John 20:24, John 20:25, and John 20:27-29.** What do we learn about Jesus in His interactions with Thomas?

2. Martha was dead in the delay.

Read John 11:17-24. Explain how Martha's open response can be interpreted as both disappointment and a profession of faith.

- Though filled with faith and belief, a grieving Martha fails to recognize that Jesus has authority over space and time. Sometimes in our view of how God *should* respond, we place limitations on what God *can do* and *will do* when we trust Him.
- Share a time when what you thought was a delay was God's perfect timing and provision.
- What are you currently facing that appears to be delayed, too late to restore, or beyond all hope. **Read John 11:25-26, replacing Martha's name with yours.** How does Jesus' proclamation apply to your personal situation?

3. Mary was dead in her discouragement.

Read John 11:20 and John 11:30-32. What was Jesus' response to Mary's statement? How does it differ from His response to the same statement from Martha? Why do you think He responds differently with Mary?

If we allow, disappointment and discouragement can steal our hope. When our eyes are focused on unmet expectation, we remain dead in areas God wants to resurrect, such as a broken relationship, an ongoing addiction, or an illness. In the next section, we'll give you three keys to help you overcome.

3 Keys to Conquer Death

1. Settle in our heart Who Jesus Is.
Read John 11:27, 1 John 5:20, and Matthew 28:18.
2. Stop analyzing everything.
Read Proverbs 3:5, Psalm 46:10, and Exodus 14:14.
3. Live again.
Read John 11:43, John 6:33, John 10:10 and John 6:51.

Life Challenge

This week, write on a sheet of paper areas in your life that you have grieved as beyond hope. Pull out your Bible and began to read out loud the scriptures listed in the *3 Keys to Conquer Death* section. Declare them over the dead areas of your life. If you struggle with believing the promises of God over your situation, invite God to help you to stand on His Word.

Prayer

Lord, Jesus, we proclaim the Truth of what you have said about Yourself. We believe that You are the Resurrection and Life. We know that You are able and willing to breathe life into the things we once thought dead (name those things out loud or in your head). All authority has been given to You from the Father and we trust You beyond what we can see, feel, hear, or touch. Thank You! Pray for the specific needs of the group.