

# Why Does God Wait?

## We Hate to Wait...

### The Scriptures and the Story

*“Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. <sup>2</sup>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. <sup>3</sup>So the sisters sent word to Jesus, “Lord, the one you love is sick.” <sup>4</sup>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.” <sup>5</sup>Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. <sup>6</sup>Yet when He heard that Lazarus was sick, He stayed where He was two more days. <sup>7</sup>Then He said to His disciples, “Let us go back to Judea.” <sup>8</sup>“But Rabbi,” they said, “a short while ago the Jews tried to stone you, and yet you are going back there?” <sup>9</sup>Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours of daylight? A man who walks by day will not stumble, for he sees by this world’s light. <sup>10</sup>It is when he walks by night that he stumbles, for he has no light.” <sup>11</sup>After 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.” <sup>12</sup>His disciples replied, “Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better.” <sup>13</sup>Jesus had been speaking of his death, but His disciples thought He meant natural sleep. <sup>14</sup>So then He told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead, <sup>15</sup>and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.” <sup>16</sup>Then Thomas (called Didymus) said to the rest of the disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with Him.”*

- John 11:1-16

### 1. The Place. (It is important for several reasons.)

*“Then Jesus went back across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing in the early days. Here He stayed <sup>41</sup>and many people came to Him. They said, “Though John never performed a miraculous sign, all that John said about this man was true.” <sup>42</sup>And in that place many believed in Jesus.”*

- John 10:40-42

### 2. The Problem.

A man named Lazarus was sick. “Lazarus” is from “Eleazar” which means, “*The Lord is my HELP.*” (a common name)

This man and his sisters lived in Bethany near Jerusalem. (Mary was famous from another story.)

### 3. The Plea

The sisters go to Jesus for help. (“Lord”) *“<sup>3</sup>So the sisters sent word to Jesus, “Lord, the one you love is sick.”*

- John 11:3



Their request shows great insight: “*The one you love.*”

- They didn’t say, “*The one that loved you,*” as that would be manipulative.
- They didn’t say, “*The one that we love,*” as that would be a play on emotions.

Jesus loved with “brotherly love.” (*phileō*) It’s nice to know that it isn’t my love for Him, but HIS love for me that matters!

### 4. The Patience

Because of His love (*agapaō*) for these three individuals, Jesus waited for Lazarus to die. Jesus “*stayed where He was*” for two more days.

One of the greatest problems among people who love the Lord is that they cannot wait for His timing!

### 5. The Plan

Jesus told His disciples that they would return to Judea.

They “remind” Him of the danger.

Jesus explained through a Hebrew idiom, that God’s time is always the right time!

### 6. The Prophecy Again

Jesus knew that Lazarus had now died.

Jesus told the disciples that He would “wake up” Lazarus. It was the plan of God.

### 7. The Puzzle

The disciples thought that Jesus meant that Lazarus was resting. They often misunderstood Him.

Jesus explained clearly that Lazarus was dead, but that He was glad, so that the disciples would believe.

They didn’t want to go anywhere near Jerusalem, but Thomas encourages them to “go and die”. (Irony/Love)

### The Lessons

1. Although waiting is difficult, God’s timing is always best.
2. We wait because of His love (*agapaō*) for us!

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