I AM—5
When Hope Seems Dead

God's Delays Are Not Always God's Denials

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. 2 It was Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill. 3 So the sisters sent to him, saying, "Lord, he whom you love is ill." 4 But when Jesus heard it he said, This illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it. 5 Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. 6 So, when he heard that Lazarus[a] was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

John 11:1-6 ESV

We often confuse God's silence with God's absence

Jesus Meets Us in Our Deepest Disappointments

Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. John 11:25 ESV

Jesus Is the Resurrection and the Life

Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." 24 Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." 25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, 26 and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" 27 She said to him, "Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world."
John 11:23-27 ESV

Jesus Can Bring Hope Where Everything Seems Lost

Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. 39 Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, by this time there will be an odor, for he has been dead four days." 40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?" 41 So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. 42 I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me." 43 When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out." 44 The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

John 11:28-44 ESV

The miracle demonstrated the authority of Jesus—And it called the witnesses to respond to what they had seen—

TALK IT OVER

Read John 11 this week. Reflect on Jesus' question to Martha, "Do you believe this?" Ask God to strengthen your faith in His promises, especially during seasons of uncertainty.

Ask yourself these 2 questions

1. When God doesn't answer my prayers according to my timing, do I continue to trust His wisdom and love?

2. Is my hope built on circumstances working out the way I want, or on the promise of eternal life through Jesus Christ?