

## “The Other Side of If”: Lazarus and Mary

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*This story takes place just before the famous “triumphal entry” into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. This miracle not only once again showed Jesus’ victory over death, but was also the catalyst that cemented his enemy’s decision to have Him put to death.*

*In this chapter, we see a number of “ifs” that are presented. The call to us is to let go of the “ifs” and trust in Jesus and His plans.*

*Read all of John 11.*

### 1. Jesus Received Word of Lazarus’ Sickness – John 11:6-14

- If they followed Him, they would be fine
- If they went with their own plans, they would stumble in darkness

The disciples’ response to Jesus informing them of Lazarus’ sickness:

- “Lord, IF he sleeps he will get well.”
- Jesus told them “Lazarus is dead.”

### 2. Jesus Comes to Bethany – John 11:17-36

Martha’s “IF” statements: : “If you had been here, my brother would not have died” (vs. 21, 32)

- The Lord has her affirm her faith that he is the “resurrection and the life”

### 3. Jesus Shows Who is in Control – John 11:38-44

- Even here, Martha balks at Jesus’ command to remove the stone
- Jesus gently reminds her *“Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?”*

### 4. This Resurrection Lead to a Plot to Kill Jesus – John 11:53-58

- Today, we must come to grips with who is in control of our life and our “ifs”.

*If Jesus is really in control of my life... how does that affect my place in this world?  
If Jesus is really in control of my life... how does that affect what I say I believe?  
If Jesus is really in control of my life... how does that affect the past “ifs” that haunt me?*

**Questions:**

1. In what ways might your response have been different to Jesus' when he heard of Lazarus' sickness? Why?
2. Have there been "ifs" that have haunted your past? (What if I had moved to this country? What if I had taken this job/course? What if I had done this differently?) How can your trust in Jesus help with these?
3. Even after such an amazing miracle as the raising of Lazarus, some hearts were so hardened to the point of plotting Jesus' death. Despite the evidence, they could not submit themselves to Jesus' authority and power over sin and death. Have you submitted to Him completely? Is Jesus really in control of your life?

**Prayer:** *"Father, thank you for demonstrating your power over death with Lazarus, and subsequently, your own grave. Thank you that you are in control even when it may not always seem like it with my mind and thinking. I submit myself completely to You and Your perfect will. Thank you for saving me, and that, through You, I also have victory over sin and death. In Jesus' mighty name, amen!"*