

TWO DAYS

JOHN 11:1-44

John 11 starts off with two verses that clarify how much Jesus loved Lazarus, Martha, and Mary. John does not want readers to forget Jesus loved those three before he dives deeper in the story.

Jesus discovered Lazarus was sick, but he stayed in the town for two more days. For two whole days he did not go to heal Lazarus.

Has God ever made you wait?

During my second year living in the Dominican Republic, a sharp pain kept me up the majority of the night. I finally woke my roommate at 2:00 am to help me catch a taxi to the emergency room. I had never before felt such intense pain. Writhing on the hospital bed, I vomited as we tried to figure out what was wrong with me. After some tests, they told me I had kidney stones. I felt like the pain medicine was never going to kick in, and I laid there waiting. Suffering. Crying.

Waiting times are not without purpose. John 11:4 tells us that Jesus had a purpose for waiting. God fills our lives with challenges to help us see His glory. John 11:15 tells us that God has us wait so that we would believe in Him more.

A second lesson in this story is found in John 11:35. The shortest verse of the Bible tells us Jesus wept. Jesus was sad. He loved these people, and he knew they were hurting with deep pain.

Read James 1:2-3.

These verses tell us to be full of pure joy when we face hard times. Wow, God. Really? It can seem impossible to find joy in the middle of challenges. We get so overwhelmed by the darkness, that it becomes really hard to see God's light.

Read Romans 12:12.

Ultimately, we need to be patient in hard times. The sadness or pain seem to never end. Use those moments to turn to God in prayer. Ask Him what He is trying to teach you, so your time of suffering is also a time of growth. Two days might seem like a long time like it did for Martha and Mary, but God has a plan.

GOING DEEPER:

- What trial are you going through right now? How can you find pure joy in that hard time?
- What are you waiting for? Illustrate a clock to remind you that God is in control.
- Read and think about John 11:21 and John 11:32. Are you blaming God for something right now?
- Write a prayer, thanking God that just like Lazarus and Mary and Martha, He loves you.

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