

When Hope is Gone

John 11:1-46

What do you do when hope is gone? How do you respond when you come to the end of your rope? How do you react when you are overwhelmed by grief and cannot take another step? How do you respond when you lose the most important thing in your life? How do you react when you are unfairly criticized and your integrity is questioned? How do you respond when you have a desperate need and you beg God to intervene, and he seemingly does nothing?

John 11:1-46 describes the most dramatic miracle in the ministry of Jesus. ***Through a series of encounters, Jesus reveals himself as the Resurrection and the Life who brings hope out of despair.***

In this passage, Jesus meets each person at their point of need and provides what they lack.

Person	Need	Provision
Disciples	Faith	Invitation
Martha	Persuasion	Challenge
Mary	Sympathy	Compassion
Lazarus	Life	Call
All	Hope	Credible proof

Encounter with the disciples (1-16)

In desperation, Jesus' friends ask for help. Why does God delay his answers?

The disciples express concern about Jesus' safety. One who walks in God's will is always safe.

When hope is gone, believe that God can use disease, delays, disappointment, and even death to bring glory to himself.

Encounter with Martha (17-27)

Martha acts while Mary sits. She buys into the "If only ..." syndrome.

Martha's faith is future oriented. She needs to believe what she believes.

Jesus reveals himself as the Resurrection and the Life.

When hope is gone, translate your theology into practice.

Encounter with Mary (28-37)

In her heartbreak, Mary questions Jesus' compassion.

Jesus' compassion is evident to those who are close to him.

When hope is gone, rest assured that God is not indifferent to your needs, but cares deeply about you.

Encounter with Lazarus (38-44)

"I know God can do anything, but let's be realistic."

Jesus acts so that others might believe.

When hope is gone, believe that when the time is right, Jesus will demonstrate his power as the Resurrection and the Life to bring hope out of despair.

Encounter with the crowds (45-46)

Revelation always demands a response.

Miracles convince some people to believe and others to disapprove.

When hope is gone ...

- Believe that God can use disease, delays, disappointments, and even death to bring glory to himself.
- Translate your theology into practice.
- Rest assured that God is not indifferent to your needs, but cares deeply about you.
- Believe that when the time is right, Jesus will demonstrate his power as the Resurrection and the Life to bring hope out of despair.
- Understand that sometimes God is silent because he wants to teach us something new about himself.