A man named Lazarus was sick. He lived in Bethany with his sisters, Mary and Martha. **2**This is the Mary who later poured the expensive perfume on the Lord’s feet and wiped them with her hair. Her brother, Lazarus, was sick. **3**So the two sisters sent a message to Jesus telling him, “Lord, your dear friend is very sick.”

**4**But when Jesus heard about it he said, “Lazarus’s sickness will not end in death. No, it happened for the glory of God so that the Son of God will receive glory from this.” **5**So although Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, **6**he stayed where he was for the next two days. **7**Finally, he said to his disciples,“Let’s go back to Judea.”

**8**But his disciples objected. “Rabbi,” they said, “only a few days ago the people in Judea were trying to stone you. Are you going there again?”

**9**Jesus replied, “There are twelve hours of daylight every day. During the

day people can walk safely. They can see because they have the light of this world. **10**But at night there is danger of stumbling because they have no light.” **11**Then he said, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but now I will go and wake him up.”

**12**The disciples said, “Lord, if he is sleeping, he will soon get better!” **13**They thought Jesus meant Lazarus was simply sleeping, but Jesus meant Lazarus had died.

**14**So he told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead. **15**And for your sakes, I’m glad I wasn’t there, for now you will really believe. Come, let’s go see him.”

**16**Thomas, nicknamed the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, “Let’s go, too—and die with Jesus.”

**17**When Jesus arrived at Bethany, he was told that Lazarus had already been in his grave for four days. **18**Bethany was only a few miles down the road from Jerusalem, **19**and many of the people had come to console Martha and Mary in their loss. **20**When Martha got word that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him. But Mary stayed in the house. **21**Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died. **22**But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask.”

**23**Jesus told her, “Your brother will rise again.”

**24**“Yes,” Martha said, “he will rise when everyone else rises, at the last day.”

**25**Jesus told her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. **26**Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this, Martha?”

**27**“Yes, Lord,” she told him. “I have always believed you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who has come into the world from God.” **28**Then she returned to Mary. She called Mary aside from the mourners and told her, “The Teacher is here and wants to see you.” **29**So Mary immediately went to him.

**30**Jesus had stayed outside the village, at the place where Martha met him. **31**When the people who were at the house consoling Mary saw her leave so hastily, they assumed she was going to Lazarus’s grave to weep. So they followed her there. **32**When Mary arrived and saw Jesus, she fell at his feet and said, “Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died.”

**33**When Jesus saw her weeping and saw the other people wailing with her, a deep anger welled up within him, and he was deeply troubled. **34**“Where have you put him?” he asked them.

They told him, “Lord, come and see.” **35**Then Jesus wept. **36**The people who were standing nearby said, “See how much he loved him!” **37**But some said, “This man healed a blind man. Couldn’t he have kept Lazarus from dying?”

**38**Jesus was still angry as he arrived at the tomb, a cave with a stone rolled across its entrance.**39**“Roll the stone aside,” Jesus told them.

But Martha, the dead man’s sister, protested, “Lord, he has been dead for four days. The smell will be terrible.”

**40**Jesus responded, “Didn’t I tell you that you would see God’s glory if you believe?” **41**So they rolled the stone aside. Then Jesus looked up to heaven and said, “Father, thank you for hearing me. **42**You always hear me, but I said it out loud for the sake of all these people standing here, so that they will believe you sent me.” **43**Then Jesus shouted, “Lazarus, come out!” **44**And the dead man came out, his hands and feet bound in graveclothes, his face wrapped in a headcloth. Jesus told them, “Unwrap him and let him go!”

**45**Many of the people who were with Mary believed in Jesus when they saw this happen. **46**But some went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. **47**Then the leading priests and Pharisees called the high council together. “What are we going to do?” they asked each other. “This man certainly performs many miraculous signs. **48**If we allow him to go on like this, soon everyone will believe in him. Then the Roman army will come and destroy both our Temple and our nation.”

**49**Caiaphas, who was high priest at that time, said, “You don’t know what you’re talking about!**50**You don’t realize that it’s better for you that one man should die for the people than for the whole nation to be destroyed.”

**51**He did not say this on his own; as high priest at that time he was led to prophesy that Jesus would die for the entire nation. **52**And not only for that nation, but to bring together and unite all the children of God scattered around the world.

**53**So from that time on, the Jewish leaders began to plot Jesus’ death.

**I AM JESUS**

**I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE**

**“I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying” John 11:25**

This is either one of the most powerful statements made by a very bright, hopeful and compassionate human beings or it is the most ludicrous and delusional statement made by someone who really needs to be committed to an institution or at least this person should be heavily medicated.

**A man named Lazarus was sick. He lived in Bethany with his sisters, Mary and Martha…3So the two sisters sent a message to Jesus telling him, “Lord, your dear friend is very sick.” John 11:1,3**

They reached out to Jesus and Jesus reached out to them in a way that blew their minds and was absolutely unexpected. When we reach out to Jesus he always reaches back out to us. But he didn’t do it on their timing.

**But when Jesus heard about it he said, “Lazarus’s sickness will not end in death. No, it happened for the glory of God so that the Son of God will receive glory from this.” John 11:4**

God is doing everything for His glory. This will not end in death. Jesus looks at all things through the eyes of His Heavenly Father and knew the plan that was going on. He was working all things out so that the focus and attention would go to God – to make him famous. A whole new perspective. In his heart of hearts you see Jesus wanting people to get that perspective.

**DEAD ENDS**

**Picture of a road sign saying Dead End**

Stuck in a cul de sac? There is a creek and you cannot get to there from here. Living in Surrey it is pretty simple because everything is a big grid. But sometimes it doesn’t take you through – there is ALR land and there are creeks. You cannot get to there from here. Sometimes belief is like that. Cognitively, rationally or emotionally you cannot get to there from here. We find ourselves in situations where we are lost for answers. The story today deals with people who

1. **DEAD IN DOUBTS**

**Thomas, nicknamed the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, “Let’s go, too—and die with Jesus.” John 11:16**

Jesus reaches out with reasonable truth. Thomas said to the rest of the disciples but Thomas missed it and doubted. Jesus appeared and Thomas fell down before him in worship. Jesus invited Thomas to touch his hands and his feet. He appeared to many witnesses. Go through the what ifs and what happened on that Easter Sunday and the following 40 days. For those who do – it’s a reasonable truth. Jesus invites that kind of exploration. Thomas gave his life to sharing the life of Jesus after the death and resurrection. He believed in Jesus.

Doubt your way to God. Greg Boyd and Bruxey Cavey. When it comes to belief – you may be wired like that. “Letters from a Skeptic”

We can doubt our way into a dead end or we can take the leap – Pascal’s wager.

1. **DEAD IN DESPAIR**

**When Martha got word that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him. But Mary stayed in the house. John 11:20**

Mary was telling Jesus that it

Jesus reaches out by entering our humanity and weeping with us.

He cried tears with and for these dear friends. Jesus entered our humanity. Jesus wept - verse 35. He knew that in ten minutes he would bring Lazarus back to life. Why would he cry?

“Cry out to Jesus.” Third Day.

1. **DEAD IN THE DELAY**

**When Jesus arrived at Bethany, he was told that Lazarus had already been in his grave for four days….  21Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died. John 11:17,21**

Martha was telling Jesus that he missed the deadline.

“I will supply all your needs.” I can’t handle the delay. Jesus you missed the deadline When we find that Jesus is not on time with personal or business financial needs – we are at a financial dead end. Cut corners on honesty. Compromise integrity. Take out dumb loans.

“It’s not good for man to be alone.” I can’t handle the delay. Jesus you missed the deadline not on time with a woman or a man…I am so alone

**22**But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask.” John 11:22

**Jesus told her, “Your brother will rise again.”“Yes,” Martha said, “he will rise when everyone else rises, at the last day.”Jesus told her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die.**

**Do you believe this, Martha?” John 11:23-26**

**THE RESURRECTION IS NOT AN EVENT – IT’S A PERSON**

Martha was telling him that she knew the Jewish doctrine. Jesus was reframing that – telling her that this is something to be experienced and lived each day. This is the now. This is immediate. This is not something just in the future. It’s not a belief we just give a nod to, it’s for here and now.

It’s not just a consolation but a resurrection.

**Then Jesus shouted, “Lazarus, come out!” 44And the dead man came out, his hands and feet bound in grave clothes, his face wrapped in a headcloth. Jesus told them, “Unwrap him and let him go!” John 11:43-44**

**DO YOU BELIEVE THIS?**

**Jesus told her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die.**

**Do you believe this, Martha?” John 11:25-26**

This is the question for each of us. Do you believe that this is life uninterrupted? That somehow all that everything bad will become untrue? That out of death comes resurrection?

Media people are always looking for a storyline. We need to make sense of things. The great storyline of the bible is that what appears as loss can actually become better. That in serving we experience life. That is because of a life that came out of heaven to earth and went back to heaven but is here among us.

Documentary: I AM

If you believe, then there is a power. More than a hopeful wish. In serving it is more than something altruistic. “I will not just take you out of the world but I will give you the powers of the new heaven and the new earth.” He says, I have created all at the beginning and I am life. I can bring what seems dead in doubt or despair or delay back to life.” That is the storyline.

It is the creator life – resurrection and the life.There is a power and a peace and a joy that comes in.

When did you believe this for the first time?

**Amazing Grace**

**“How precious did that Grace appear, the hour I first believed” John Newton**

Belief is something that we revisit often. It grows in our lives as we experience Jesus. There is a time – an hour.

It may not be a moment but rather an hour or span of time. It may be like going on a train ride and somewhere at night you crossed over into a new country but you know it happened land.

**“The Hour I First Believed” …in five sentences.**

Wayne: I first believed in my Mom and Dad’s room at the age of 4 or 5. That morning my mom had just shared with us kids a bible story on a flannel graph. The story finished with Jesus giving us a choice to believe in him and follow His way. I had a very real sense of Jesus’ presence to forgive me and love me. With my mom, I prayed to invite Jesus into my life and I experienced God’s love and peace.

Person 1: I first believed…..and four more sentences.

Person 2: I first believed…..and four more sentences.

Person 3: I first believed…..and four more sentences.

Person 4: I first believed…..and four more sentences.

Person 5: I first believed…..and four more sentences.