



When You Feel Abandoned

I Am Strong – PART 3

February 13-14, 2016 • John Dickerson

Introduction

Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. This Mary, whose brother Lazarus now lay sick, was the same one who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair. So the sisters sent word to Jesus, "Lord, the one you love is sick."

...Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. Yet when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days...

John 11:1-3,5-6

When you feel like Jesus has forgotten or abandoned you...

1. He is working for you, even when it **SEEMS** He betrayed your confidence.

Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. Yet when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days...

John 11:5,6

When you feel like Jesus has forgotten or abandoned you...

2. He is working for you, despite your **DOUBT**, frustration or confusion.

[angry grief]

When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home.

“Lord,” Martha said to Jesus, “if you had been here, my brother would not have died.”

John 11:20-21

[broken grief]

When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.”

John 11:32

When you feel like Jesus has forgotten or abandoned you...

3. He is working for you, to give you far greater than you
ASK OR IMAGINE.

Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. “Take away the stone,” he said.

“But, Lord,” said Martha, the sister of the dead man, “by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days.”

Then Jesus said, “Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?”

So they took away the stone...

...Jesus called in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face.

Jesus said to them, “Take off the grave clothes and let him go.”

John 11:38-41a, 43b-44

However, as it is written:

*“What no eye has seen,
what no ear has heard,
and what no human mind has conceived”—
the things God has prepared for those who love him”*

1 Corinthians 2:9

*“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD,
“plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you
hope and a future.”*

Jeremiah 29:11

When you feel like Jesus has forgotten or abandoned you...

4. He is actually hurting WITH YOU.

*When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come
along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit
and troubled.*

“Where have you laid him?” he asked.

“Come and see, Lord,” they replied.

John 11:33-34

When you feel like Jesus has forgotten or abandoned you...

**5. He is WEEPING WITH you, FEELING
what you feel.**

Jesus wept.

Then the Jews said, “See how he loved him!”

*But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes
of the blind man have kept this man from dying?”*

John 11:35-37

When you feel like Jesus has forgotten or abandoned you...

6. UNTIL your final deliverance, Jesus weeps WITH YOU in the waiting.

There's much more hope. This series is based on the book, *I Am Strong: Finding God's Peace and Strength in Life's Darkest Moments*. It's available in the Venture bookstore, or get free sample chapters at **IAmStrongBook.com**

Application/Discussion Questions

1. In this week's message we talked about the times when we feel like Jesus is not responding or helping us in our pain. Describe in your own words how you think Lazarus felt emotionally as he waited for Jesus to come heal him, but then learned Jesus was not coming.
2. Have you ever felt some of the same things Lazarus felt?
3. This message builds on the previous two "I Am Strong" messages. You can watch them at **venturechristian.org/teaching**. In the last message we learned about God's plan to deliver us entirely out of our trouble. Until then, we are waiting. In what ways does it help you to know that Jesus weeps with you in the waiting.