

Revival & REFORMATION

The Official *United in Prayer* Weekly Blog and World Church Prayer Requests
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Praying to Wait

By Lisa Lothian

Waiting is hard. Personally, I really don't like it. I consider myself efficient and time conscious, so I hate to waste my or other people's time. But for some reason, God tells us that we need to wait.

Imagine how Mary and Martha felt. Their beloved brother Lazarus was sick unto death. John 11:5 says, "Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus." He loved them. He cared about them. They were a part of His inner circle. Jesus socialized with them frequently in their home. Mary herself experienced the love of Jesus through life-changing miracles from His own hand. He delivered her from evil spirits and a vile life. She knew that she could count on Jesus to come through in any and every situation. Yet Jesus, after being told that Lazarus was sick, decided to stay where He was for two additional days instead of rushing to the home and bedside of His friends to perform the desired miracle. They had to wait.

The days and hours probably felt like years as Mary and Martha cried, prayed, and hoped... nothing. Lazarus died. Jesus was not there. They had the funeral, the burial, the repast—no Jesus. Maybe they had stopped "waiting" altogether. When their expectations were lowest, and their hopes were strained near to their limits, Jesus arrived!

As a nurse with many years of experience, I have sat at the bedside of dying patients. More than once, I was in the presence of families of faith who hoped that something miraculous would happen for their loved ones. They prayed. They waited. They couldn't see that hidden from their perception Jesus was working out something deeper, richer, and more miraculous than they could imagine.

There is a reason for waiting. The scriptures tell us why. James 1:3,4 tells us that waiting tries our faith and works patience, that we might be perfect, or mature. We can see how this was the case with Martha when Jesus finally arrived at their home 4 days after Lazarus died. She expressed faith in Jesus despite the fact Lazarus was already dead. Martha affirms in John 11:22, that even now, as Lazarus lies dead in the grave, if Jesus asked anything of God, He would do it. Including a miracle. When Jesus went on and said that Lazarus would rise again, Martha still had faith in God to agree that Lazarus would in fact rise again in the resurrection at the last day. That is faith!

It is sometimes the case that as we wait on God, and He doesn't do what we want, feelings of resentment, unbelief, and anger step in. We must pray for that not to happen to us. Romans 5:3,4 tells us that it is necessary for us to learn that trials and tribulations work patience, and patience experience, and experience, hope.

I wonder if Martha had greeted Jesus with anger, frustration, lack of faith and all the things that our weak flesh manifests when expectations are unmet—would Jesus still have performed the miracle? Peter 1:6,7 says that we should rejoice when we are tempted and heavy with the cares of life. The trial of our faith is more precious than gold, and when we are tried, we will be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. That is exactly what Martha experienced. Her faith met Jesus' face to face with honor when He showed up at their home and He did the unimaginable. Lazarus was raised from the dead!

As we are waiting for our answers to prayer this coming year, let's trust that God will do what is best for us in the long run. Ultimately, it may be a resurrection. A resurrection of our faith, or whatever the broken situation is. However, no matter what happens, we can be assured of one thing, that God is working out all the unseen important details for His glory and our good. "Wait on the Lord; Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the Lord" (Psalm 27:14).

Lisa Lothian is a Registered Nurse in Westchester County, NY. She loves intercessory prayer, teaching, journaling and encouraging and discipling women. Her greatest desire is to be a blessing and witness about Christ in her everyday associations which have become known to her as daily divine appointments. This blog was shared by www.TimeToGetReadyMinistries.org

World Church Prayer Requests

December 24-30, 2021

- Pray for the first quarter Day of Prayer and Fasting on January 1, 2022. The emphasis for this coming year is: "Praying the Three Angels' Messages." To learn more, visit: www.revivalandreformation.org
- Pray for the Ten Days of Prayer taking place January 5-15, 2022. The theme is "The Three Angels Call to Prayer."
- Pray that we would individually understand the significance of the Three Angels' messages and their relevance for our lives today.
- Pray for the 28,000 Bosniaks in Kosovo. Pray for healing—physical, spiritual and emotional—from their tragic past, and for open hearts as mission agencies work among them.