

<sup>1</sup>Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. <sup>2</sup>(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.) <sup>3</sup>So the sisters sent word to Jesus, “Lord, the one you love is sick.”

<sup>4</sup>When he heard this, Jesus said, “This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God’s glory so that God’s Son may be glorified through it.” <sup>5</sup>Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. <sup>6</sup>So when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days, <sup>7</sup>and then he said to his disciples, “Let us go back to Judea.” – John 11:1-7

<sup>17</sup>On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. <sup>18</sup>Now Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, <sup>19</sup>and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. <sup>20</sup>When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home. – John 11:17-20

**1) When God writes a story, it usually isn’t how we would write the story.**

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the LORD. <sup>9</sup>“As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”  
– Isaiah 55:8-9

<sup>21</sup>“Lord,” Martha said to Jesus, “if you had been here, my brother would not have died. <sup>22</sup>But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.”

<sup>23</sup>Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.”

<sup>24</sup>Martha answered, “I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”

<sup>25</sup>Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; <sup>26</sup>and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?”

<sup>27</sup>“Yes, Lord,” she replied, “I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.” – John 11:21-27

**2) Jesus knows the beginning and the end to every story He writes because He is the beginning and the end.**

<sup>28</sup>After she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary aside. “The Teacher is here,” she said, “and is asking for you.” <sup>29</sup>When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to him. <sup>30</sup>Now Jesus had not yet entered the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. <sup>31</sup>When the Jews who had been with Mary in the house, comforting her, noticed how quickly she got up and went out, they followed her, supposing she was going to the tomb to mourn there.

<sup>32</sup>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.”

<sup>33</sup>When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. <sup>34</sup>“Where have you laid him?” he asked.  
“Come and see, Lord,” they replied.

<sup>35</sup>Jesus wept.

<sup>36</sup>Then the Jews said, “See how he loved him!”

<sup>37</sup>But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?”

<sup>38</sup>Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. <sup>39</sup>“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.”

<sup>40</sup>Then Jesus said, “Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?”

<sup>41</sup>So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. <sup>42</sup>I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me.”

**3) When Jesus steps into a story, it changes everything. All the broken pieces are used to make something beautiful.**

<sup>20</sup>You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. – Genesis 50:20

“No story with God ever ends in ashes.” – Elisabeth Elliot