

TAKE AWAY THE STONE

Jesus wants to breathe life into the things and experiences that lie behind the “stone” and to use them as an opportunity to bring glory to God.

KEY POINTS

God engages His purpose for our lives through the facility of relationship.

- ❖ The miracle of the raising of Lazarus from the dead is one of the most incredible events recorded in the gospel of John.
- ❖ A closer reading of the unfolding of the events surrounding Lazarus’ resurrection in John 11:17-44 will yield the understanding that the resurrection miracle was set within the context of Jesus’ relationship with Lazarus and his sisters, Mary and Martha.
- ❖ Mary and Martha knew that Jesus loved them (Jn. 11:3, 5), and their request for Jesus to come and heal their brother was based on their knowledge of Jesus’ love for them.
- ❖ The interesting thing about the events in John 11 is that when Jesus heard that Lazarus was sick, He decided to stay in the place where He was for two more days (v. 6).
- ❖ This detail in the story is a bit perplexing. Jesus loved Lazarus—people knew this—yet instead of going to heal His friend, Jesus decided to wait for Lazarus to die.
- ❖ There are some experiences that saints go through in the Christian faith that are difficult to explain. But God’s ways and His thoughts are above our ways and thoughts (Isaiah 55:8-9).
- ❖ At face value, it doesn’t make sense that Jesus would decide to wait for Lazarus to die; however, a driving force for the unfolding of all these events was Jesus’ relationship with Lazarus and his sisters.
- ❖ Relationships, by nature, are intended to cultivate and develop faith, trust, and loyalty. Jesus had confidence in the relationship He had with Lazarus, Mary, and Martha, and so used their experience as an opportunity to not only demonstrate the power of God but to also use it as an occasion to bring glory to God.
- ❖ There are times when the circumstances that create the opportunity for the demonstration of God’s power in our lives can be difficult, like with Job, for example (see Job 1). But that doesn’t mean God has abandoned us. God is still able to demonstrate His power to comfort, heal, and provide in whatever situation we may be experiencing.

God invites us to participate in His purpose for our lives through partnership.

- ❖ Jesus has chosen to invite us to participate in His purpose for our lives through partnership.
- ❖ This invitation into partnership is communicated through the letter the Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthian church. In it, he tells us that Jesus is the One that causes people to grow, develop, and mature spiritually (1 Corinthians 3:6-9).
- ❖ However, Jesus invites people to participate in the spiritual growth of others by initiating and nurturing that growth through sharing His Word.
- ❖ We see such invitations to participation throughout the Bible, like when God invited Adam to participate in the creation by naming all the animals (Genesis 2:19-20), and when Moses

KEY SCRIPTURE: John 11:17-44

(all scripture in NIV unless otherwise noted)

was invited to participate in the miracle of separating the Red Sea so that the nation of Israel could be saved from the Egyptians (Exodus 14:13-16, 21-22).

- ❖ Jesus has all power in heaven and earth and has the capacity to perform supernatural actions beyond our wildest imaginations. Yet He invites us to participate in His purpose for our lives through the demonstration of faith in His Word.
- ❖ When Jesus went to Bethany where Lazarus had died, it was for the purpose of raising him from the dead. After telling Martha that He is the resurrection and that life exists within Him, He asked her, “Do you believe this?” (Jn. 11:24-25).
- ❖ Jesus was telling Martha that the opportunity to experience the supernatural power of God was a present reality available to her in that very moment.
- ❖ Jesus didn’t need anyone’s help to raise Lazarus from the dead, yet He invited them to participate in the demonstration of His glory in their lives when He asked them to “take away the stone” (v. 39).
- ❖ The “stone” in this case symbolizes the resistance and opposition we encounter when God is trying to bring forth life out of us for His glory. We need to “take the stone away” so that God can perform His purpose in our lives.
- ❖ Taking the stone away involves being vulnerable with Jesus. It requires us exposing our hurts, traumas, brokenness, regrets, resentments, and failures. It also requires us to unveil those precious things within us, like our hopes, talents, giftings, and aspirations.
- ❖ Jesus wants to breathe life into these things, and the experiences that lie behind the “stone”, and to use them as an opportunity to bring glory to God.

DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1. Things like traumas, hurts, and regrets can lie behind the grave stone. What are other things that may be lying behind the stone? In what ways do they hamper “life”?
2. When the stone was rolled away and Jesus spoke, Lazarus came back to life. What stones were rolled away in your situation when Jesus spoke? If comfortable, share what was spoken. Did that Word spark life in what you thought was a dead situation?
3. Moses is an example of someone who was used to participate in the purpose God had for the Israelites (Ex. 14:13-16, 21-22). Discuss the purpose, how Moses was used, and the result. Consider at least two other figures in the Bible and how God used them to accomplish a specific goal. Had God ever used you or someone you knew in such a way? Please share.

PRAYER TIME

Lord, take away the stone and bring forth life into any dead places that exist within me. Amen.

Start-up: Have you ever dealt with people who seem to take pleasure in resurrecting dead things? What is a good way to deal with them?

WEEK OF SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2025

NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week’s message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

✓ (Reminds me/Confirms) 💡 (New idea) 🗨️ (Think about)
! (Do this) ❤️ (Speaks to my heart) ➡️ (Must share)

PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS

Go deeper with your Life Group family.
CONNECT-REFLECT-DISSECT THE WORD
Your Life Group ~ Your Lifeline

PRAYER FOCUS: Thanksgiving for God's goodness, provision, protection, freedom, health, etc.

24-hour Prayer: Daily;

Daily Devotions: Monday - Friday @ 6:30 a.m. & 9:00 p.m.;

Departmental Prayer: Every Thursday (please check schedule)
Corporate Prayer: Every Friday @ 7:00 p.m. (and in person every second Friday @ 9:00 p.m. - 3:00 a.m.).

Zoom ID: 898 3191 5909 **Phone Access:** 647-374-4685

FAITH SANCTUARY DONATIONS

To donate online, please go to www.faithsanctuary.com/give
For email transfers, please use donate@faithsanctuary.com



ANNOUNCEMENTS

MONTHLY LEADERS' MEETING

Sunday, November 23rd, 2025 @ 1:15 p.m. in the Upper Chapel.

FS ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

Our annual business meeting will take place after service on Sunday, November 30th, 2025.

Contact: Pastor A. Peel

FS PRAYER HOSTS AND LEADERS

There will be another prayer leaders, prayer hosts & co-host training session via the FS "Departmental Meetings" zoom link on www.faithsanctuary.com.

Date: Sunday, December 7th, 2025

Time: 4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Contact: Bro. Mike Allen

NOVEMBER FASTING

There will be fasting every Friday during the month of November from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. If you already fast on another day, please continue with that.

Contact: Pastor A. Peel

PRODIGAL SONS & DAUGHTERS' PRAYER

Please join us as we pray for our sons and daughters.

Date/Time: Every Sunday @ 1:15 p.m.

Location: Prayer Room

Contact: Sis. Suzanne Allen

FAITH SANCTUARY WEEKLY SERVICES

Sunday Bible Study @ 10:00 a.m.

Sunday Worship Service @ 11:00 a.m.
(Listen via phone: 1-844-268-4848)

Monday Berean Bible Study @ 6:30 p.m.
(Zoom, Facebook, YouTube)

Wednesday Bible Study @ 7:30 p.m.
(In person and via Zoom)

Friday Evening Service @ 8:00 p.m.
(In person and via Zoom)

Life Group Meetings – individually scheduled
(see ushers for information)

FAITH FOUNDATIONS

GOD

We believe there is only one God: the eternal, holy, loving, all-knowing, all-powerful, omnipresent Spirit, creator of all (Deuteronomy 6:4; 1 Timothy 1:17; Leviticus 19:2; 1 John 4:8; Hebrews 4:13; Revelation 19:6; Jeremiah 23:24; John 4:24; Isaiah 44:24; Colossians 1:16).

GOD'S WORD

We believe the Holy Scriptures—The Bible—is God's true and complete Word to humanity, verified most notably through fulfilled prophecies concerning Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Isaiah 41:21-23, 42:8-9, 46:9-10; Luke 24:25-27; John 17:17).

GOD'S CREATION

We believe all people were created in the image of God for His pleasure, to be His children, His church and His bride, living in eternal love and fellowship with Him (Revelation 4:1; Genesis 1:27; John 1:12-13; Romans 8:16; Ephesians 5:25-32; Revelation 19:7).

HUMANITY'S FALL

We acknowledge that we have all sinned and failed to fulfill God's plan and purpose for our lives, through willful disobedience to the word of God and our own conscience. All sinful acts lead to separation and alienation from God's pure, holy presence, eventually resulting in both physical and spiritual death (Romans 3:23, 6:23a).

THE GOSPEL

We believe that Jesus Christ is the Almighty God, fully divine and fully human (1 Timothy 3:16). He came to Earth and suffered death by crucifixion, willingly substituting Himself for us in receiving God's judgment against sin (Isaiah 53:5). But God raised Him from death (Acts 5:30), and He now offers eternal life to all who will believe in Him (John 3:14-17, 6:29; 2 Corinthians 5:18-21; Romans 6:23b; Ephesians 2:4-9). Faith is sparked within us when we hear the gospel, the "good news" that Jesus died, was buried and rose from the dead for our benefit (Romans 10:14-17; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4).

OUR FAITH RESPONSE

Hearing the gospel is intended to lead us to repentance, a divinely inspired change of heart that causes us to turn away from our sins and turn to God (2 Corinthians 7:9-10; 2 Timothy 2:24-26). Faith and repentance lead us to obey the scriptural command to be baptized in Jesus' name for the forgiveness of our sins and to receive His gift of the Holy Spirit. His Spirit gives us the power to live a righteous, godly life, joyfully sharing the good news of our new life in Christ with others (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38, 4:12; 1 Peter 1:22-23).

CHRIST'S RETURN

We believe our Lord Jesus Christ will soon return to Earth to receive His people to Himself and establish His righteous, eternal kingdom (John 14:3; Matthew 25:34).

NOVEMBER 23, 2025



Feed Canada to Feed the World

Building People, Building Resources

~ 2025 ~

Pastor:
Rev. Adrian W. Peel

*"Jesus said to her,
'I am the resurrection and
the life. The one who believes
in me will live, even though
they die; and whoever lives by
believing in me will never die.*

Do you believe this?'"

John 11:25-26 (NIV)

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