

What do you do in a situation where hope is lost, how do you respond, what should we do when we meet people who are faced with no hope, where something has happened where there seems to be no answer or way out?

Jesus calls us to raise the dead! Let's look at how Jesus did it:

John 11: 1-44 Lazarus

Luke 7:11-15 The widows son

Mark 5: 21-24 & 35-43 Jarius's daughter

1. Why bother or if only you had done something sooner...

We see this happening in some of the accounts above:

- > Lazarus - both Mary and Martha both say - if only you had been here sooner - once he was dead their faith and hope had gone.
- > Jarius - news reached him that his daughter has died - and they say don't bother with Jesus anymore. She's dead now time for a miracle has gone, time to move on, just accept the situation.

In both cases Jesus responds to encourage faith rather than condemn them. He encourages them by stating who he is -

- > He said to Mary and Martha "*I am the resurrection and the life*" and what belief in him will bring - "*we never die - we live even though we die.*"
- > He said to Jarius - "*don't; be afraid - just believe!*"

2. God's timing

God sometimes will wait and let a situation get worse so that He can be more clearly seen to bring the answer in a hopeless situation. There are good motives in him waiting:

- > **For Gods glory** - (John 11: 4) Jesus could have easily gone immediately and healed Lazarus, but he waited so that an even greater miracle could be seen. Often we see God working in a way that says a cure is better than prevention! Just look at all of us - he could have prevented us from sinning, rebelling against him, but he allowed us to get into a bad state and then saved us! 1Co 1:27 *God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise.*

> **So faith is stretched and built up** (John 11:14-15)

Jesus wanted to build the faith of his disciples through this incident - they as usual could not understand what Jesus was getting at - he had to say it plainly - *look guys Lazarus is dead not asleep!*

However low your faith is, Jesus is prepared to go the extra mile to build it up - we just have to stick with him, even if we think it is stupid to!

3. Jesus is a loving and compassionate God

How can we be sure Jesus won't just leave us to rot? - We can be sure because of his love and compassion for us - he sees our needs and wants to help. Ps 86:15 *a compassionate and gracious God*

- > In the case of Lazarus (John 11: 33&35) he was genuinely moved to tears and not just tears he wept!
- > In the case of the widow who lost her son (Luke 7:11-15) It says his heart went out to her - she was just simply hurting, grieving and desperate and Jesus responded not just in sympathy but in action too.

Be convinced Jesus does love you and care for you, be convinced that you can love and care in a similar way with him inside you!

4. The power of a word spoken with authority

The widows son: *Young man I say to you get up!*; Lazarus: *Lazarus come out!*
Jarius's daughter: *Little girl I say to you get up!*

The whole universe came into being by God speaking words
God is God - he has ultimate authority, everything must give in to his word.

God has given us his authority in terms of sickness, (including death), and to drive out evil spirits. (Matt 10:1)

Its time for us to not be afraid and believe and start asking God to raise from the dead things we thought were hopeless cases.