

The Confidence of Christ in Prayer: an example from the account of Lazarus, Martha, and Mary

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Jesus, the Anointed One, our Savior and Messiah demonstrated great confidence in prayer. Let's learn how to pray with holy boldness, following His example.

The Final Inquiry

A movie came out many years ago called ["The Final Inquiry."](#) It is a moving story set in 35 AD about a Roman man sent on a mission to determine whether or not the resurrection of Jesus actually happened, or not.

In one scene, the Roman, named Valerius Taurus, is out by the caves where people had been buried. By this point in the movie, the Pharisees have figured out that Tauro is on a quest to find out the truth, so they come up with a way to explain

away the different miracles performed by Jesus, to influence his investigation so that Tauro would conclude that the resurrection was a fraud: only an illusion used to confuse people and cause them to think Jesus was divine.

In an extreme act, the Pharisees offer Tauro a cup of spiked wine. Tauro is drugged against his will and loses consciousness for several days, so they bury him. When he wakes up, in graveclothes, the Pharisees use the experience to suggest that the raising of Lazarus, and of Jesus, could be logically explained, and that a true resurrection was nothing but a hoax. Doubts were sown into Tauro's heart, but by the end of the movie he experiences the healing power of Jesus (and falls in love with a beautiful Jewish girl – *it's a movie after all*) and becomes a follower of the One who legitimately is "the Resurrection and the Life."

The Example of Lazarus

When Jesus (Yeshua) says in [John 11:11](#), "[Our friend Lazarus sleeps,](#)" He is not referring to a drug-induced coma or taking a nap.

Believers in Jesus who die are often said in Scripture to be sleeping, not to be "dead."

The disciples do not understand, and say, "Well, Lord, if he's sleeping, he will get well" [\(John 11:12\).](#)

The LORD had to get through to them, so He says plainly, "[Lazarus is dead.](#)" [\(John 11:14\).](#)

Our Savior wanted to make it very clear that without Him, Lazarus really was dead.

Jesus could have gone immediately to heal His friend at the news of Lazarus' sickness, but He stayed another 2 days where He was before venturing out.

By the time Jesus arrives, Lazarus had been dead for 4 days.

There was to be no question that Lazarus had died.

This was all part of God's plan to demonstrate His power, that He would be glorified.

["Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother wouldn't have died" \(Luke 11:21\).](#)

We must recognize the extent of God's miracle-working power

Martha recognized Jesus' healing power, but she didn't understand the **extent** of His power.

Her faith was limited by her mindset and experience – **Martha thought miracles could only happen to the living.**

As always, Messiah Jesus (Yeshua) is patient with Martha. He says to her, ["your brother will rise again" \(Luke 11:23\).](#) Martha is still unable to understand and she confesses her belief that Lazarus will have eternal life, but **Jesus wants her to understand that in Him is life – even in this earthly life.**

Mary comes along and **says the same thing:** ["Lord, had you only been here" \(Luke 11:32\).](#) She is weeping and others with her were as well.

Jesus wept

["Jesus wept" \(Luke 11:35\).](#)

Jesus wept, too, but He doesn't weep out of despair like the others.

He wept for the people who just don't understand.

For the people who haven't placed their hope in Him.

The Almighty Lord resolved to demonstrate His power. He told the people to roll the stone away.

Have an agreeable, teachable spirit

Despite Martha's confession that she **knows** Jesus is the Anointed One, the Christ, the Son of God, *and* despite the fact Jesus had told her shortly before, "your brother will rise again," **she counters Him: convinced that rolling the stone away is a bad idea because of the stench of Lazarus' dead body.**

Jesus would be right to get upset at this point.

I don't know in what tone of voice He answered her, but Scripture records Him saying, ["Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" \(Luke 11:40\).](#)

He must've been exasperated.

Some people just don't listen!

If there is one time to be agreeable, it's when Jesus is standing right in front of you with the full ability and willingness to raise your loved one from the dead!

The people roll the stone away to reveal the dead body of Lazarus.

The onlookers probably wondered: **where was the glory of God in this?**

But Jesus' illustration wasn't done yet. Some of the people would have lacked a true teachable spirit. They were discouraged, incredulous, and lacking in hope and conviction.

Confronted with the finality of death

Confronted with the evidence of the finality of death, it is hard for anyone to think beyond it.

Have you ever had your hopes crushed?

Have you ever put your head down on your pillow after a time of turmoil in your life and in the quietness of the night, all that you could wonder was, “why would God let this happen to me?”

Or

“Where is the glory of God in this?”

No matter how faithful we are, we all go through times when we ask that question.

Yet Jesus always asks us to believe. And then we will see the glory of God.

The Confidence of Christ in the face of death

As an example to us, Jesus lifted up His eyes and began to pray with confidence:



**And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said,
"Father, I thank You that You have heard Me."**

Luke 11:41



[Luke 11:41 "And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me."](#)

It is important to note the manner in which Jesus prayed.

There are occasions recorded in the Bible when Jesus knelt down to pray.

There is nothing wrong with folding your hands, closing your eyes, and humbly praying.

But there are other occasions when prayer is different.

Jesus is standing before a dead man.

Prayer that requires Conviction and Confidence

His prayer needed to be one of conviction and confidence.

He lifted up His eyes to the Father, fully aware of the authority His Father has given Him, and He said,

["Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that](#)

You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me.” (Luke 11:41-42).

Jesus uses His prayer to teach the onlookers about having faith and confidence in who they can be as God’s children if they will only believe.

Do you pray with this kind of confidence?

Father, I thank You because I know You hear me.

Father, I know I am Yours, and because of my faith in Jesus, I know that when I call to You, You will answer, and when I am in need of You, You are beside me.

Do you pray only out of habit, or do you pray because you believe prayer has the power to change lives and to change circumstances?

Are you able to approach the throne of your Father in heaven and have the absolute confidence that He cares about your requests?

Jesus did not meekly pray, “Father, if it is Your will, please do something about Lazarus.”

He didn’t stand there as one with little hope and say, “Father, I think You’re up there. I think You are interested in Me and my unattainable prayer request.”

He did not mope and shake His head, “Father, I know it’s too late, nothing can be done.”

Of course not!

Jesus thanked His Father for always hearing Him, and then He went right to work drawing upon that confidence. The Bible says that with a **loud** voice Jesus said, “Lazarus, come forth!” (Luke 11:43).

And with that, a bound up dead man came walking out of the tomb.

What needs to come forth in your life?

What is bound up inside of you that you need released to new life?

In what areas of your life do you need greater confidence?

The Lord says that if we have faith the size of a mustard seed (*that's realllllllllllly small*), we can say to the mountain ahead of us: move, and it will move.

[1 John 5:14-15](#) reaffirms this Truth: [“This is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.”](#)

Jesus challenges us to believe, and to follow His example. By simply maintaining a real, living relationship with your Father in heaven, you can witness amazing things happen in your life and the lives of others, simply by praying with confidence.

We can hold our heads up high because by the blood He shed at Calvary, we stand before the Father blameless. Jesus was without sin, and He has made a way for us, so we too, are no longer dead, but living.

To be alive in Christ for all eternity is a privilege guaranteed to those sealed by the Holy Spirit.

Have you encountered Jesus in such a way as to know that without a doubt, your life has been changed and your eternal destiny completely decided, that because of His touch upon

your life, you will live with Him forever?

And do you realize that in the middle of your normal days, you can approach the throne of grace with boldness and present your requests to God with great confidence as a son or daughter of the Most High God?

Repentance for New Life

I can recall each time when I was in the hospital with my newborn sons. It was such a joyful time when friends or family would visit and we would spend time together rejoicing. And to know they took time out of their day just to be with me, my husband, and the baby.

It is the same with our Heavenly Father. He rejoices with gladness when one of His children takes time out of the day to spend with Him to open your heart to Him just for a few moments, and to let Him know how you are feeling and tell Him how wonderful He is.

Don't ever say you can't or are too old to seek God.

I talked to one older fellow once who told me it would be hypocritical for him to start seeking God now that he lived 90 years without God.

God can forgive a hypocrite who repents.

People will always say it's too late but it is not.

I prayed that that man forgave himself and sought the true Forgiver who could give Him relief of his every burden.

Do you believe what Martha came to believe?

That Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life?

Do you believe He is Lord and Savior?

Never allow a spirit of unbelief or negativity to dissuade you from following and obeying the Lord. Seek Him and trust in Him and follow Jesus' example: have confidence even in the face of death because He has the ability to bring new life!

I pray that you will know Jesus as your Lord and Savior today! You do not need to fear. He has provided for your salvation by His sacrifice on the cross of Calvary. When this earthly body fails, you will be resurrected to new life in Christ, if you will only believe and pray sincerely with all your heart! [Luke](#), who recorded this account of Lazarus and Mary and Martha was a doctor. He was an eyewitness to the miracles of Jesus and He recorded this for you and me to believe. If a doctor was convinced: surely we can also know without a doubt that what is written in Scripture is as true today as it was then!

Live in confidence: you can do all things through Christ who is your strength!