

Lazarus is raised from the dead.

intro: today, I want to share a guided meditation with you, one that will invite us all into the heart of the gospel, so that together we can grow closer to Jesus Christ, and appreciate his sacrifices for us.

I invite you to clear your laps, place your hands unfolded comfortably in your laps, sit up straight and, if your feet can touch the floor, put them there. I'll invite you to close your eyes.

Let's take a few breaths in, and out...and keep going...

It's time to enter our meditation. You're standing with Jesus at the tomb of Lazarus w Martha & Mary. All cry.

You *know* how you feel when a loved one dies: you feel **all** kinds of feelings: sad, scared, lost, even mad: Martha misses her brother Lazarus, & her tone of voice tells us she's mad at Jesus: he didn't prevent Lazarus' death.

Jesus continues to love Martha, and both keep crying about Lazarus' death.

Hearing Martha tell Jesus how she really feels gives YOU courage: all of a sudden

At times, many of us are impatient/mad/annoyed that God didn't do things, or do them faster or better.

Tell Jesus of a time when you were mad at God, even for a minute, for what happened or didn't happen. [pause]

You stay close to Jesus. You **hear** Jesus speak to God: you **want** Jesus to bring Lazarus back from death to life.

Then you **hear** Jesus say, "Lazarus comes out," and you look over at the tomb, and for a second, nothing happens. Then, he's there: you see Lazarus for the first time, & you gasp out loud.

You wanted it to happen, yet it's shocking: Lazarus is alive, and you see him **hopping out of the tomb**:

Lazarus is all tied up & can't walk by himself, Jesus has to remind them to untie Lazarus & let him go free.

Tell Jesus of a time when you were **joyful** about something good happening to somebody you know

You look at Lazarus & you **know** that feeling Lazarus has: being tied up, being unable to move when you want.

Then you see Lazarus untied, and how happy he is to be alive again, & Martha & Mary & all have tears of joy.

You want the feeling Lazarus has: that feeling of being FREE and JOYFUL, no longer confined or stifled.

You'd LOVE to feel as free as Lazarus feels, yet sometimes people or situations keep U down/rob your freedom. Tell Jesus now who/what is keeping you down, & tell Jesus how much you want to be free. [pause]

Jesus listens to you: he nods his head. He understands what this desire for freedom means to you:

he knows that feeling tied up or a lack of freedom is hard for us: it hurts, and it can make us tired very quickly. So Jesus promises to be with you this week, as **both of you work** together to avoid whatever drags you down.

Tell Jesus what you need help with this coming week, so you can be a true son/daughter of God, not a slave 2darkness [pause]

You're glad you could tell Jesus the truth about what you've felt in the past, & what you're feeling now.

You feel better you told Jesus you want 2B on the side of life rather than death:

You want to be lifted up, not dragged down; helped up, not forced down.

As we come to the end of our meditation,

you've told Jesus about the help you need for the coming week: & Jesus showed you he understands:

He will be with you to fill you with a new strength to stay away from darkness & live in the light.

We feel our feet press against the floor; we feel our body relax; we slowly open our eyes & adjust to the light.

We know that just as Jesus' face was filled with joy, he calls us to be that joyful presence as we love others.

We know we can depend on Jesus.