

**The Character of Jesus 59**  
**Raising Lazarus**  
**John 11:1 – 24**

- **Characteristic: Patience**
  - (1) Jesus had visited them previously (Luke 10:38 – 48). They were friends.
  - (2) This event is recorded in John 12:1 – 8.
  - (3) Jesus had favorites (also verse 5). Another example is the apostle, John, who referred to himself as “the one whom Jesus loved.” (13:23, 20:2,21:20)
  - (4) Jesus was intentionally cryptic here. Jesus could be referring to spiritual death, or to the end result that Lazarus would not be permanently dead. The point was to avoid being questioned about why He did not go sooner.
  - (8) The disciples were well aware of the dangers. See also verse 16.
  - (9) Essentially, Jesus says, “It’s time.” He was following the predictions about the Messiah as set out in Isaiah, Daniel, and Psalms. If He were to avoid this path, He would be on His own (in darkness).
  - (11 – 14) The figure of speech for dead was “fallen asleep.” Perhaps owing to verse 4, the disciples interpreted Jesus’ words as meaning literal sleep. So, Jesus was clear, “Lazarus is dead.” Then He puts a positive spin on it, “That you may believe.” This planned resurrection had as one of its objectives to increase the faith of the Twelve.
  - (17) Other resurrections were more immediate, before decay had become advanced (Jairus’ daughter was within hours, the son of the Widow of Nain was perhaps half a day).
  - (19) Typically, visitors came to console the family for a week.
  - (21 – 22) Martha stated the obvious: if Jesus had come immediately, Jesus would have healed him. The second part may imply that she thought Jesus planned to raise Lazarus, but 11:39 implies that she thought that resurrection was beyond hope.
  - (23 – 26) Martha seemed to place Judgment as less important than physical life. Jesus reminded her of the eternal life concept, that it starts while still breathing.
  - (27) Some people understood who Jesus was.
  - (32) Repeat interaction with Mary.
  - (35) Weeping in compassion for the grief of the sisters and friends.
  - (39) If you can raise the dead, reversing decomposition should not be a problem.
  - (42) Public prayer to make sure that everyone would understand what was about to happen.
  - (44) Jesus seemed to limit His miracles to things people could not do. The mourners could take care of the bindings on Lazarus.
- **Application: Patience**
  - Patience in letting events fall into place
    - In what circumstances might faithful people today delay in this way?
    - When do faithful people tend to react too quickly?
  - Patience with people
    - When might the faithful use a lack of understanding to enhance the objective?
    - When do faithful people tend to react too quickly?