

CALLED by NAME

Isaiah 43:1

FOCUS VERSE

Jesus went on speaking to them. "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep," he said. "But I am going there to wake him up ..." Then Jesus called in a loud voice. He said, "Lazarus, come out!" —John 11:11, 43 NIV

Devotion: Lazarus - Called to Life



- Do you have any really close friends?
- How do you like to spend time with them?
- Do you trust them?
- Do you count on them for help?
- Do you pray with them?

Imagine what it would be like to have Jesus call you his friend. (Reread the Bible verse.) Wow! Lazarus was exactly that—Jesus' friend. Jesus would often visit Lazarus and his sisters Mary and Martha when he was tired and feeling stressed. Bethany, the town where they lived, was less than two miles from Jerusalem. That made it easy for Jesus to get away and have some down time with friends. Jesus enjoyed their company. It was nice for Jesus to be around friends.

This story of Lazarus shows us how much Jesus loved his friends. Jesus got news his friend Lazarus had died. Jesus did not get to Bethany until four days after Lazarus' funeral. When he got there, he was so sad he cried. Good friends are usually sad when a friend dies. It is part of being a human; we all have emotions.

- Have you ever had a friend die?
- How did you feel when you heard about your friend's death?

When Jesus cried, it showed that Jesus was human, a person, and had the same feelings we do. It tells us Jesus knows what we go through when someone dies, because he also experienced losing a friend on earth.

Jesus did something very special for his friends, something we could never do. He called to Lazarus and brought him back to life! Right after he showed human emotion by crying, Jesus did something only God can do... give life back to a dead person. This was a wonderful gift to his friends and it surprised them. It amazed everyone who was there. Just imagine what Lazarus and his friends all thought when Lazarus was able to walk out of his tomb!

Jesus, the Son of God, gives us new life, too! We can be alive in heaven some day with him. We can go to heaven because Jesus died on the cross and rose from death. Because Jesus died, we can also be forgiven. Because we are forgiven, we can live in heaven. Jesus is our friend, just like he was Lazarus' friend. Jesus loves us so much he gives us a chance to live in heaven some day.

Prayer:

Dear Father, we are so blessed to have Jesus call us his friend. Thank you for sending him to die on the cross for us. Thank you for the promise of heaven. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.