



**DGM Message Title: Push Against the Stone**

**Theme: Getting Through Hard Times**

**Sermon Date: 3/29/2015**

**Message Summary:** It's easy to proclaim God's goodness when things are going well in your life. But when things take a turn for the worst, you can struggle to trust God to work it all out in your favor. It's in these moments that God undergirds your faith to take you to the next level. Be encouraged to know that God can step in and help you press through and overcome any challenge you might be facing today.

**Scripture References:**

- John 11:1-44
- Luke 7:37
- Psalm 23:4

**Key Points:**

- John 11:1 (A man was afflicted with fever, pain and weakness)
  - Introduction to Lazarus (name means God is my help)
    - It's easy to say God is my help when bills are help, bodies healed, family is stellar, but it's tough when things aren't going the way you think they should
    - Lazarus is the brother of Mary
- Luke 7:37
  - Mary is referred to as a sinner, based on her past, but one act of destiny changed her from sinner to "that girl"
    - When she found out Jesus was at the Pharisee's house, she showed up (no matter what they said or how they felt)
      - She came in with a box of alabaster (fragrance)
    - Mary was unique because when she came to worship God, she always brought something with her
      - If you want to worship God, you have to bring something with you
        - Something that's expensive, moves you and is controversial
  - No matter how good you are, the roads you travel tend to leave a little residue
  - Mary began to wash Jesus' feet; she wiped his feet with her hair

- When you're a true worshipper, you don't care what people in the room think; your focus is on making Christ look good
  - She anointed his feet with a fragrant oil that was worth a year's salary (disciples felt it was too much money); this is what made her "that girl"
- John 11:2
  - The sisters, Mary and Martha, were present
    - God's love doesn't necessarily shield us from every problem
  - Jesus communicate this sickness would not lead "to" death, but "through" death
    - Psalm 23:4\*\*\*
- John 11:14
  - Lazarus' sickness is for the glory of God
  - The next level of glory often comes after the next level of pain
  - Jesus wanted to move Lazarus' "boxing class" up in the ring
  - The sister may have wondered why this was happening if God love them so much
    - If you're going to be like Christ, sometimes you have to go through to get to the place God wants you to be
- John 11:6
  - Jesus loved them, but when he needed them the most, he tended to stay way
    - Sometimes, the things Jesus does doesn't make any sense
  - Real faith is trusting God, despite the facts
- John 11:15
  - "Lazarus is dead and I'm glad for your sake that I was not there..."----confusing, to say the least because Jesus seemed to be insensitive at this time
  - God's delays are opportunities for our faith to strengthen
    - We can't grow up if God always shoves a lollipop in our mouth
  - Jesus wanted to show the world God came to destroy death, itself
    - Healing from sickness and casting out demons is a small glimpse of the power
- John 11:20
  - When Martha heard Jesus was coming, she went and met him while Mary stayed behind
    - For the first time in scripture, we see her unresponsive to Jesus
  - No matter how high we go with him, we still have to go down that mountain and be in the valley
  - Martha was angry at Jesus
  - In spite of their anger, Jesus didn't kick the girls to the curb
- John 11:28
  - After the meeting, Martha secretly called Mary
    - Sometimes when we're in a mourning place, we need people to come back for us and take us where we need to go
      - Sometimes, Jesus will hug the anger right out of us
  - All Mary needed was a little help from her sister to get back on her feet
- John 11:32
  - Mary went to where Jesus was and fell down at his feet; she expressed her anger and frustration because he let their brother die; he wasn't there (and she was even more mad because he displayed the look of love on his face)

- John 11:33
  - When Jesus saw her weeping, he was troubled
    - He asks, “Where have you laid him? (he already knows but he wants her to say it)
      - Prayer is confirmation of what God already knows; he wants to hear it from our lips
- John 11:35
  - Jesus wept
    - he hated what death did to families
      - two emotions: sorrow and anger
- John 11:38
  - Sometimes, you’re at a loss for words
  - Jesus approached the tomb; it was a cave/dark place with no sunlight
    - We sometimes feel locked away in a place like this; no light, no air, just death!
  - Jesus said, “Take away the stone.”
- ***If we would do our part and push against the stone, Jesus would do his part and resurrect the hope that has died!***
  - Use your anger to get back on your feet and push the stone
  - Only after they remove the stone, Jesus says, “Lazarus, come forth”
    - God wants to bring things back to life
  - Jesus is saying I’ll only help if you push through
  - Stop blaming God; he is not our problem, but our help in the time of trouble
    - Don’t let those evil thoughts fill your mind and make you want to give up
- Even if you are at a place where you think God has failed you, God says, “if you push...”