



CELL GUIDE

TOPIC	When All Seems Lost	SPEAKER	SP Chua Seng Lee
THEME	Encountering Jesus: The Book of John	DATE	5 April 2026

MESSAGE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

SP opened his message by acknowledging that we live in a fallen world filled with bad news and uncertainty, ranging from global conflicts to local challenges and difficult relationships. In such a world, it can be challenging to find hope, and many of us try to maintain a positive facade despite feeling lost inside.

It has been said that the acid test of one's faith is how much it helps us in the face of death. When faced with seemingly hopeless situations, Christians know that death does not have the final say; Jesus does. Therefore, we can always look to Jesus for comfort.

THREE ANCHORS FROM JOHN 11

1. God is in control, even in difficult times.

Our application: Rely on God

When Jesus heard that Lazarus was ill, He delayed going to him for two days, despite His love for Lazarus and his sisters Martha and Mary. By the time He arrived, Lazarus had already passed away.

Jesus' delay defies human logic. Most people would rush to the side of a sick loved one. However, while God cares for our well-being, He prioritises the demonstration of His glory and the growth of our faith in Him.

Jesus raised Lazarus four days after he died – when all human hope was gone and mourning had begun. It was the perfect opportunity to reveal His power and show that He was fully in control.

God does not work according to 'our timing'. He is never late, and His delay does not equate to denial. Rather, we must recognise that our lives ultimately belong to God.

2. God still cares for us, even in bad times.

Our application: Receive His Love

Jesus further demonstrates His care through His interactions with Lazarus' sisters, Martha and Mary (John 11:20-27). Martha showed her faith in Jesus when she said, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.' Jesus affirmed her with the truth: 'I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die.'

In contrast, Mary was overcome with emotion. Upon seeing her and the other Jews weeping, Jesus was deeply moved and wept with them. We live in a fallen world, and Jesus recognises that.

Martha needed the theological truth to nurture her faith, while Mary needed compassion. Thus, Jesus' response to each sister was unique to their individual needs. Similarly, God responds to us uniquely. When all hope seems lost, we can turn to Jesus, knowing that He understands and cares deeply for us.

3. God can change our bad times for good.

Our application: Rest in Him

When Jesus performs miracles, He invites our participation. In this instance, He asked for the stone to be removed from Lazarus' tomb (John 11:38-44)

When Jesus called Lazarus to 'come forth', Lazarus was resurrected. While others saw the tomb as 'final', Jesus saw it as an opportunity for faith to grow and for God to be glorified.

Lazarus was not the only one resurrected; Jesus himself rose after His crucifixion. His resurrection transformed fearful disciples into bold witnesses. Nothing is final with Jesus - we serve a living saviour!

God turns our messes into messages, our trials into testimonies and our pain into purpose. When all seems lost, we can surrender and rest in Him. Death does not have the final say; He does.

CONCLUSION

When all seems lost, we can believe in Jesus. He is in control, He cares for us and He has the power to change our circumstances.

QUESTIONS

1. Jesus responded differently to Martha and Mary according to their needs. Can you share a time when God answered your prayer in a way that felt personal to you? What happened, and how did it impact your faith?

2. Death does not have the final say; Jesus does. What does this truth mean to you in your current circumstances? What would it look like for you to rest in the Lord instead of relying on your own strength?

3. We live in a fallen world filled with conflict, and it can be difficult to guard against despair even as followers of Christ. What practical steps or encouragement can we offer one another to remain hopeful and continue relying on God in times of difficulty?