An 8-day devotional for Hillsong Church UK

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DAY 1: GLIMPSES OF GLORY

JOHN 20:30-31

ESV

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

If you've spent time with a toddler, you've likely noticed their favorite word: "Why?" Why is the sky blue? Why do birds fly? Why do things fall down instead of up?

Toddlers, in their curiosity, are wise. They relentlessly seek understanding – a wisdom we often lose as we age. Yet, especially in our faith, we should never stop asking "Why?" We follow a wonderful God who welcomes our questions. Jesus' Himself encourages us to unashamedly pursue Him: "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find" (Matthew 7:7).

God invites us to wrestle with "why?", not to frustrate us, but to draw us close. The more we seek, the more we find Him: the One who reigns over time and space and yet loves each of us personally and perfectly.

This devotional, then, is all about asking, "Why?". We're exploring the seven signs of Jesus in John's Gospel and asking: Why did Jesus perform these particular signs, and why did John preserve them? What do they reveal about Jesus, and how do they apply today?

John answers part of this in today's passage, telling us that, of everything he could have written down, he recorded these signs "so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name".

This is a revelation! Everything John writes, we realize, is geared toward helping us believe Jesus

is who He claimed to be – and in believing, to experience the abundant life He promises. Within each sign, therefore, we should expect to discover something about Jesus' identity and the expansive life He offers us. John is inviting us to engage with Jesus' miracles as "glimpses of glory", a theological treasure hunt leading to Christ Himself.

C.S. Lewis puts it beautifully: "Miracles are a retelling in small letters of the very same story which is written across the whole world in letters too large for some of us to see."

Pause to reflect. Do you want to deepen your confidence that Jesus is the Christ? Do you long to experience life in His name?

If so, this journey is for you. Over these eight devotionals, we'll examine each of the seven signs in turn. You can complete the journey in 8 days or pair it with our Hillsong UK Lent reading plan (available here: **www.hillsong.co.uk**)

Either way, we pray these reflections will draw you closer to Jesus – the One who is first, foremost, and forever.

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DAY 2: A RIPPLE OF TRANSFORMATION

JOHN 20:30-31

ESV

On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples. When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. And he said to them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast." So they took it. When the master of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now." This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

The seven signs in John are more than miracles; they're a roadmap to confidence in Jesus as the Christ. Like a crescendoing musical symphony, they build to a breathtaking conclusion: Jesus is the One all history points to – the long-awaited Messiah, death's defeater, and our eternal Saviour. He is the One our souls long for – first in our hearts, foremost in our lives, and forever at the centre of our worship.

Today, we pause on the first of these signs: a moment when, as N.T. Wright describes, "heaven is opened, and the transforming power of God's love bursts into the present world." At a wedding in Cana, Jesus turns water into wine. This, though, is no "party trick". It's a signpost to Christ's very identity and mission.

Running out of wine at a first-century wedding wasn't just embarrassing; it was a social catastrophe. The shame would have lingered long after the celebration ended. Imagine waving at someone who's waving at the person behind you. Multiply that humiliation by a hundred, and you'll begin to understand the hosts' predicament.

But into this moment of disgrace, Jesus acts. He doesn't just meet the immediate need; He exceeds it, turning water into the finest wine. This miracle, you see, isn't merely a demonstration of power – it's a dam-breaking act of flowing love. Jesus is showing us who He is: the One who transforms our failures into grace-filled abundance. Is that the Jesus you know? There's more. The jars Jesus used were for Jewish purification rites, symbols of the old covenant with its rituals and laws. By transforming the water into wine, Jesus offers a glimpse not only of His identity, but also His mission: to fulfill and surpass the old covenant with something more glorious. Wine – symbolizing celebration, life, and the blood Jesus would shed – points us to the new covenant of grace He inaugurates.

As Augustine observes, this miracle reveals Christ's power to transform not only the elements but also our lives. He turns the ordinary into the extraordinary, replacing failure with joyful abundance. The new wine is grace – unearned, overflowing, abundant and poured out over YOU.

Pause to reflect. What areas in your life feel marked by failure or shame? Prayerfully bring them to Jesus, the one who transforms and redeems. As you do, meditate on Jesus' new covenant, where grace overflows like the finest wine. Christ is far more than a miracle worker. He's your eternal Saviour, forever transforming your failures and covering your shame.

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DAY 3: A WORD THAT TRAVELS FAST

JOHN 4:46-54

So he came again to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water wine. And at Capernaum there was an official whose son was ill. When this man heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went to him and asked him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. So Jesus said to him, "Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe." The official said to him, "Sir, come down before my child dies." Jesus said to him, "Go; your son will live." The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and went on his way. As he was going down, his servants met him and told him that his son was recovering. So he asked them the hour when he began to get better, and they said to him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him." The father knew that was the hour when Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live." And he himself believed, and all his household. This was now the second sign that Jesus did when he had come from Judea to Galilee.

A motif is a rich and beautiful creative tool. Like a signature whisper, woven through a story or a song, a motif is a recurring thread that reinforces meaning and links the whole piece together. Think of the shark's ominous theme in Jaws that frightens you every time those two notes play, even before the monster has appeared. Motifs create patterns, connect ideas, and point to a bigger picture.

When Jesus performs miracles, we can think of them like motifs in God's grand narrative. These open-heaven moments are powerful in themselves, but they always point to something deeper: the wider patterns of God's purpose.

Let's dig further. We all know words have power; it's something we've all experienced. Our words can build up or tear down, encourage or destroy. A word of affirmation can impact the trajectory of someone's life. Equally, a careless word of gossip can shatter someone's confidence. And yet this weight, the power of our human words, is a mere echo of the weight God's Word holds. His Word is not just powerful, but ALL-powerful; transcending time and space, creating and shaping reality itself.

The Bible teaches us that God's Word underpins everything. Genesis begins with creation by His Word: "And God said, "Let there be light!" (Genesis 1:3). John's Gospel then intentionally echoes this, opening with: "In the beginning was the Word." (John 1:1). Scripture is making a cosmic point: God's Word, embodied in Jesus, is unstoppably powerful and stunningly creative. If the power of God's Word is the principle, then today's miracle - John's second 'sign' - is the motif, pointing to that bigger picture. In Jesus, we see the might of God's Word in living, breathing action. The official's son wasn't healed by Jesus' physical presence but by His spoken Word – from a distance. It's a moment that reveals the unmatched authority and reach of God's Word; a moment that causes the official to joyfully surrender his life to Jesus.

Today, like the official, we can have faith that God's word is true, trustworthy and powerful. It transcends time and space, and we can rely on it. As theologian Darrell W. Johnson writes: "Jesus' word not only informs, it performs; his word not only announces, it accomplishes what it announces."

Prayerfully reflect. What promises of God are you struggling to trust? What would it look like to rest confidently in His Word today, even if He feels far away? Then, go one step further. Meditate on the power of your words. How can you use them for good today, rather than harm – to lift others up, rather than pulling them down?

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DAY 4: A HIGHER POWER

JOHN 4:46-54

ESV

After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Aramaic called Bethesda, which has five roofed colonnades. In these lay a multitude of invalids – blind, lame, and paralyzed. One man was there who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been there a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be healed?" The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, and while I am going another steps down before me." Jesus said to him, "Get up, take up your bed, and walk." And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked.

Now that day was the Sabbath. So the Jews said to the man who had been healed, "It is the Sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to take up your bed." But he answered them, "The man who healed me, that man said to me, 'Take up your bed, and walk.""

The theologian N.T. Wright describes John's gospel as "a kind of treasure hunt, with careful and sometimes cryptic clues laid for us to follow." During Lent, we are following these clues to find Jesus, our ultimate treasure, as we reflect on His 'seven signs of glory'.

Today's sign may appear at first to be a straightforward miracle. Jesus compassionately heals a man who had been disabled for thirty-eight years. However, as we're increasingly discovering, no miracle is 'just' a miracle. Embedded in Jesus' actions are signposts to His identity and mission. This moment is layered with meaning.

Our modern culture is a noisy, confusing place. Have you felt it? Competing worldviews and ideologies bombard us, each claiming to hold the answers to our deepest longings. Social media floods us with worldly wisdom, promising us that our "perfect" life is just one more investment scheme, relationship or self-help plan away. While these things may have their place, they become harmful when they replace our ultimate need for Jesus. Among the many voices and 'solutions' vying for our attention, only One can truly heal our souls.

John's account of Jesus at the Pool of Bethesda showcases this reality. The pool was steeped in mystic superstition and surrounded by those seeking its supposed healing properties. Jewish religious leaders, too, prowled the area while the public watched on, ensuring that the law's strict Sabbath traditions were being observed. The scene brims with layers: mystic ritual, worldly wisdom, and religious legalism. It's into this complex cultural cacophony that Jesus steps boldly.

When Jesus heals the man, He does more than display His power as a healer. He reveals His authority as Lord – of the Sabbath, and over all. In one act, He dismantles and circumvents human systems of superstition, self-help, and religious rigidity. His message is unmistakable: "Over and above your rituals, rules and striving, I am the One you are looking for."

This is a breathtaking moment. Amid all human attempts to find meaning, healing and answers, Jesus reigns supreme. His way is better. His authority is unmatched. He IS the treasure. Whatever struggles we face today, He invites us to turn to Him.

Pause to reflect. Are there areas in your life where you feel stagnant, despairing, or hopeless? Instead of relying on your own strength or worldly solutions, prayerfully bring these to Jesus. Why not ask Him now for His direction, His healing, and His lifetransforming power? He is the One you're searching for.

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DAY 5: A FEAST FOR THE HUNGRY

JOHN 6:1-15

After this Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias. And a large crowd was following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing on the sick. Jesus went up on the mountain, and there he sat down with his disciples. Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. Lifting up his eyes, then, and seeing that a large crowd was coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?" He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little." One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?" Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, about five thousand in number. Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated. So also the fish, as much as they wanted. And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, "Gather up the leftover fragments, that nothing may be lost." So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten. When the people saw the sign that he had done, they said, "This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!"

Perceiving then that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

One of the most memorable advertising campaigns in recent history came from a popular chocolate bar. Its iconic tagline, "You're not you when you're hungry," resonated deeply with the public, boosting sales across 56 of the 58 markets where it aired and winning multiple marketing awards.

Why was it so effective? Because, amongst other things, it draws on a universally relatable truth: Hunger changes us, and rarely for the better. When we're hungry, we're more impulsive, irritable, and prone to poor decisions – hence the widely recognized term "hangry".

Have you ever tried to make a wise decision with an empty stomach? How did that go for you?

Today's sign, the feeding of the 5,000, speaks to this theme of hunger – but not just physical hunger. Beyond Jesus' miraculous multiplication of bread and fish lies a deeper message.

To grasp this depth, we must trace a recurring pattern in Scripture; a repeating theme of God giving His people physical bread to point them towards His spiritual provision. Exodus 16 is a prime example. The Israelites are in the wilderness, grumbling, fearing they will starve. What does God do? He rains down manna – bread from heaven – to sustain them. This wasn't just about meeting their physical needs; it was a tangible reminder of God's faithful provision. Fast forward to John 6 and this miracle takes on new levels. Jesus is doing more than demonstrating His power to feed a hungry crowd; He's making an announcement. Christ is declaring Himself our eternal, spiritual provider. Only a few verses later, He makes this connection clear: "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst." (John 6:35)

With this in mind, think back to "you're not you when you're hungry". This truth, we must concede, applies to more than just physical hunger. It speaks to our deeper hunger for meaning, purpose, and fulfillment. Just as when we make poor choices when our stomachs are empty, so it is when our souls feel empty. We make impulsive decisions and chase fleeting pleasures – be it wealth, relationships or likes – but quickly discover how unsatisfying they all are.

Today, Jesus, the bread of life, offers a better way. He's not only your provider, but your abundant provider, giving you more than enough. Whatever your deepest aches, needs or struggles today, turn to Him. Rely on Him. Only in Christ will you find true, lasting satisfaction.

Prayerfully reflect. In what areas of your life do you feel "hungry" or "unsatisfied" at the moment? Instead of turning to worldly solutions, fleeting pleasures or 'quick fixes', ask yourself this: How do you think Jesus can help?

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DAY 6: A PATH THROUGH THE STORM

JOHN 6:16-21

When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were frightened. But he said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid." Then they were glad to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going.

If we are to *"believe that Jesus is the Christ"* and find *"life in his name"*, as John hopes we will (John 20:31), we must be fully persuaded of His nature and character. We need unshakable confidence in His love, deep-rooted assurance of His care, and resolute belief in His power.

One of the greatest fears gripping our world today is the ever-more-inescapable power of nature. With climate change a devastating reality, we are seeing unprecedented natural disasters. Earthquakes, wildfires and tropical storms rage unchecked, highlighting our human fragility. The overwhelming force of creation can leave us feeling small, powerless, and vulnerable.

If you're struggling with fear and uncertainty today, then John's fifth 'sign of glory' – Jesus walking on water – offers deep reassurance. This is not merely a dramatic, splashy spectacle but a deliberate revelation of Jesus' authority over creation: an undeniable demonstration of His sovereignty over the elements He formed.

Imagine yourself among the disciples that night. Exhausted, they had rowed *"three or four miles"* against the wind, their small boat battered by relentless waves. The Sea of Galilee, infamous for sudden, violent storms, had turned hostile, and these seasoned fishermen knew the danger all too well. Then – on top of the chaos – a figure emerged from the darkness, walking on the water. It was like something out of a horror film: wind howling, rain lashing, the boat pitching wildly – and now, a man striding across the waves. How would you have felt? John sums up the disciples' mood: *"they were frightened"* (verse 19).

Then, Jesus spoke. His words cut through the storm and their terror: *"It is I"* (verse 20). The Greek phrase used here, ego eimi, echoes the very language God uses to reveal Himself to Moses at the burning bush: **"I AM"** (Exodus 3:14). This was not just reassurance; this was Christ declaring His divinity. The One treading upon the stormy sea was no mere man. He was YAHWEH, the Creator of heaven and earth, stepping into the disciples' fear and revealing His awe-inspiring power.

If fear grips your heart today – whether from global turmoil, personal trials, or the storms within – pursue the presence of Jesus and let His Word cut through your worries. He reigns over nature, commands the waves and calms the tempest. You may feel out of control, but He is not. He is the Great I AM, the One is **first** and **foremost**, **forever**.

Prayerfully reflect. Jesus is safe to trust, mighty to save, and worthy of your worship. Amid the current storms of your own life, what would it look like for you to step out in faith and trust Him? What habits or rhythms could you put in place in your life to help you deepen your trust in God?

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DAY 7: A VISION OF TRUTH

JOHN 9:1-12

As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.

The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar were saying, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" Some said, "It is he." Others said, "No, but he is like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." So they said to him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed and received my sight." They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

Through this devotional journey, we've seen that none of Jesus' signs in John's Gospel are just miracles. They're motifs – profound, tangible clues revealing who Jesus is. So far, we've encountered Him as the inaugurator of a richer covenant, the transcendent Word, the universe's highest authority, the fulfillment of our deepest hunger, and the Lord over creation. Nothing is beyond His power, yet He is intimately present in our lives. It's an awe-inspiring picture.

In today's sign, Jesus heals a man born blind. At first glance, it seems like just another miraculous act. A man who has never seen meets Jesus, obeys His command to wash, and returns with sight. Once again, Jesus is revealed as the healer who restores the broken and lifts the marginalized.

But as always, there's more here than meets the eye.

Centuries earlier, Isaiah spoke of a coming 'servant of the Lord' who would bring true liberation: *"a light for the nations, to open the eyes that are blind"* (Isaiah 42:6-7). This prophecy pointed not just to a physical healer but to a Messiah – one who would open blind hearts and bring God's truth into a darkened world. As we look closer, we discover the motif of light overcoming darkness is woven throughout scripture, stretching back to Genesis, when light first shattered the void. It's another clue. From creation onward, history was waiting – holding its breath – for the One who would open blind eyes for good, pushing back the darkness once and for all. Then, Jesus arrives, and John weaves the threads together: *"In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it"* (John 1:4-5). The stage is set. In healing the blind man, Jesus does more than fulfill prophecy – He proclaims His identity and mission. Just as this man's world was transformed from darkness to light, so too was Jesus doing the same for humanity.

In verse 5, Christ speaks the words that tie it all together: "I am the light of the world". In Him, confusion gives way to clarity, chaos to peace, blindness to sight. He alone reveals what is true – things we could never see without Him.

Today, Jesus offers you what He offered the blind man: sight and light.

Prayerfully reflect. Where does life feel dark or uncertain today? What's confusing you or making you worried? Instead of asking why or assigning blame – as those around the blind man did – turn your gaze to Jesus, the Light of the world. Let Him be your light, your clarity, and your hope.

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DAY 8: THE CONQUEROR OF DEATH

JOHN 11:17-44

Now when Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother. So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, but Mary remained seated in the house. Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life.[d] Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" She said to him, "Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world."

Jesus Weeps

When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in private, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you." And when she heard it, she rose quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha had met him. When the Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary rise quickly and go out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there. Now when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet, saying to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled. And he said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." Jesus wept. So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?"

Jesus Raises Lazarus

Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, by this time there will be an odor, for he has been dead four days." Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?" So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me." When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out." The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

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DAY 8: THE CONQUEROR OF DEATH

As John's Gospel reaches its climax, drawing together the threads of Christ's mission, one final sign points us towards the pinnacle of it all. Through John's literary treasure hunt, we have come to recognize Jesus as God – Lord over creation, human authorities and both the physical and spiritual realms. But now, we see where it has all been leading: the defeat of the last and greatest enemy – death itself. With all we have witnessed, Jesus' words strike like a thunderclap: *"I am the resurrection and the life"* (verse 25).

In Western culture, we are deeply uneasy about death. Historian Philippe Ariès describes a "contemporary crisis of death," where modern societies have shifted from accepting mortality to avoiding and medicalizing it, keeping it hidden from view. We shy away, distract ourselves, and only face it when it forces itself upon us in painful, unavoidable moments.

Pause and reflect - why is this?

In a secular world, this aversion makes sense. If death is final, it is unbearable to dwell on. It renders life fragile and fleeting, raising the terrifying question: What's the point of anything? If death is ultimate and undefeatable, then all human effort is reduced to futility. Why strive, love, or hope when the end is inevitable?

But as followers of Jesus, we live within a different framework. Returning to John's purpose statement in John 20, we're reminded that belief in Christ leads to life in His name. And that belief hinges on a certainty: death is not the end. Our God has power over it. And that changes everything.

Enter today's miracle. Jesus raises Lazarus, showcasing the unrivaled, unstoppable glory of God. This is not merely an act of compassion but a foreshadowing of the greater reality to come. It is the final sign pointing to the ultimate victory – Christ's own death and resurrection. The message is unmistakable: Jesus is the conqueror of death, and He alone holds the power to grant eternal life. Consider what this means. If Jesus reigns over death, then life is infused with purpose. Our fears – of the future, of suffering, of mortality itself – can be replaced with resilient hope. Despair gives way to joy. Even in trials, we stand on the unshakable foundation of Christ's victory. Prayerfully reflect. How does Jesus' raising of Lazarus encourage you today?

Now, take the next step: How does it lead you to celebrate the joy of Easter – the moment when Christ shattered death's grip forever? Eugene Peterson sums it all up: *"What appeared to be a defeat was actually the greatest victory of all."*

Let's finish in prayer, using the beautiful words from the Anglican liturgy for Resurrection Sunday:

God of glory, by the raising of your Son you have broken the chains of death and hell: fill your Church with faith and hope; for a new day has dawned and the way to life stands open in our Saviour Jesus Christ, Amen.