

## If Jesus Had Been There

### Scripture Reading — John 11:1-7, 17-25

*“Lord,” Martha said to Jesus, “if you had been here, my brother would not have died.”*  
—John 11:21 —

When I was 12 years old, my 24-year-old brother was killed in Indonesia. The Sunday after we were told about his death, our pastor preached a message about Jesus raising a widow’s son while she was on her way to bury him. I don’t remember any-thing about the sermon, but I do remember wondering why Jesus could not have been there on the way to my brother’s grave to raise him from death.

In my own way I was repeating what Martha said to Jesus: “Lord ... if you had been [there], my brother would not have died.” She did not understand. She had sent word to Jesus that her brother was sick, but instead of coming right away, the Lord waited two days. Martha was convinced that Lazarus would not have died if Jesus had been there.

So many things in life are difficult to understand. Sometimes we wonder if God really was there when someone we loved was taken from us. Sometimes it seems as if, in the words of C.S. Lewis, “God has double-bolted the door to heaven.”

Make no mistake: God is where we are. Even when we cannot see him or find our way to him, he is still there. The Lord Jesus promised his constant presence when he said, “I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:20). Nothing can separate us from the love of God!

### Prayer

*Open our eyes, Lord; we want to see you. Please send us a sign of your presence in our lives. Because of Jesus, Amen.*

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