

Beware of the 'But' Sayers!

Jesus has arrived with a crowd of people at the tomb of Lazarus. He has given the instruction to roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb. The story continues in John 11:39:

“But, Lord,” said Martha, the sister of the dead man, “by this time there is a bad odour, for he has been there four days.”

I would like to focus on the five words and phrases in the above scriptures that I have highlighted in red.

1. “But..”

Remember the scenario. Jesus has arrived on the scene and is about to do something incredible. And just when Jesus has ordered, “Remove the stone!” Here comes Martha’s comment...”But Lord!” “Hey Jesus, wait a minute! You can’t do that!” Beware of the “But Sayers!”...these are people who can put obstacles in your way, and often give good and compelling reasons why something cannot be done! Sadly, I can also be my own ‘But Sayer’ with my discouraging thoughts and convincing reasons why “I can’t!”

2. “Sister”

I will be very brief here! Oftentimes, the people who discourage you are those closest to you....family and dear friends!

I don’t want to seem too spooky to someone who may not believe in God, let alone have a relationship with Jesus. But believe it or not, the devil is real, and he uses people closest to you to try to prevent God from doing something great in your life. Like Martha, they may have good intentions, and their reasons are often logical and sound. Other times they serve as distractions to prevent you from fulfilling God’s plan for that season of your life.

3. “By This Time”

One of the things the devil also uses is your past, your history, to cause you to abort God’s plans for your future. Remember Lazarus has been dead for four days. Martha is using this past event as the basis of her argument why Jesus should abort His mission. Your past may have been a living hell, and today the hurt and pain linger on. The fact is God loves you, and Jesus wants to do something great in your life TODAY. The past is passed. Trust God and focus on what God is about to do in your life at the present moment. You have a bright future!

4. “A Bad Odour!”

Oh, how the devil loves to drop this bomb on us! He uses this lethal weapon to cripple our thoughts and to stop us from pursuing purpose! Lazarus stinks! So what! Yes, sin is a bad odour in our lives. As human beings we can give off a bad odour in the way we think, the things we say, and what we do. At some point in our lives we have all messed up.

With Jesus, it does not matter how stink your sin is. He looks beyond that and sees the potential within you to develop beyond your past failures and/or present circumstances into a wonderful human being. That is called UNCONDITIONAL LOVE. My friend, God hates the sin, but he loves the sinner! Even in your

situation and mines, there is always hope in Jesus. He wants to clean us up, help us to break free from sin, and turn our lives around. Someone really needs to hear this! Stop beating yourself up for what you have done in the past. You made a mistake and messed up. It is time to forgive yourself and others, and move on! “Let Go and Let God!”

5. “Four Days!”

Lazarus has been dead four days. Yes, the situation appears hopeless and impossible by human logic. But what is impossible for man is possible with God. Always remember this. In this earthly and natural realm, we use our senses and logical mind to navigate our way through life. But there is also another realm – the spiritual realm- where logic does not operate. In the spiritual realm, God is the boss, and our belief in His Son Jesus is the vehicle that takes us places on this earth. Always remember this: It is only by our faith that Jesus can work.

Martha’s comment may have been well-intended. She was focussing on her reality and the fact that Lazarus was dead for four days. She was using logic and the fact that dead man + four days = hopeless situation.

What is that hopeless situation in your life? To whom have you been listening? A ‘But Sayer’ like Martha can give a logical and good argument based on her senses why things cannot change. Beware of the ‘But Sayers!’ Don’t even trust yourself, because at times, we can be our worst enemy.. the biggest ‘But’ Sayer! Learn to silence the voices of the critics, who say “Don’t!” or “You Can’t!” . Instead, trust Jesus to perform His miracle in your life, TODAY. ALWAYS LET GOD HAVE THE FINAL SAY. Be blessed.

Heavenly Father,

I trust You, and thank You for what You are about to do in my life. I silence every voice that tells me why my situation is hopeless and cannot change. Lord, Help me to only hear Your voice and to believe Your Word. I let go of my past and forgive myself and others. In faith, I receive Your miracle! In Jesus’ name I pray with thanksgiving. Amen.

Luke 18:27 (NIV) - Jesus replied, “What is impossible with man is possible with God.”

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