



Designated Delays | James Powell | 03.14.2025

Weekly Study

SHARE

As group members get settled, take a few minutes to check in with everyone and see how life is going. Share an exciting story from this week, your highs and lows, an answered prayer, or something you're struggling with. If someone is really struggling, rally the group around them and take a few moments to pray over them.

- **Share a high, a low, and something interesting from this week.**
- **Do you consider yourself a patient person? How do you typically respond to delays?**

GROW

Holy Week is the most powerful and transformative week in history. It marks the final days of Jesus' earthly ministry—His entry into Jerusalem, His time in the temple, the Last Supper, His betrayal, crucifixion, and ultimately, His resurrection. It's a week filled with deep sorrow, unwavering love, and overwhelming victory.

Too often, we rush through this season, moving quickly from Palm Sunday to Easter morning without truly pausing to reflect on the details. But every moment of Holy Week is intentional. Every step Jesus took carried purpose. As we lead up to Easter, we want to slow down and take

a closer look at the finer details—those moments that may seem small but hold incredible significance for our faith today.

This week, Pastor James opened up the series with his message, "Designated Delays." Sometimes, delays feel frustrating and inconvenient, but what if the waiting seasons in our lives are meant to prepare us, protect us, or position us for something greater? Before Jesus went to the cross, there were moments of pause—times when God's timing was at work in ways that weren't immediately clear. This week, we explored how these delays are not obstacles but opportunities to trust in God's greater plan by looking at the sickness, death, and resurrection of Lazarus in John 11.

As we journey through the coming weeks, we invite you to lean in, reflect deeply, and walk through Holy Week with fresh eyes—so that when Easter morning arrives, we don't just celebrate it; we truly experience the fullness of its meaning.

Read John 11:1-24

- **How did this week's message speak to you? What were some major takeaways?**
- **Delays are often based on our expectations. Can you share a time when you experienced a "designated delay" in your life? How did it affect your faith?**
- **Is there something you're facing right now that makes you think, "God, if You really cared, You would've stopped this from happening"?**

M O V E

As James pointed out, we rarely grasp God's full plan—especially in the middle of difficult seasons. When our prayers seem unanswered, it's easy to feel like we've done something wrong, that God is distant, or that He doesn't care. But delays aren't signs of neglect; they are often intentional.

When we step back and shift our perspective, we can see that designated delays serve a greater purpose:

1. **By Jesus' Design** – His timing is always intentional.
2. **For My Development** – Delays shape and strengthen our faith.
3. **To See Jesus' Character** – They reveal His love, wisdom, and faithfulness.
4. **For Proximity** – They draw us closer to Him.
5. **To Show Jesus' Power** – They set the stage for His glory to be revealed.

When we trust Jesus' timing, character, and power, we can hold onto the promise that He works all things for our good—even when we don't yet see how.

Read John 11:25-44

- **Reflect on the statement: "If I can trust who Jesus is, I can trust what He's doing." How does understanding Jesus' character impact your ability to trust Him during difficult times?**
- **Pastor James talked about the importance of being present in the moment, like Jesus weeping with Mary and Martha. How can we better practice being present with others who are suffering?**
- **Sometimes God invites us into His process (like rolling away the stone). In what ways might God be inviting you to participate in His work right now?**
- **How does the story of Lazarus challenge or encourage your faith, especially in relation to situations that seem hopeless?**

P R A Y

Lord, this week, will you fill us with peace, patience, and understanding, especially in the waiting. So often, we struggle with unanswered prayers, delays, and moments where we wonder if You truly see or care. But today, we choose to trust that Your timing is perfect, Your plan is good, and Your love never fails.

Help us surrender our need for control and lean into the truth that designated delays are not obstacles but opportunities—opportunities to grow, to draw closer to You, and to witness Your power in ways we never expected. When we feel discouraged, remind us that You are still working. When we feel distant, pull us near. When we doubt, strengthen our faith.

Reshape our perspective and open our eyes to see Your hand in every situation. Teach us to trust in Your design, to embrace the growth You are cultivating within us, and to rest in the promise that You work all things for our good.

Amen