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Wednesday 08 April, 2020

## REFLECTION

One day morphs into another; the gentle advice to stay indoors is now an instruction to remain house-bound. The answer to the question, *What's next?* seems to be lost in the wind. Life indoors isn't that bad, although it would be nice to know how long this *incarceration* will last!

I wish an accomplished playwright would script a play of Jesus' last week, between commanding Lazarus out of the tomb to the night before His crucifixion. The texts of this period, both Biblical and reliable extra-Biblical are **SO** rich in drama, are equally rich in communicating Truth and messaging spin, demonstrating how misunderstanding God, i.e. believing the spin, leads to the rejection of Truth.

It starts with Judas' comment on Mary's extravagance in her expression of worship. The thorn in Judas' flesh was his fixation with money (I wouldn't call his a *love* of money, rather an obsession or a preoccupation with money). In Judas' mind everything had money equivalent. This blinded him to the reality of God's Kingdom in which, the loving generosity of God is so great, it cannot be exchanged for anything, completely neutralising the need for money.

Judas had blinded himself to the Majesty of God and the Sonship of Jesus, as a result, he did not appreciate Mary's

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extravagance, and reduced it to his world-view of God: money.

Jesus makes this clear in His great teaching on the mountainside, *No one can serve two masters; you hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You, therefore, cannot completely serve God and be enslaved to money.* Judas missed this Truth completely, and fell for the spin that everything in life has an equivalent money value!

People flocked to see the Man who “raised Lazarus *from the dead*”. The Pharisees and the Priests misunderstood God and as a result, rejected Truth. They missed the Truth about Jesus, *I am Resurrection and I am Life! (11:25)*, a Truth which was to become a reality in a few days. Had they spent time with Jesus learning this Truth from Him, they would not have “*decided to kill Lazarus too!*” They believed in the spin, that they were God’s chosen and had to protect Temple worship and the trappings of sacrifice from *madmen like this one who kept calling Himself, the Son of God!*

Despite Jesus pleading, *Put your trust in the light while there is still time; then you will become children of the light (12:36)*, in the very next verse we read, *Despite all the miraculous signs Jesus had done, most of the people still did not believe in Him.*

We live in similar times. We have news that hospitals across Britain are staffed by many committed Christians, who are

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going beyond the call of duty, praying with the hurting, comforting the dying and ministering to the grieving. *Despite the many miraculous signs God is doing*, people prefer the easier route of trusting the spin and rejecting Truth.

Hope, therefore, seems ever distant, faint, even lost. We have exhausted all ability to imagine anything could be brought back from this darkness. The **“Fourth Day”** (John 11:39) gives us a glimpse of real hope. Everyone said, *Lazarus is dead four days and the body will be smelling foul!*, but Jesus stands where we least expect Him and call you by name **“Come out! Put your back to the darkness and walk into the Light!”**

When you feel uncertain, when hope is distant and you feel trapped in grief, when like Mary and Martha (and Lazarus) you do not yet know the end of the story, the Truth is, Jesus is calling you by name to leave life's darkness behind and step into His light.

Guess what?! When you step into His light, you become a witness like Lazarus! You don't have to say a word, because people will see the **NEW** you and follow the Christ who made you new!

**AMEN.**