

The 4th Day Reset

Resurrection Rhythms for Moral Injury — John 11 (Lazarus) as the canonical pattern for veterans, fallen leaders, and anyone who feels past the point of return.

Dr. J Rodriguez, Founder, Troika Ministries • 2026-07-09 • NIV84 (primary), with one deliberate, retained exception: John 11:39 remains LEB ("he is stinking already") rather than NIV84 ("there is a bad odor") — the paper's own argument leans on the LEB's bluntness at this specific point (see §III). Pending Dr. J's final confirmation; flagged in this revision's editorial report.

"The 4th Day comes after the silence. After hope by human reckoning has died. That is exactly the day the Shepherd calls a name."

— Dr. J Rodriguez, Founder, Troika Ministries

o. The Epidemic This Paper Answers

Symptom 03 — The Wounded Left Behind. "Every leader who falls takes a congregation, a company, or a family down with him. The cost of the epidemic is counted in people, not headlines — and the people rarely recover on their own." This paper is written for those people — the fallen leader himself, the veteran carrying moral injury no clinical protocol can finish healing, and anyone else who has concluded, with good evidence, that too much time has passed for restoration to still be possible. The 4th Day Reset exists because Scripture names a day precisely engineered for that conclusion to be wrong.

I. The Thesis

Every recovery framework that begins before the third day has passed is not honoring the pattern Scripture actually gives. Lazarus was already four days dead when Jesus arrived — past decomposition, past hope by every human measure his own sister could name. The 4th Day is not a metaphor for quick turnaround. It is the specific day Scripture identifies as the day resurrection, not resuscitation, becomes the only remaining category. Troika's 4th Day Reset is built on this exact pattern, for exactly the population who needs a framework honest enough to admit that some wounds are past what effort or optimism can fix — and hopeful enough to insist that this is not the same as being past what God can do.

II. The Vocation This Protects — Rooted in Original Intent

This paper stands on the same doctrinal floor as the rest of the series: the Father prepared a garden, the Son prepared a place, and the Spirit dwells in us, preparing us for that place. But Original Intent doctrine does not pretend the road there is unbroken. Its own biblical arc names the pattern honestly: fellowship established, then repeatedly fractured — Eden lost, Israel exiled, kings failed, the body of Christ fractured again in every generation that stops consulting the Father. **The 4th Day Reset is what happens when the vocation of preparing a people collides with someone who no longer believes they can still be part of that people.**

This matters pastorally, not just theologically. A person carrying moral injury or the aftermath of a public fall is not usually resisting the invitation to formation out of rebellion. They are resisting it because they have concluded, often on real evidence, that they are the one exception the pattern doesn't apply to — too far gone, too many days in the tomb, too much decomposition for a Father who "prepared a place" to still mean *them*. The 4th Day Reset answers that specific despair, not with reassurance that it isn't as bad as it feels, but with the claim that Scripture's own pattern was built to be used precisely when it is.

III. The Biblical Case — Four Days, Not Three

John structures the Lazarus narrative with a precision that is easy to read past. Jesus receives word that Lazarus, whom he loved, is sick:

So the sisters sent word to Jesus, 'Lord, the one you love is sick.'... Yet when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days.

John 11:3, 6, NIV84

He does not rush. He waits — deliberately, while someone he loves is dying. This is the first and hardest part of the pattern: **the delay is not neglect. It is intention.** When he finally tells the disciples plainly what has happened, he even names why:

So then he told them plainly, 'Lazarus is dead, and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.'

John 11:14–15, NIV84

By the time Jesus arrives, the timeline has already run past the point any of them expected:

On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days.

John 11:17, NIV84

Jewish burial custom held that the soul lingered near the body for three days, hoping for revival, before departing for good on the fourth. Whether or not every mourner at Bethany held that belief consciously, the number is not incidental to John's account. **Four days meant finished. Four days meant no one was still watching the tomb expecting anything.** Martha's own words confirm exactly how finished it felt to her:

Martha, the sister of the one who had died, said to him, 'Lord, he is stinking already, because it has been four days.'

John 11:39, LEB

That is not despair as poetry. That is a sister stating a physical fact to stop what she assumes is a well-meaning but pointless request. **She has already done the grief work required to accept that this is over.** And Jesus does not correct her math. He does not claim it hasn't really been four days, or that decomposition hasn't really begun. He asks for the stone to be moved anyway.

Before he does, Scripture records something too easily rushed past in the retelling:

When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled... Jesus wept.

John 11:33, 35, NIV84

The one who already knew he was about to call Lazarus out of the tomb still wept at the tomb first. **Resurrection does not skip grief. It walks through it.** The 4th Day is not a bypass around Days 1 through 3 — it presumes them.

Martha's confession, given before the miracle, before any visible evidence that anything is about to change, is the theological center of the whole passage:

Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?' 'Yes, Lord,' she told him, 'I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world.'

John 11:25-27, NIV84

And then the moment the whole pattern exists to reach:

When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out!' The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, 'Take off the grave clothes and let him go.'

John 11:43-44, NIV84

The name comes first. The grave clothes come off second, and someone else has to do it. Both details matter for the model built on this text.

IV. Why "Day 4" Specifically — The Theological Logic of Delay

The temptation, in any recovery framework, is to intervene as early as possible — Day 1 crisis response, Day 2 stabilization, an urgency to shorten the suffering. Jesus does the opposite, on purpose, and names the reason: *so that you may believe*. **A resurrection performed before anyone believed the situation was truly dead would be mistaken for resuscitation — a near-miss, a medical save, a story about how**

it wasn't really that bad. A resurrection performed on the fourth day, after the sister has already said the words "he is stinking already," cannot be explained away as anything other than what it actually is.

This is the precise theological function the 4th Day Reset borrows: **it does not rush past Days 1 through 3, because those days are what make Day 4 recognizable as resurrection rather than luck.** A veteran carrying the weight of what happened in combat, or a leader carrying the weight of a public fall, has usually already lived through their own version of Days 1 through 3 — the shock, the grief, the accumulating evidence that this cannot be undone. The Reset does not ask them to skip that. It asks them to recognize which day they are actually standing in, and to know that the day they've reached is not outside the pattern — it may be exactly the day the pattern was built for.

Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones names the same despair, in the same generation's own words, and answers it the same way:

Then he said to me: 'Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, "Our bones are dried up and our hope is gone; we are cut off." Therefore prophesy and say to them: "This is what the Sovereign LORD says: O my people, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel. Then you, my people, will know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and bring you up from them."'

Ezekiel 37:11–13, NIV84

Cut off as far as we are concerned is Martha's "stinking already," spoken by an entire nation. God's answer is not to dispute their assessment of the bones. It is to breathe into exactly the bones they have already declared beyond use.

V. The Anatomy of the 4th Day Reset

Troika's 4th Day Reset translates this pattern into a deliberate, unhurried sequence rather than a crisis-response sprint:

- **Days 1–3: Sit with the weight of what happened.** No spiritualizing, no rushing to silver linings, no premature forgiveness language. This mirrors Jesus weeping at the tomb before calling anyone out of it. A person is permitted — required — to name the actual loss before anyone offers them resurrection language.
- **Day 4: The resurrection lens.** The reframe is not "it wasn't that bad" but "what if God wants to resurrect meaning and purpose from exactly this, the way He raised Lazarus from a state everyone present had already accepted as final?" This is offered only after Days 1–3 have been honored, never as a shortcut around them.
- **The covenant pathway.** "I cannot undo what I did or witnessed, but I can covenant to live differently going forward." This is Paul's own resurrection language, made personal:

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Galatians 2:20, NIV84

We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

Romans 6:4, NIV84

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

2 Corinthians 5:17, NIV84

- **The grave clothes still have to come off — and someone else has to help.** Lazarus walked out of the tomb still bound, and Jesus's final instruction was to the community around him: *untie him and let him go*. Resurrection in this pattern is never a solitary event. The formerly dead man needed his community's hands to finish what the miracle started. This is the theological basis for Troika's peer cohort model in moral injury and veteran recovery — the Reset is never designed to be walked alone.

VI. Application — Veterans, Fallen Leaders, and Anyone Past the Point of Return

For veterans carrying moral injury: the wound is not primarily fear-based (which is PTSD's amygdala signature) but conscience-based — shame, self-condemnation, the conviction that what was done or witnessed disqualifies them permanently from any future that includes belonging or purpose. The 4th Day Reset does not argue them out of the weight of what happened. It offers the one category their own moral reasoning cannot generate on its own: that God specializes in exactly the "four days already, past hope" cases, and always has.

For fallen leaders navigating restoration: this paper's companion, *Post-Failure Leadership Restoration*, distinguishes restoration to fellowship from restoration to office — a distinction the 4th Day Reset makes possible rather than contradicts. Lazarus was raised to life; Scripture does not record him being reinstated to any office he held before he died. **Resurrection is unconditional. Restoration to responsibility is a separate, later, rightly-discerned question.** Conflating the two is what causes churches to either withhold resurrection hope entirely (fearing it implies automatic reinstatement) or grant premature reinstatement (mistaking resurrection for restoration to office). The 4th Day Reset holds them apart on purpose.

For anyone who has quietly concluded they are the exception: the Reset's deepest pastoral function is simply naming that the despair itself — "too much time has passed," "too much damage has been done," "I am stinking already" — is not evidence against the pattern. In John 11, it was the precondition for recognizing it.

VII. How Troika Builds This Structurally

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- **A 12-week structured module** paces the Reset deliberately across the full arc — sitting with the weight, the resurrection reframe, the covenant pathway, and re-entry with a peer cohort — refusing the urgency that would compress Days 1–3 into a single session.
 - **Peer covenant cohorts (6–12 people)** embody "untie him and let him go" — the community's hands are structurally built into the model, not left to chance or to whoever happens to notice someone struggling.
 - **Vagal Tone Reset (4-4-6 breathing)** and other polyvagal-informed practices address the nervous-system reality underneath moral injury — PFC regulation must be online before formation of any kind, resurrection language included, can be received rather than merely heard. Regulate → Relate → Reveal → Reform, always in that order.
 - **Crisis routing is mandatory and non-negotiable** wherever suicidal ideation or immediate danger is present: 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, Crisis Text Line (text HOME to 741741), or 911. The 4th Day Reset supports — it never replaces — professional clinical care and human shepherding.
 - **The Reset never spiritualizes what is neurological.** Trauma's amygdala and hippocampus signature and moral injury's anterior-insula, shame-based signature are named plainly, not talked around with only theological language.

VIII. Conclusion

Every framework that promises fast recovery is, without saying so, promising that the situation was never really as bad as it felt. The 4th Day Reset makes the opposite promise, and it is the more durable one: **the situation can be exactly as bad as it felt, four days gone, already decomposing by every human measure — and still not be beyond the reach of the One who is the resurrection and the life.**

"The 4th Day comes after the silence. After hope by human reckoning has died. That is exactly the day the Shepherd calls a name."

Lazarus did not walk himself out of the tomb. He was called by name, and his community untied him. That is the whole pattern, and it is enough.

Scripture Reference List

- John 11:3, 6 — Jesus receives word and deliberately delays
- John 11:14-15 — "I am glad for your sake that I was not there, so that you may believe"
- John 11:17 — already four days in the tomb
- John 11:21-27 — Martha's confession; "I am the resurrection and the life"
- John 11:32-35 — Jesus wept, before the miracle
- John 11:39 — "he is stinking already, because it has been four days"

- John 11:43-44 — "Lazarus, come out!"; "Untie him and let him go"
- Ezekiel 37:1-6, 11-14 — the valley of dry bones; "our bones are dried up... cut off as far as we are concerned"
- Galatians 2:20 — "I no longer live, but Christ lives in me"
- Romans 6:4 — buried with him, raised to a new way of life
- 2 Corinthians 5:17 — new creation, the old has passed away

All Scripture quoted from the New International Version, 1984 edition (NIV84), per Troika Ministries' translation standard settled 2026-07-08, with one deliberate, retained exception: John 11:39 remains quoted from the Lexham English Bible (LEB) — "he is stinking already" — rather than NIV84's "there is a bad odor," because the paper's own argument in §III leans specifically on the LEB's bluntness at this point ("That is not despair as poetry. That is a sister stating a physical fact"). Converted from the original LEB citations, 2026-07-09; the John 11:39 exception is Dr. J's to reverse if he judges NIV84 should apply there as well.

Canon Alignment

Existing canon	How this paper reinforces it
The Epidemic (Series Preface)	Direct answer to Symptom 03 — the wounded left behind by public collapse
Original Intent Narrative	§II frames despair-driven self-exclusion from the vocation as the exact wound the 4th Day pattern answers
Veteran PTSD Ministry canon	§VI distinguishes moral injury's shame/conscience signature from PTSD's fear signature, per the 3-system model
Post-Failure Leadership & Restoration Framework	§VI draws the resurrection-vs-restoration-to-office distinction explicit in that framework
Neurobiology and Biblical Integration canon	§VII cites polyvagal theory and the Regulate → Relate → Reveal → Reform sequence
Crisis Safety Flow	§VII restates the mandatory crisis-routing protocol without exception

Canonization Record

- **Originated by:** Dr. J (Jose G. Rodriguez, Ph.D.)
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