

CONNECT Group study questions for March 29, 2020

“The Death and Resurrection of Lazarus”

Prayer for the Week of March 29th: This week begins our Easter series, and we are asking everyone in our church to invite someone who doesn't know Christ to come to church (online?) with them on Easter. Pray for everyone in our church that they would be bold in their witness for Christ during this great opportunity. Pray for the person God wants *you* to invite. Pray for the staff and elders as they get everything ready to have lots of unchurched people view our service. Pray that the people who are invited would come, hear the gospel, be saved, and then be disciplined into Christ-like missionaries.

This week begins our Easter series, and we will be in John 11, the account of the raising of Lazarus from the dead. For John this is the “climactic sign” in his Gospel. John tells us the story of Lazarus to help us better understand the resurrection of Jesus. Next week we will look closely at the crucifixion of Jesus, and then on Easter we will celebrate the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

1. **Read John 11:1-16.** People who are very familiar with this story have heard it so frequently they are prone to miss just how shocking it is. Use the questions below to think through the text and what it might mean for us.

- Why do you think Lazarus' sisters send word to Jesus to tell him that their brother is sick?
- Jesus knows that Lazarus is going to die without a miracle, but he lets him die anyway.

According to verses 5 and 6, why does he wait and let him die?

- When the disciples don't want to go see Lazarus because it is too dangerous, what does Jesus say to them in response?

- Jesus gives the disciples a strong hint of what is about to happen (v. 11, 14). Why do you think the Disciples don't believe him?

Thought Question - Do you think God deals with us in the same way? How should we respond when we don't know what God is doing in our lives? How should we respond when we pray to ask God to rescue us or someone we love from disaster and he allows the disaster to happen anyway?

2. **Read John 11:17-37.** From the moment Jesus arrives on the scene, he is met with unbelief. Everyone's unbelief is expressed differently, but it is unbelief all the same. Use the questions below to think through the text and what it might mean for us.

- Do you find Martha's question and comment to be accusatory (vs. 21-22)? Of what is she accusing Jesus?
- How does Martha respond when Jesus answers her accusation (v. 23-27)? Does she sound convinced to you? What is she missing?
- Mary makes the same accusation as Martha (v. 32), but this time Jesus doesn't even answer. He goes right to the tomb. Why?
- The crowds seem to assume that Jesus could have healed Lazarus while he was sick, but now that he is dead, it is too late. “Even Jesus can't fix this.” Why do you think they believe this?

Thought Question - Can you think of a time in your life when you were pretty sure you were in a situation that even God couldn't fix? How did you respond? How should you have responded?

What advice would you give to the someone in your group who might be going through that right now?

3. **Read John 11:38-57.** Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead, and it creates quite a stir (as you can imagine). Use the questions below to think through the text and what it might mean for us.

- Why do you think John thought it was important to tell how long Lazarus has been dead?
- What do you make of Jesus' prayer in vs. 41-42?
- What was the impact of the raising of Lazarus (vs. 45-57)?

Thought Question - How are the responses to the resurrection of Jesus today similar to the responses to the raising of Lazarus back then?