**Never Lost**

**Victory over Disappointment- Week #3**

**Small Group Notes**

**March 25 and 28, 2021**

**Introduction:**

**How do you respond when someone disappoints you? Why is it hard on us when it is someone that we are close to?**

**Have you ever expected something to happen from God and it didn’t come through the way you desired? How do you handle those times of disappointment?**

**Discuss:**

1. Victory over disappointment is for those who expect delays.

* Read John 11: 1-7
* Delays do not show disinterest but divine purpose.
* We feel disappointed in life because we play the short game.

Explain: Jesus had a close relationship with this family. When Lazarus was sick it was natural for them to bring their need to Jesus. It was expected that if He miraculously met the needs of so many others, He would meet their need also.

Ask:

**What does the phrase mean that we “don’t see the forest because of the trees”? How can we sometimes see the things that we go through with short-sighted faith?**

**How have you seen God to show His purpose through our times of waiting?**

2. Victory over disappointment is for those who value God’s glory over our immediate gain.

* Read John 11:4-6
* Victory over disappointment is a result of living for the glory of God!
* Christ’s definition of victory is glory!

Explain: God was glorified through Jesus’ resurrection, but He was also glorified through His death. Any crisis that brings glory to God is good. If God is glorified in illness, it is good, as difficult as this is for our human minds to grasp. The Lord’s words, “this sickness will not end in death,” show us how much more deeply He was thinking than the disciples.

Ask:

**Although Jesus said that the sickness would not end in death (v. 4), Lazarus did still die. Why did Jesus not misspeak in this moment? What might He have meant about the ultimate eternal life we are promised in Him?**

**How can we let timelines dictate our lives? How can we get caught up in our own timelines instead of God’s glory?**

3. Victory over disappointment is not primarily found in “working the process” but falling in love with the person!

* Read John 11:17-27; Victory is found in a present person, not just a future event.
* Read John 11:28-35; In life’s greatest disappointments, Jesus is working and weeping!

Explain: Jesus put Martha to the test by asking, “Do you believe this?” (v. 26). Her faith apparently was steady and growing, but she may not have understood the full impact of Jesus’ words. Her answer in verse 27 shows that she believed Jesus was the Christ (the “Anointed One” or Messiah) and also the Son of God. While so many others of Jesus’ day denied His identity as the Messiah, Martha strongly confessed her faith in Him.

Ask:

**What are the dangers of expecting and demanding that God act according to our own understanding?**

**Why did Jesus ask Martha to believe in Him before He gave her a miraculous physical reason to believe? What does that mean for our lives?**

4. Victory over disappointment will always require a measure of faith.

* Read John 11:36-44.

Explain: Jesus told the people to take off the grave clothes and let him go. Many of those who had come to visit Mary saw what Jesus did and put their faith in Him. Jesus exercised power—not for His own glory, but that people might believe and be saved. What Jesus did was designed to cause people who observed the sign to place their faith in Him and receive the eternal and unending life only He can give. Therefore, our response to the glory of God is always to trust by faith!

Ask:

**What proves Lazarus was really dead? How is this similar to the spiritual deadness all people are in before establishing a relationship with Christ? In what way do we all need a resurrection?**

**How can we maintain hope in God’s goodness, sovereignty, and love, even when our situations aren’t so dramatically resolved on earth? How can your story be a story of God’s glory?**

5. Victory over disappointment is for those who battle from a place of victory.

* Read John 11:53.
* Victory over disappointment is for those who know that Jesus has stepped into the ring!
* Victory over disappointment occurs when we realize that one day our God will reveal the glory of recomposition out of our decomposing disappointments!

Explain: Ultimately, He will make everything right, working all things for our good as we trust Him who is the Resurrection and the Life no matter what happens, overflowing that hope and faith into our relationships with others.

Ask: **How does knowing that Jesus willingly chose to suffer for us challenge us in how we view our suffering we experience?**

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