

DAILY TIME**SECTION 1 | JOHN 11:1-16**

We're told that our time in college will be the best years of our lives. You've set out to come and find "who you are." Campus offers us a lot of ways of who we're "supposed" to be—we could pursue finances, fame, followers. Maybe trusting in your grades, romantic encounters, or campus involvement hasn't kept up with the promises of the good life. Maybe instead of happiness and fulfillment, you've felt emptiness and pain. You start to wonder how to actually deal with hurt and struggles in your life when things that seemed promising no longer live up to what they claimed.

Life is hard. There's no hiding it. We face challenges, obstacles, hardships—we all have dirty laundry. And that's certainly not what God intends for our lives. Some of us may have grown up believing that if you were a Christian, you had to be perfect or have it all together. Maybe some of you still feel that way. That God doesn't see or care about hurt, pain or struggle in our lives. But the Gospel of John uniquely shares with us a story of a man named Lazarus, whom Jesus deeply loved, and walked him and his family into living hope even amid certain death. In this story, we'll see the glory of God revealed in Jesus and how he brings hope, healing, and life—even after death.

¹A man named Lazarus was sick. He lived in Bethany with his sisters, Mary and Martha. ²This is the Mary who later poured the expensive perfume on the Lord's feet and wiped them with her hair. Her brother, Lazarus, was sick. ³So the two sisters sent a message to Jesus telling him, "Lord, your dear friend is very sick." ⁴But when Jesus heard about it he said, "Lazarus's sickness will not end in death. No, it happened for the glory of God so that the Son of God will receive glory from this."

⁵So although Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, ⁶he stayed where he was for the next two days. ⁷Finally, he said to his disciples, "Let's go back to Judea."

⁸But his disciples objected. "Rabbi," they said, "only a few days ago the people in Judea were trying to stone you. Are you going there again?" ⁹Jesus replied, "There are twelve hours of daylight every day. During the day people can walk safely. They can see because they have the light of this world. ¹⁰But at night there is danger of stumbling because they have no light." ¹¹Then he said, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but now I will go and wake him up."

¹²The disciples said, "Lord, if he is sleeping, he will soon get better!"

¹³They thought Jesus meant Lazarus was simply sleeping, but Jesus meant Lazarus had died. ¹⁴So he told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead.

¹⁵And for your sakes, I'm glad I wasn't there, for now you will really believe. Come, let's go see him." ¹⁶Thomas, nicknamed the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let's go, too—and die with Jesus."

? What strikes you about Jesus? Why didn't he immediately leave to see Lazarus? What do you think the disciples were thinking?

? Why did he let Lazarus die? Why would someone be glad when someone died?

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- ② What does this passage infer about God’s timing?
- ② Jesus is pretty convinced that Lazarus died (not just taken a nap). What do you think he means by “this sickness will not end in death?”

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SECTION 2 | JOHN 11:17-37

- If only. How many times do we think that?
- If only I had done better on that exam.
- If only I had dated this person.
- If only I had more time.
- If only I hadn’t done _____.
- If only God had showed up.

In the following passage, it’s easy to relate with Mary and Martha. It’s easy to ask, “God, where are you in this?” “Why did you let _____ happen?” “Why can’t I stop doing ____?” When things don’t go the way we expected or unfold the way we wanted them to, we can easily turn our frustrations on God or feel left in hopelessness. In this passage we see how Jesus responds to this.

¹⁷When Jesus arrived at Bethany, he was told that Lazarus had already been in his grave for four days. ¹⁸Bethany was only a few miles down the road from Jerusalem, ¹⁹and many of the people had come to console Martha and Mary in their loss. ²⁰When Martha got word that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him. But Mary stayed in the house. ²¹Martha

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said to Jesus, “Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²²But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask.” ²³Jesus told her, “Your brother will rise again.”

²⁴“Yes,” Martha said, “he will rise when everyone else rises, at the last day.” ²⁵Jesus told her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. ²⁶Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this, Martha?”

²⁷“Yes, Lord,” she told him. “I have always believed you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who has come into the world from God.”

²⁸Then she returned to Mary. She called Mary aside from the mourners and told her, “The Teacher is here and wants to see you.” ²⁹So Mary immediately went to him. ³⁰Jesus had stayed outside the village, at the place where Martha met him. ³¹When the people who were at the house consoling Mary saw her leave so hastily, they assumed she was going to Lazarus’s grave to weep. So they followed her there. ³²When Mary arrived and saw Jesus, she fell at his feet and said, “Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died.” ³³When Jesus saw her weeping and saw the other people wailing with her, a deep anger welled up within him, and he was deeply troubled. ³⁴“Where have you put him?” he asked them. They told him, “Lord, come and see.” ³⁵Then Jesus wept. ³⁶The people who were standing nearby said, “See how much he loved him!” ³⁷But some said, “This man healed a blind man. Couldn’t he have kept Lazarus from dying?”

- ❓ What do you think God thinks or feels about our struggles?
- ❓ What pain or brokenness do you need to invite Jesus into today? Do you believe that Jesus is with you in these painful moments?

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- ② Have there been times you've found yourself asking "God, where are you?" Does your view of God change after reading this part of the story? Why or why not?
- ② We see Jesus acting profoundly *human* in this passage. Is that a problem?

SECTION 3 | JOHN 11:38-44

³⁸Jesus was still angry as he arrived at the tomb, a cave with a stone rolled across its entrance. ³⁹"Roll the stone aside," Jesus told them. But Martha, the dead man's sister, protested, "Lord, he has been dead for four days. The smell will be terrible." ⁴⁰Jesus responded, "Didn't I tell you that you would see God's glory if you believe?" ⁴¹So they rolled the stone aside. Then Jesus looked up to heaven and said, "Father, thank you for hearing me. ⁴²You always hear me, but I said it out loud for the sake of all these people standing here, so that they will believe you sent me." ⁴³Then Jesus shouted, "Lazarus, come out!" ⁴⁴And the dead man came out, his hands and feet bound in graveclothes, his face wrapped in a headcloth. Jesus told them, "Unwrap him and let him go!"

Jesus called Lazarus by name. He called him out of darkness and into light. He called him from death to life! We can't roll our own stone away. Jesus demonstrates that only he has the power to roll the stone aside and bring us out into new life with him! It is truly a miracle that Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, but His good work doesn't stop there. Instead, it's an invitation to a deeper faith. To trust that God can lift us out of our pain, our past, and our sinfulness.

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- ❓ If Jesus were to call you out of your grave, what would that grave be?
- ❓ Jesus commands that Lazarus' graveclothes be removed. His graveclothes were what dressed and defined him (a dead man). What is Jesus calling you to remove from your life or no longer be defined by?
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GROUP TIME

WEEK 6 - ~~BAD TO GOOD~~ ⇒ DEATH TO LIFE

When we look to Jesus, we come and see what a true, fulfilled life looks like. When we look to campus or the world, we only find emptiness and temporary gratification that ultimately doesn't fulfill us but leads to death. This week, identify ways that campus offers "life" and how that's different than Life with Jesus.

JOHN 11:1-44

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❓ Jesus says in John 11:25 “I am the resurrection and life.” What do you think this means, what is *life* that Christ offers?

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❓ What are some of the ways campus promises us life? What does the full life of campus look like? Where do you think Jesus would show up on campus to contrast his life with what’s on offer here?

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❓ How does Christ interact with pain, isolation, or brokenness in this story? What does that tell us about how he deals with our pain, isolation, and brokenness?

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PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Lazarus came out of his grave and points us to resurrection. We must come out of our graves as well. We do this by pleading the blood of Christ. Take 10 minutes as a group with your journal read through this Prayer of Confession. Journal your reflections.

Then break up into small groups (2-3) or your accountability group and share what Jesus is inviting you to confess and turn from. Pray for one another and encourage one another as you confess and receive forgiveness and invitation to the rich life of Jesus.

*Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.*

LIVING IT OUT

As a group, decide how you're going to apply something from this week's discussion. Write out what you decide here.

