

Getting Ready for Easter

So That They May Believe-John 11:1-53

Ice Breaker: Talk about a time that you were not ready for something that you were supposed to be ready for.

The Death of Lazarus

John 11:1-16 *Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. 2 (This Mary, whose brother Lazarus now lay sick, was the same one who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair.) 3 So the sisters sent word to Jesus, "Lord, the one you love is sick." 4 When he heard this, Jesus said, "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it." 5 Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. 6 So when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days, 7 and then he said to his disciples, "Let us go back to Judea." 8 "But Rabbi," they said, "a short while ago the Jews there tried to stone you, and yet you are going back?" 9 Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Anyone who walks in the daytime will not stumble, for they see by this world's light. 10 It is when a person walks at night that they stumble, for they have no light." 11 After he had said this, he went on to tell them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up." 12 His disciples replied, "Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better." 13 Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep. 14 So then he told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead, 15 and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." 16 Then Thomas (also known as Didymus) said to the rest of the disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."*

1.What do we learn about Lazarus, Mary and Martha in John 11:1-7?

2. Why did his disciples want him to stay where he was? (John 10:31-33,39; John 11:8,16)

John 10:31-33 *Again his Jewish opponents picked up stones to stone him, 32 but Jesus said to them, "I have shown you many good works from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?" 33 "We are not stoning you for any good work," they replied, "but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God."*

John 10:39 *Again they tried to seize him, but he escaped their grasp.*

3. Why did Jesus wait two more days after he heard that Lazarus was sick before he left where he was for Judea? (John 11:4,15), look ahead also to John 11:25-26, 39-42)

Jesus Comforts the Sisters of Lazarus

John 11:17-37 *On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. 18 Now Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, 19 and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother.*

20 When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home. 21 "Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died. 22 But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask." 23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." 24 Martha answered, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." 25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; 26 and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?" 27 "Yes, Lord," she replied, "I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world." 28 After she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary aside. "The Teacher is here," she said, "and is asking for you." 29 When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to him. 30 Now Jesus had not yet entered the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. 31 When the Jews who had been with Mary in the house, comforting her, noticed how quickly she got up and went out, they followed her, supposing she was going to the tomb to mourn there. 32 When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." 33 When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. 34 "Where have you laid him?" he asked. "Come and see, Lord," they replied. 35 Jesus wept. 36 Then the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" 37 But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

4. How did Mary and Martha react to Jesus coming after their brother had died four days earlier? (John 11:21,32)

5. Why is it so hard to wait on God's timing for our prayers? And why do we tend to blame God when the outcome is not what we want?

6. How does Jesus reassure Martha? What claim does Jesus make about himself?
What does He ask of her? (John 11:25-26)

7. What are ways Jesus reassures us when life does not go the way we want?
What does He ask of us?

Jesus Raises Lazarus From the Dead

John 11:38-46 *Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. 39 "Take away the stone," he said. "But, Lord," said Martha, the sister of the dead man, "by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days." 40 Then Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?" 41 So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. 42 I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me." 43 When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" 44 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." 45 Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him. 46 But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done*

8. Why did Jesus pray the way he did before he asked them to roll away the stone? (John 11:41)

9. Why do you think that Jesus asked them to roll away the stone (John 11:39) and take off the grave clothes (John 11:44) when He could have miraculously done that himself?

10. What are some of the stones (act of faith) you need to roll away so that Jesus can work in your life? What is keeping us from rolling those stones away?

11. How are the resurrections of Lazarus and Jesus the same? How are they different?

12. Why did Jesus perform this miracle? (See answer in question 3) Why do you think Jesus revealed this miracle in a public way, rather than privately? (John 11:42)

13. How can we reveal the works of Jesus in our lives in such a way that others may believe and see the glory of God?

The Plot to Kill Jesus

John 11:47-53 *Then the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin. "What are we accomplishing?" they asked. "Here is this man performing many signs. 48 If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our temple and our nation." 49 Then one of them, named Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, spoke up, "You know nothing at all! 50 You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish." 51 He did not say this on his own, but as high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation, 52 and not only for that nation but also for the scattered children of God, to bring them together and make them one. 53 So from that day on they plotted to take his life.*

14. Describe the people who were at the tomb to witness the miracle and what was their response? (John 11:37, 45-46)

15. How does raising Lazarus from the dead prepare the stage for what will happen to Jesus that leads to the cross? (John 11:53, 12:9-11)

John 12:9-11 *Meanwhile a large crowd of Jews found out that Jesus was there and came, not only because of him but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. 10 So the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus as well, 11 for on account of him many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and believing in him.*

16. Soon after this event, Jesus will go to Jerusalem to be betrayed, crucified and resurrected. How do you think this event helped to prepare the disciples for what they were about to experience?

17. How is God preparing you for your next steps with Him? How are you preparing yourself?