

## WHAT TO DO WHEN "HERE" IS NOT WHERE YOU WANT TO BE

### AN HONEST COMPLAINT

Psalm 73/ Proverbs 12:21,13:21,14:19/ Ecclesiastes 7:15, 8:14/ Psalm 44:17-26

### WHAT TO DO WHEN "HERE" IS WHERE YOU DON'T WANT TO BE

- (1) Don't be **SURPRISED!**  
1 Peter 4:12/ John 16:33/ Acts 14:21-22/ 1 Peter 1:6-7
  
- (2) If you can move on without **HURTING OTHERS** or **DISOBEYING GOD** - then do so!  
Psalm 15:1-4/ Matthew 11:28-30
  
- (3) If you can't move on:
  - ✓ *Focus On* your **DESTINY**.  
Psalm 73:16-17/ 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 & 11:23-29
  
  - ✓ *Look For* God's **PLAN**.  
James 1:5
    - Is he building my **CHARACTER**?  
James 1:2-4/ Romans 5:3-5
  
    - Is he preparing me to **HELP OTHERS**?  
2 Corinthians 1:3-6
  
    - Is this a chance to show his **POWER**?  
Philippians 1:29-30/ Colossians 3:17/ Philippians 4:11-13

# Life Group Study Questions

For the week of September 23, 2018

## GETTING TO KNOW YOU

- What's the most interesting building you've ever seen or been in?
- What's one of your most memorable surprises?
- We all have different responses when we suddenly find ourselves not where we want to be. Two extreme responses are, 1) "*It's the end of the world as we know it,*" and 2) "*Don't worry, be happy, it will all work out.*" What might be the downside of living on either of these extremes?

If you asked two friends which way they think you would respond, what do you think they would say?  
(Extra Credit: Try texting/calling them to really find out).

- Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

## DIGGING DEEPER

1

None of us like to find ourselves in tough situations, especially when it seems like God isn't responding the way we think he should. The story in John 11:1-44 is an example of this. As you read each section of verses below, write down any comments, actions or attitudes that stand out to you as a surprise to those in the passage.

### **v. 1-10** *New International Version (NIV)*

Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. <sup>2</sup> (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.) <sup>3</sup> So the sisters sent word to Jesus, "Lord, the one you love is sick." <sup>4</sup> 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." <sup>5</sup> Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. <sup>6</sup> So when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days, <sup>7</sup> and then he said to his disciples, "Let us go back to Judea." <sup>8</sup> "But Rabbi," they said, "a short while ago the Jews there tried to stone you, and yet you are going back?" <sup>9</sup> 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. <sup>10</sup> It is when a person walks at night that they stumble, for they have no light."

### **v. 11-16** *New International Version (NIV)*

<sup>11</sup> 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." <sup>12</sup> His disciples replied, "Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better." <sup>13</sup> Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep. <sup>14</sup> So then he told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead, <sup>15</sup> and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." <sup>16</sup> Then Thomas (also known as Didymus<sup>[a]</sup>) said to the rest of the disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

**v.17-37** *New International Version (NIV)*

*Jesus Comforts the Sisters of Lazarus*

<sup>17</sup> On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. <sup>18</sup> Now Bethany was less than two miles<sup>[b]</sup> from Jerusalem, <sup>19</sup> and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. <sup>20</sup> When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home.

<sup>21</sup> “Lord,” Martha said to Jesus, “if you had been here, my brother would not have died. <sup>22</sup> But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.”

<sup>23</sup> Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.”

<sup>24</sup> Martha answered, “I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”

<sup>25</sup> Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; <sup>26</sup> and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?”

<sup>27</sup> “Yes, Lord,” she replied, “I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.”

<sup>28</sup> 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.”<sup>29</sup> When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to him. <sup>30</sup> Now Jesus had not yet entered the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. <sup>31</sup> 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.

<sup>32</sup> 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.”

<sup>33</sup> When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. <sup>34</sup> “Where have you laid him?” he asked.

“Come and see, Lord,” they replied.

<sup>35</sup> Jesus wept.

<sup>36</sup> Then the Jews said, “See how he loved him!”

<sup>37</sup> But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?”

**v. 38-44** *New International Version (NIV)*

*Jesus Raises Lazarus From the Dead*

<sup>38</sup> Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. <sup>39</sup> “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.”

<sup>40</sup> Then Jesus said, “Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?”

<sup>41</sup> So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. <sup>42</sup> 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.”

<sup>43</sup> When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” <sup>44</sup> 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.”

Which surprise catches your attention the most and why?

Like the disciples, can you think of any situations where it seemed like God was absent and then it became apparent that he was at work all along?

2

After going through a tough season, sometimes it can be surprising to find that your experience actually allows you to help others. Ironically, receiving help from others isn't always as easily done. Can you think of any way someone could effectively come alongside you during a difficult time? If so, explain.

When someone we know is going through a rough time, our intentions are always to help, but sometimes it backfires. Can you think of any potential ways someone thinks they are helping, but they actually aren't? If so, explain.

How do these verses help guide us in how to effectively come alongside others?

**Ephesians 4:29** *New International Version (NIV)*

<sup>29</sup>Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

**Philippians 2:3–4** *New International Version (NIV)*

<sup>3</sup>Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, <sup>4</sup>not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

**Proverbs 18:2, 13** *New International Version (NIV)*

<sup>2</sup>Fools find no pleasure in understanding  
but delight in airing their own opinions.

<sup>13</sup>To answer before listening—  
that is folly and shame.

**Proverbs 17:27** *New International Version (NIV)*

<sup>27</sup>The one who has knowledge uses words with restraint,  
and whoever has understanding is even-tempered.

Which of these verses catch your attention the most and why? Which one is more important for you to remember?

## TAKING IT HOME

1

Which point from this weekend's message is most important for you to remember when you find yourself "not where you want to be"?

2

Is there any challenge or difficulty in your life you'd like prayer for this week?

## PRAYER REQUESTS

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## TIPS ON GROUP PRAYER

Prayer is an important part of being in Life Group. Over the years we've found that group prayer goes better when we follow three simple guidelines.

**WE PRAY FOR ONE TOPIC AT A TIME** - Anyone in the group is free to introduce a prayer request either before prayer begins or during the prayer time. Once a topic is introduced, the group focuses on that request alone. Once it's covered, the group moves on to the next topic.

**PRAY MORE THAN ONCE** - Because the group is focusing on one topic at a time, each person is encouraged to pray several times during the prayer time for those topics they feel most led to pray about. No one is required to pray.

**WE KEEP OUR PRAYERS SHORT AND SIMPLE** - Group prayer goes better when members keep their prayers short and to the point. When someone prays for a long time, it's hard for the other members to stay focused and long prayers tend to intimidate those who are just learning to pray out loud in a group. No one is required to pray out loud.



### **REAL MAN WEEKEND – “The Palomar Experience” - Oct. 26-28**

Lookin' for some crazy guy stuff to do? Want to kick back or get refocused on God? Join us for another epic men's weekend that will get you recharged and refreshed as our speakers lead us into a look at what a real man is and isn't! The weekend will also include plenty of “man” event options like paintball, high ropes course, skeet shooting, archery, zipline, horseback riding, etc. Space is limited so don't delay!

Register online at [northcoastchurch.com/real-man-weekend](http://northcoastchurch.com/real-man-weekend)