

Small Group Discussion Guide — March 22, 2020

- Series: “Life in His Name”
 - Sermon: Live Into Your Life
 - Scripture: John 11
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FOLLOW-UP FROM LAST WEEK:

Describe a time this week when you reflected on the words from Mark 1:11, “And a voice came from heaven: ‘You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased,’” and thought of them as words for yourself. How did your attitude toward yourself change in light of these words?

CONNECT:

1. Have you felt more in the light or in the dark this week? Give an example of either (or both) situation.
2. How have you seen God at work in your “new normal”?

ENGAGE:

Read John 11: 1-44.

- Jesus says, “This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God’s glory.” What purpose did God have for Lazarus’s sickness?
- What is the meaning of the parable (vv 9-10) Jesus shares after his disciples express their concern about his plan to go to Judea? Now read John 8:12. How do these scriptures relate to each other?
- In verse 35, scripture tells us that Jesus wept. Pete connected this to 1 Peter 5:7. What do you think is the connection?

APPLY:

1. Pete discussed the thought, “Why do bad things happen to good people?” He re-framed it in a way John might, if we could ask him this question: “The God that I knew on earth did not go to work eliminating evil people; instead, first he loved me, then he went to work eliminating the evil in me.” How would your perspective change if you turned the question around and focused instead on the darkness in your heart? How can God do work there?
2. Both Mary and Martha use the phrase with Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here...” Have you ever felt this way in your prayer life, like Jesus wasn’t listening? How did you deal with that feeling? Examine Jesus’ response to each woman’s expression. What do you notice about his words and actions?
3. Read verses 14-15 aloud. Jesus says, “For your sake,” he is glad he was not there. Have you ever been faced with a difficult situation that ended up enriching your faith after having gone through it? Consider that God may have allowed that situation “for your sake.” How would you be different if you had been able to avoid the situation altogether?
4. Martha tells Jesus that she “knows” that Lazarus will rise again at the last day. Jesus’ response to her “knowledge” is to shift her gaze from an unknown time to himself, right now: “I am the

resurrection and the life.” He asks her to shift from a belief in doctrine to a reliance on His person. What is the difference in those two perspectives? How does that shift change your perspective?

PRAY:

Dear Lord, You tell us that if we believe, we will see the glory of God. Help us to bridge the gap between belief that you are with us, belief that you care for the birds of the air and therefore will care for us, and faith to trust what you say, that we are not alone. Help us to believe that you are the resurrection and the life, and to rest not on confidence in ourselves, but in our confession that we need you. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

GOING DEEPER:

1. Pete asked us to consider that when we are told that COVID-19 has been contained, and we can return to our “normal” lives, how will we go? Will we be different? Will we remember how much we need Jesus? Ask God to shape your spirit during this time, and imagine yourself stepping back into the world like Lazarus emerging from the tomb. How do you hope the Lord will have changed you?
2. One theme of today’s teaching was “Jesus does His best work in dark places. In caves or other dark places, we see best when we stay near the light. We don’t have to stumble in the darkness, for God has promised, “Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you” (Deut. 31: 6). What are some practical ways we can stay near the light of Jesus during this time?

SUPPORTING VERSES:

Friendly reminder: Download one of the Bible apps on your phone or tablet to have quick access to the many different versions of scripture available.

- John 8:12
- 1 Peter 5:7
- Matthew 6:26
- Deuteronomy 31:6

OTHER REFERENCES:

Pete referenced Andy Stanley’s comments on why a good God would allow bad things to happen. You can see Andy Stanley’s full sermon on this topic here:

<https://northpoint.org/messages/bystander/coexistence>