

5-Day Devotional: Jesus Meets Us in Our Sorrow

Based on John 11:17–44

Day 1: Jesus Sees Your Sorrow

Scripture

John 11:33

“When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled.”

Devotional

One of the most comforting truths in John 11 is easy to overlook: **Jesus saw her weeping.**

Mary was grieving the death of her brother Lazarus. Her heart was broken. Her hopes had been crushed. She had sent for Jesus, but He had not come when she expected Him to. By the time He arrived, Lazarus had already been dead for four days.

But Jesus did not walk into that moment casually. He saw Mary's tears. He saw the pain in the room. He saw the sorrow of everyone gathered there.

Sometimes in our grief, we feel invisible. We may think no one really understands what we are carrying. We may even wonder if God sees us at all. But Scripture reminds us that God is not distant from our pain.

In Genesis 16, Hagar called God “the God who sees me.” Psalm 56:8 says God keeps track of our tears. Psalm 34:18 says He is near to the brokenhearted.

You are not invisible to Jesus. Your sorrow is not hidden from Him. He sees the tears you cry in public and the ones you hold back in private. He sees the heaviness you cannot explain. He sees the questions you are afraid to ask.

And His seeing is not cold observation. He sees with compassion, love, and perfect understanding.

Reflection Questions

Where in your life do you need to remember that Jesus sees you?

Have you ever felt forgotten or overlooked in your sorrow?

How does it change your perspective to know that Jesus personally sees your pain?

Application

Take a few minutes today to honestly name before God what you are carrying. You do not have to dress it up or explain it perfectly. Simply pray, “Lord, You see this.” Then trust that He does.

Prayer

Jesus, thank You that I am not invisible to You. Thank You that You see my sorrow, my questions, my fears, and my tears. Help me believe that You are near, even when I feel alone. Remind me today that I am fully seen and fully loved by You. Amen.

Day 2: Jesus Feels Your Sorrow

Scripture

John 11:33–35

“When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled... Jesus wept.”

Devotional

Jesus did not merely see Mary’s sorrow; He felt it.

John tells us that Jesus was “deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled.” This phrase carries intensity. Jesus was stirred up. He was troubled by the pain in front of Him. He was angered by the devastation of sin and death.

Then John gives us the shortest verse in Scripture: **“Jesus wept.”**

Those two words reveal so much about the heart of Christ. Jesus knew He was about to raise Lazarus from the dead. He knew resurrection was coming. He knew grief would soon turn to joy. And yet, He still wept.

That means hope does not cancel grief. Faith does not mean we never cry. Trusting God does not mean pretending everything is fine.

Jesus grieved because death is an enemy. Sin has broken the world. Pain, loss, sickness, betrayal, and death are not how things were meant to be. Jesus does not shrug at our suffering. He enters it.

Isaiah 53 describes Jesus as “a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.” He knows what it means to suffer. He knows what it means to be rejected, wounded, misunderstood, and grieved.

When you bring your sorrow to Jesus, you are not bringing it to someone who is annoyed by your weakness. You are bringing it to the Savior who weeps with those who weep.

Reflection Questions

Why do you think Jesus wept even though He knew Lazarus would rise?

Do you ever feel pressure to hide your sadness or “be okay”?

How does Jesus’ compassion give you permission to grieve honestly?

Application

If there is something you have been trying to minimize or ignore, bring it honestly to Jesus today. Write it down if helpful. Remember: grief is not unbelief. You can cry and still trust God.

Prayer

Jesus, thank You that You are not distant from my pain. Thank You that You know sorrow and that You meet me with compassion. Help me grieve honestly before You. Teach me to trust You even through tears. Amen.

Day 3: Jesus Moves Toward Your Sorrow

Scripture

John 11:34–35

“And he said, ‘Where have you laid him?’ They said to him, ‘Lord, come and see.’ Jesus wept.”

Devotional

After Jesus saw Mary weeping and was deeply moved, He asked, “Where have you laid him?”

Jesus moved toward the tomb.

He did not avoid the place of pain. He did not keep His distance from the grief. He did not offer a quick religious phrase and walk away. He moved toward the very place that represented loss, sorrow, and death.

This is the heart of Jesus. He moves toward broken people. He steps into grief. He comes near to the places we might rather hide.

Many of us try to keep Jesus away from certain parts of our lives. We may invite Him into our Sunday mornings, our prayers before meals, or our obvious needs. But when it comes to deep wounds, hidden grief, private sin, disappointment, or shame, we may keep the stone rolled firmly in place.

But Jesus asks us to bring Him there.

Where have you laid your disappointment?

Where have you buried your grief?

Where have you hidden your anger?

Where have you placed the pain you do not want anyone to see?

Jesus does not move toward your sorrow to condemn you. He moves toward it because He loves you. He is not afraid of your questions, your tears, or your weakness.

He is the Savior who comes near.

Reflection Questions

What is one area of pain or disappointment you have been tempted to keep from Jesus?

Why do people sometimes hide their sorrow from God?

What would it look like for you to invite Jesus into that place today?

Application

Pray through this simple question: “Jesus, where do I need to let You come near?” Sit quietly and allow the Holy Spirit to bring to mind any area you have been hiding, avoiding, or carrying alone.

Prayer

Jesus, thank You that You move toward my sorrow, not away from it. Forgive me for the ways I try to carry pain on my own. Help me invite You into the places I have hidden. Come near, Lord, and teach me to trust You there. Amen.

Day 4: Jesus Conquers Our Greatest Sorrow

Scripture

John 11:25–26

“Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?’”

Devotional

Jesus did not only comfort Mary and Martha. He conquered the very thing causing their grief.

Standing before Lazarus' tomb, Jesus cried out, "Lazarus, come out." And Lazarus came out alive.

This miracle shows us that Jesus has authority over death. He does not merely offer sympathy from a distance. He speaks, and death must obey.

But the raising of Lazarus points us to an even greater resurrection. Soon after this moment, Jesus Himself would go to the cross. He would suffer, bleed, and die for sinners. His body would be placed in a tomb. But on the third day, Jesus walked out victorious.

The One who called Lazarus out of the tomb would Himself defeat sin, death, hell, and the grave.

This is the foundation of Christian hope. We do not hope because life is easy. We do not hope because we avoid suffering. We hope because Jesus is alive.

Jesus told Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life." Then He asked her, "Do you believe this?"

That question is personal. It is not enough to admire Jesus. It is not enough to know facts about Him. It is not enough to be around church or Christian people. The question is: **Do you believe?**

Do you believe Jesus is who He says He is?

Do you believe He died for your sin?

Do you believe God raised Him from the dead?

Do you believe He is your only hope in life and death?

Because Jesus lives, death does not get the final word.

Reflection Questions

What does the raising of Lazarus reveal about Jesus' power?

How does Jesus' resurrection give hope in the face of death and grief?

How would you personally answer Jesus' question: "Do you believe this?"

Application

Take time today to confess your faith in Jesus. Say out loud or write down: "Jesus, I believe You are the resurrection and the life." If you have never surrendered your life to Christ, today is the day to call on Him.

Prayer

Jesus, I believe You are the resurrection and the life. Thank You for dying for my sin and rising from the dead. Thank You that death does not have the final word. Strengthen my faith and help me live with resurrection hope. Amen.

Day 5: We Remember, We Hope, We Go

Scripture

1 Corinthians 11:26

“For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.”

Devotional

John 11 reminds us that Jesus meets us in sorrow. Communion reminds us why we can have hope in sorrow.

When we take the bread and the cup, we remember the body and blood of Jesus. We remember the cross. We remember the cost of our forgiveness. Communion is serious because sin is serious. Jesus died so that we could be forgiven, cleansed, and brought into relationship with God.

But communion is not only a funeral-like remembrance. It is also a celebration. We proclaim the Lord’s death **until He comes.**

That means Jesus is alive. The tomb is empty. The King is returning.

Because of Jesus, we can face sorrow differently. We do not have to pretend pain is not real. We do not have to deny grief. We do not have to understand all of God’s timing. But we can trust His heart.

Jesus sees our sorrow.

Jesus feels our sorrow.

Jesus moves toward our sorrow.

Jesus conquers our greatest sorrow.

And now, as His people, we are called to reflect His heart to others.

There are people around us who are grieving, lonely, disappointed, anxious, or afraid.

They do not just need quick answers. They need the compassion of Christ through the presence of His people.

Jesus moved toward sorrow. We should too.

Reflection Questions

How does communion help you remember both the sorrow of the cross and the victory of the resurrection?

Who in your life is currently walking through grief or hardship?

What would it look like for you to move toward them with the compassion of Jesus?

Application

Reach out to one person today who may be hurting. Send a text, make a call, pray with them, write a note, bring a meal, or simply let them know they are not alone.

Prayer

Jesus, thank You for the cross and the empty tomb. Thank You that You are coming again. Help me remember Your sacrifice, celebrate Your victory, and live with hope. Show me someone who needs Your compassion today, and help me move toward them in love. Amen.

Jesus Meets Us in Our Sorrow

A Sermon Blog from John 11

Life can feel like a roller coaster.

One moment we are celebrating, rejoicing, and praising God for His goodness. The next moment, life hits hard. Grief comes. Sorrow settles in. Questions rise to the surface. We find ourselves asking things like, “God, where are You?” or “Why did You allow this?”

John 11 brings us into one of those deeply emotional moments. It is a chapter filled with death, grief, tears, confusion, and pain. But it is also a chapter filled with hope, power, compassion, and resurrection.

In this passage, Jesus comes face-to-face with the grief surrounding the death of His friend Lazarus. Lazarus was the brother of Mary and Martha, and John makes it clear that Jesus loved this family deeply. When Lazarus became sick, word was sent to Jesus: “Lord, he whom you love is ill” (John 11:3).

Naturally, we might expect Jesus to drop everything and go immediately. But He does not. Instead, He waits two more days. By the time Jesus arrives in Bethany, Lazarus has already been dead for four days.

That delay creates tension. Jesus loved Lazarus. Jesus had the power to heal him. Jesus knew what was happening. And yet, Jesus allowed Lazarus to die.

That tension is not just in John 11. It is often the tension we feel in our own lives. We believe Jesus loves us. We believe He is powerful. But we also walk through real sorrow, loss, and pain.

So what does John 11 show us about Jesus in the middle of our grief?

1. Jesus Sees Our Sorrow

When Jesus arrives, Martha comes out to meet Him. Later, Mary comes to Him as well. Both sisters are grieving. Both are hurting. Both say essentially the same thing: “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died” (John 11:21, 32).

Then John 11:33 says:

“When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping...”

That phrase matters: **Jesus saw her weeping.**

Jesus did not miss Mary’s grief. He was not distracted from her pain. He saw her.

This is one of the great comforts of Scripture: God sees His people. In Genesis 16, Hagar, alone and suffering in the wilderness, encountered the Lord and called Him “a God of

seeing” (Genesis 16:13). The name often associated with that moment is *El Roi* — the God who sees.

God does not merely see suffering in general. He sees you.

He sees the tears no one else sees. He sees the ache you may not know how to explain. He sees the heaviness you carry into the room while everyone else assumes you are fine.

Psalm 56:8 says God keeps track of our tears. Psalm 34:18 says He is near to the brokenhearted. Hebrews 4:15 reminds us that we have a Savior who sympathizes with our weaknesses.

You are never invisible to Jesus.

2. Jesus Feels Our Sorrow

John tells us that when Jesus saw Mary and the others weeping, “he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled” (John 11:33).

This phrase is stronger than we may realize. It is not merely that Jesus felt sad. The language carries the idea of being stirred up, agitated, even indignant. Jesus is deeply moved by the devastation caused by sin and death.

Death is not natural in the sense of being part of God’s good design. Death is an enemy. It is part of the brokenness brought into the world through sin. And in John 11, Jesus stands before the tomb of His friend and feels the full weight of that brokenness.

Jesus is not cold toward our pain. He is not emotionally detached. He is not indifferent to grief.

He feels it.

Isaiah 53 describes Jesus as “a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.” He knows sorrow. He knows suffering. He knows what it is to lose someone He loves.

This means that when you grieve, you do not come to a Savior who says, “Get over it.” You come to a Savior who understands. You come to One who knows the depth of human sorrow and hates what sin and death have done to the world He created.

3. Jesus Moves Toward Our Sorrow

After Jesus sees and feels the grief around Him, He asks a question:

“Where have you laid him?”

John 11:34

Then comes the shortest verse in the Bible, but one of the most powerful:

“Jesus wept.”

John 11:35

Jesus does not avoid the sorrow. He does not keep His distance from the tomb. He moves toward it.

This is such good news.

Many of us are tempted to hide our pain from God. We think we have to clean ourselves up before coming to Him. We may assume our sorrow, anger, confusion, or questions will push Him away.

But John 11 shows us the opposite. Jesus moves toward the grieving. He steps into the sorrow. He weeps with those who weep.

And yet, in the crowd, some begin asking the question many of us ask in suffering:

“Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?”

John 11:37

In other words: “If Jesus had the power to heal, why didn’t He stop this?”

That is a painful question. And in seasons of grief, the enemy often uses that question to whisper lies: “God does not love you. You cannot trust Him. If He really cared, He would have stopped this.”

But John 11 invites us to see something deeper. We should not interpret God’s love by our circumstances. Instead, we interpret our circumstances through the lens of His love.

Jesus’ delay was not evidence of His absence. His tears were not evidence of His weakness. His presence at the tomb was not the end of the story.

4. Jesus Conquers Our Greatest Sorrow

Jesus comes to the tomb and says:

“Take away the stone.”

John 11:39

Martha objects. Lazarus has been dead four days. There will be an odor. This is real death. This is not a misunderstanding. Lazarus is gone.

But Jesus responds:

“Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?”

John 11:40

Then Jesus prays to the Father and cries out with a loud voice:

“Lazarus, come out.”

John 11:43

And Lazarus comes out.

Jesus does not merely stand outside the tomb and sympathize. He demonstrates authority over the very thing that caused their grief. He shows that death does not have the final word when the Son of God is present.

This miracle points us forward. The One who calls Lazarus out of the tomb will soon be placed in a tomb Himself. In John 19, Jesus will die on the cross. His body will be buried. A stone will be rolled in front of the entrance.

But in John 20, the tomb will be empty.

Jesus is not only able to raise Lazarus. Jesus Himself is the resurrection and the life.

He told Martha:

“I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die.”

John 11:25–26

Then He asked her the question that confronts every one of us:

“Do you believe this?”

That is the question.

Not simply, “Do you attend church?”

Not, “Have you been around Christian things?”

Not, “Did your family believe?”

Not, “Have you had religious experiences?”

Jesus asks: **Do you believe this?**

Do you believe Jesus is who He says He is?

Do you believe He died for your sin?

Do you believe God raised Him from the dead?

Do you believe He is the resurrection and the life?

Romans 10:9 says:

“If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”

And Romans 10:13 says:

“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

The hope of John 11 is not merely that Jesus can comfort us in grief, though He does. The hope is that Jesus has conquered the source of our greatest grief. Through His death and resurrection, He has defeated sin, death, hell, and the grave.

Communion and the Hope of Resurrection

This sermon led into a time of communion, which is deeply connected to the message of John 11.

Communion is a remembrance of Jesus’ death. We remember His body broken for us and His blood shed for us. It is solemn. It calls us to examine ourselves, confess sin, and remember the cost of our salvation.

But communion is also a celebration. We do not remember a Savior who stayed dead. We proclaim the Lord’s death “until he comes” (1 Corinthians 11:26). The tomb is empty, and Jesus is coming again.

So in our sorrow, we remember.

In our grief, we hope.

In our waiting, we trust.

In our pain, we look to Christ.

Because Jesus sees our sorrow.

Jesus feels our sorrow.

Jesus moves toward our sorrow.

And Jesus conquers our greatest sorrow.

A Question for Today

Jesus' question to Martha is still His question to us:

Do you believe this?

If you are grieving, bring your sorrow to Him.

If you are waiting, trust His timing.

If you are doubting, look again at the empty tomb.

If you have never surrendered your life to Christ, call on Him today.

The Savior who wept at Lazarus' tomb is also the King who walked out of His own.

And because He lives, those who believe in Him will live also.