

Dear Life Group Leaders,

This is one of my favourite chapters in the whole Bible. Savour dwelling on what it tells us about Jesus and God's purpose in the world. Also, please note we won't be producing any Life Group Guides centrally over August. Do look out for any guidance your Venue Leader might share about alternatives.

God bless, take care and stay strong

Andy *(This week's Life Group Guide was prepared by Andy Tuck, who works for Everyday Wimbledon)*

LIFE GROUP GUIDE

John 11:1-44

This week's BIG IDEA: Jesus is the resurrection and the life.

Please read John 11:1-16

1. v1-7, can someone summarise the story so far in a couple of sentences?
2. v8, what is the context for the disciples saying this to Jesus?
[Leaders note: Look back at John 10:31.]
3. v9-16, what do these verses tell us about the morale of the disciples at this stage in the story?
[Leaders note: You could focus the group on Thomas' pessimism in v16.]

Please read John 11:17-37

4. What do we learn about Mary and Martha in these verses? What similarities and differences can you see in Jesus' interactions with these two sisters?
[Leaders note: note that Martha runs to Jesus, Mary stays at home. See Martha's perfect confession of faith (cf John 20:31) in v27. Check out v21 and v32 where they say the same thing to Jesus.]
5. v21-27, Jesus responds to Mary and Martha in two different ways. What do we learn about Jesus from his answer to Martha? What is the significance of Jesus saying "I am the resurrection", not "I am the resurrected one"? Jesus claims to be both the resurrection and the life. What are the differences between the two and what significance do they hold for us?
6. v28-37, what do Jesus' tears tell us about him (v35), and what difference does it make to how you feel about him today? Do you have a "Lord, if only..." prayer? Have you voiced this disappointment to God?
7. With Martha Jesus engaged theologically, with Mary he engaged emotionally. Which comfort do you need to receive from God today?
8. How does Jesus individually tailored responses to Martha and Mary effect the way we seek to comfort those around us? Do you see people for the cherished individuals they are?

Please read John 11:38-44

9. Track Lazarus' journey through these verses. To what extent can we see similarities in our own journeys with Jesus?
[Leaders note: cf Col 2:13 and Eph 2:1-5.]
10. v38-40, in these verses Jesus asks for the stone to be rolled away, but Martha's response was no, Lazarus will stink. Resurrection life can only happen when we confront those things in our life that are dead. Are there areas in your life that currently feel like they are dead or they have no life in them?
11. v43, Jesus calls out to Lazarus to come out of his tomb. Are there parts of your life that Jesus is currently calling you out of?
12. v44, can you identify any grave clothes from your old life, in contrast to your new life with Jesus, that you are still wearing? This maybe a sinful pattern of behaviour or part of your thought life. How can others help you take your grave clothes off?