



Small Group Discussion Guide: We Carry Grief

Series: What We Carry

Date: 10/26/2025

Scripture: John 11:28–36 (NRSVUE)

Opening Prayer

God of all comfort, draw near to the brokenhearted. Teach us to tell the truth about our losses, to sit with one another without hurry, and to trust Your presence in our tears. Through Jesus Christ, who weeps with us and loves us still. Amen.

Introduction & Context

In John 11, Mary falls at Jesus' feet and says, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." Jesus knows resurrection is coming (Lazarus will live), yet He is "deeply moved" and He weeps. The passage shows that grief is not a detour from faith—it's part of it. Christian hope and honest lament can coexist. This week we're naming grief (not only death, but all kinds of losses) and learning to carry it with Jesus and with one another.

Discussion Questions

1. Naming Grief
 - Where have you encountered grief beyond bereavement—lost dreams, health changes, a friendship ending, job loss, divorce, a child's struggle, or "what used to be"?
 - Which loss is closest for you right now? What does it feel like in your body or week?
2. "Lord, if you had been here..." (vv. 32–33)
 - What honest words have you prayed (or wanted to pray) in grief?
 - How does Jesus' nearness to Mary shape how we show up for each other?
3. "Jesus was deeply moved... Jesus wept." (vv. 33, 35)
 - Why might Jesus weep even knowing He will raise Lazarus? What does this reveal about God's posture toward our pain?
 - How does this challenge the idea that strong faith never shows tears?





4. Presence over Platitudes
 - What helped you in grief (a meal, a walk, someone sitting in silence, a text on a hard date)?
 - What well-meant phrases or timelines felt unhelpful? How can we avoid “fixing” and practice gentle presence?
5. Community that Carries
 - What simple rhythms could our group adopt to walk with grievors beyond the first weeks (anniversary reminders, monthly check-ins, practical help lists)?
 - What boundaries help us care well without overpromising or minimizing (confidentiality, offering two specific options, knowing when to refer to a counselor or group like GriefShare/Stephen Ministry)?
6. Light in the Dark
 - Share a “pinprick of light” you noticed in a dark season (a verse, a friend’s prayer, a small mercy).
 - How can we help each other notice and name these small lights?

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, You are the resurrection and the life—and You are also the Savior who weeps. Hold our tears, steady our steps, and make our love practical. Keep us attentive to one another and to Your light that no darkness can overcome. Amen.

Key Takeaway

Grief isn’t proof that faith failed; it’s proof that love mattered. Jesus meets us with tears and hope, and He gives us to one another so no one grieves alone.



Next Step — P.A.R. (Pray • Act • Reflect)

- **Pray:** Each morning this week, read Matthew 5:14–16 from *The Message*. Let Jesus' call to be light shape your day.
- **Act:** Write a note of remembrance for someone you miss (or to someone who shares that loss). Consider sharing one brief story that honors their life.
- **Reflect:** Set aside a few minutes to reflect on times you've felt grief and what your experience was while grieving. What helped? Where did you sense even a small "pinprick of light"?

This guide was developed from original content with the assistance of ChatGPT.