

Leader's Guide

Jesus & Lazarus: What Are You Waiting For?

John 11:1-16

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March 22, 2026

Main Idea

In a culture that avoids waiting, Jesus shows us that waiting is often where God does His deepest work. We may not see it, but we can trust that He is working for His glory and our good.

Key Texts

- John 11:1–16
- Psalm 13:1–6

Additional Supporting Scripture

- Isaiah 40:31 – God renews those who wait on Him
 - Lamentations 3:25-26 – It is good to wait quietly for the Lord
 - Romans 8:28 – God works all things for good
 - James 1:2-4 – Trials produce perseverance and maturity
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Discussion Questions

1. Observing the Story

In John 11:1–16, what stands out to you about Jesus' response to Lazarus' sickness? How does His decision to wait challenge your expectations of how God should act?

Leader Notes:

- Help the group notice the tension: Jesus loves them, yet He delays.
- Emphasize verse 5–6. His love and His waiting are connected, not contradictory.
- If needed, ask: *Why do we assume love always equals immediate action?*

Follow-Up Prompts:

- What would you have expected Jesus to do?
 - How do you usually expect God to respond when you pray?
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2. Understanding Waiting

Where do you see impatience show up most in your own life, and how might that shape the way you relate to God?

Leader Notes:

- This is a bridge from Scripture to culture.
- Let people reflect on everyday impatience (lines, phones, delays).
- Gently connect that to spiritual expectations.

Follow-Up Prompts:

- How do you respond when God feels “slow”?
 - Do you ever try to take control instead of waiting?
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3. Personalizing the Tension

What is something in your life right now that feels like a season of waiting? What emotions or doubts have surfaced for you in that space?

Leader Notes:

- Normalize emotions like frustration, doubt, confusion.
- You may want to read part of Psalm 13 aloud to validate those feelings.
- IMPORTANT: If someone shares something heavy, thank them. Don't rush to correct or spiritualize it.

Follow-Up Prompts:

- Have you ever found yourself asking, “How long, O Lord?”
 - What has been the hardest part of the waiting?
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4. Choosing Trust

What would it look like for you to intentionally choose trust in your current situation? What truths about God do you need to remind yourself of?

Leader Notes:

- Highlight the shift in Psalm 13: from questioning to trusting.
- Trust is often a decision before it's a feeling.

Follow-Up Prompts:

- What helps you remember God's faithfulness?

- How can the group help each other hold onto truth this week?
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5. Practicing While You Wait

What is one practical habit you can begin this week that will help you stay grounded in faith while you wait?

Leader Notes:

- Move from discussion to action. Keep it simple and specific.
- Encourage habits like:
 - Daily prayer focused on surrender
 - Listening to worship music
 - Journaling prayers honestly (like the Psalms)
 - Sharing with a trusted friend

Follow-Up Prompts:

- When will you do this habit? (help them be specific)
- Who can help keep you accountable?