



January 10, 2016 | John 11:1-44

Jesus' ministry was full of friendship. He had a unique and special relationship with three of his disciples: Peter, James, and John and with the characters featured in John 11—Lazarus, Mary, and Martha. As Jesus approaches His death on the cross, He strengthens the faith and hope of His friends with a great demonstration of His power.

Discuss: Can you share an example of a time when God answered your prayer request with a NO?

Expanding Faith | Read John 11:1-16.

[Q] If you were John or another disciple, what would you think about Jesus' initial lack of action?

[Q] Jesus' delay has a specific purpose. How does He explain the purpose in verses 4, 14-15 and 40-41?

Jesus is also timing His return to Jerusalem and His own death on the cross.

[Q] Reread John 11:7-10. How do John 8:12 and 9:4-5 help explain Jesus' word picture?

[Q] How do you usually react to God's timing when it doesn't line up with yours?

[Q] Why do you think faith (believing and trusting God) is so important to Him?

[Q] How can troubles become faith-expanding opportunities in your own life?

...for we walk by faith, not by sight. 2 Corinthians 5:7 (ESV)

Extending Hope | Read John 11:17-37.

[Q] What hope does Martha express? How does Jesus extend that hope beyond her expectations?

[Q] How does this hope affect *your* outlook on grief and death? Your everyday life? Your unanswered prayers?"

[Q] Jesus walked with Mary and Martha in their grief and wept with them. How do you respond to this glimpse into the heart of Jesus?

Demonstrating Power | Read John 11:38-44.

[Q] What is Jesus' goal in verse 40-42?

Jesus' command to Lazarus is reminiscent of His words in John 5:28-29: "...for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out..."

[Q] What can we learn from this scene about the power of prayer and the power of God's voice?

Pray

*Blessed be the Lord; day by day He bears our burdens, the God of our salvation.
Our God is the God of salvation, and to God, the Lord, belongs escape from death.
Psalm 68:19-20 (BOA)*

Next week: John 14