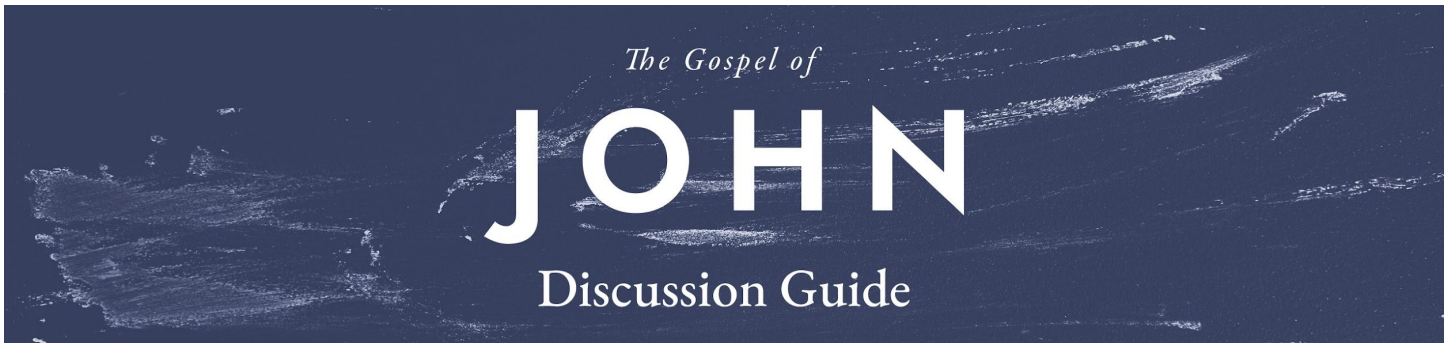

March 25-26, 2023
John 11:1-57
Ice Breaker Questions

- In John 11, we read about three siblings who seem to be close friends with one another, and close friends with Jesus. If you have siblings, how would you describe your relationship with them? Does your relationship with them have a spiritual component (eg. Do you talk about Jesus together?)

Understand Their Story

John 11 contains the story of Jesus' last and greatest public miracle: raising his friend Lazarus from the dead. As the story unfolds, however, we realize that John 11 is not only about Jesus' divine power; this chapter equally highlights his humanity. Jesus loves and weeps with his people. He is disturbed and angered by death. We pray that reading and discussing this story together will grow your love for Jesus.

1. Read John 11:1-44
    a. What are all the things you learn about Jesus' relationship with Mary, Martha and Lazarus in the first 44 verses? (Talk about what you learn from what John says (as the narrator), and what you observe from their actions and dialogue?)

    b. How does John emphasize Jesus' divinity in these verses?

    c. How does John emphasize Jesus' humanity in these verses?

        i. What detail(s) of this story are most encouraging or challenging for you? Why?

2. Read John 11:45-57
    a. What are the various ways that people respond to this amazing miracle, and what all happens as a result of him performing this miracle?

Connect to His Story.

In John 11:17-27, Jesus and Martha have a conversation about resurrection. Jesus claims, "I am the resurrection and the life", and then demonstrates the truthfulness of his claim by raising Lazarus from the dead.

3. In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul reflects on Jesus' eventual resurrection and its implication for believers.
    a. According to verses 12-19, how important is it, for Christians, that Jesus was resurrected? What is at stake?

    b. According to verses 20-26, what chain of events begins with Jesus' resurrection?

c. Lazarus is raised from the dead in this story, but will eventually die again. According to verses 35-44, how is our final resurrected body different from our current body (and from Lazarus's body at the end of this story)?

Apply to Our Story

4. In John 11, Martha, Mary and the Jews all have a similar question or complaint about Jesus. What is it?

    a. As John draws our attention to all of them having the same question, he simultaneously paints a different picture of each person's (or group's) motivation behind the question. What seems to be the difference between Martha, Mary and the Jews?

    b. Which person (or group) most accurately reflects your posture when events don't unfold as you expect? What can you learn from this story?

5. In John 11:40 Jesus says to Martha, "Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?" Throughout scripture, those who believe God, follow God, and therefore see the glory of his character and his work (think of Moses, Joshua, Elijah, Joshua, Esther and Ruth to name only a few).
    a. Pray for each other: that your belief in God would cause you to follow him and allow you to see his glory, as he works in you and through you!

    b. Pray for your friends and family who don't yet believe: that they would believe and follow so that they can see his glory!

God's work and our Work
How All of Life Connects to the Gospel - in John 11:1-57

In John 11, Jesus is in charge of the situation. At every moment, he is certain of how he should respond to the sickness and eventual death of Lazarus, and he knows how he will eventually 'solve' this problem and bring glory to the Father and himself. Despite all of this foresight, however, he doesn't minimize people's pain or suffering, and instead enters into it and shares their experiences. He does not display frustration with the fact that the disciples, Martha and Mary don't fully understand what he's up to. He doesn't even rebuke the Jews when they criticize him for not acting in a timely manner. Instead, he patiently works to reveal more of himself and God to them.

We don't have Jesus' divine power or foresight, but as his followers we can learn from him!

- We may be trying to implement a plan in our workplace (or in our families or places we volunteer) which we believe will be beneficial for our employees or co-workers and we may experience the frustration of others not 'getting it', or criticizing our actions.
    - If this is a situation you are facing, how can you model Jesus' care and concern for people as you move with them towards a specific end?

- Jesus knew how the problem of Lazarus's death could be solved, and he knew he would solve it, and yet he entered into the pain that Martha, Mary and the Jews were experiencing.
    - How can you enter into the pain that a friend or family member is experiencing rather than simply pointing out solutions?!