

DEVOTIONAL GUIDE | John 11:1-57

DAY ONE | Understand Their Story

This story is long, so we'll break it into two parts! Today, read John 11:1-37 and answer the following questions.

The relational setting (verses 1-11):

- Rather than describing this story's physical setting, the first 11 verses of this text provide us with a relational setting: John is painting a picture of Jesus' relationship with Mary, Martha and Lazarus.
 - What does John want his readers to KNOW about their relationship?
 - Based on their relationship, what surprises you about how Jesus responds in these verses?

The physical setting and key questions (verses 12-37):

- What do we learn about the physical setting and how it impacts who witnesses the next events?
- Martha, Mary and the Jews all have a similar question / complaint about Jesus. What is it?
 - As John draws our attention to all of them having the same question, he simultaneously paints a different picture of each person's / group's motivation behind the questions. What seems to be the difference between Martha, Mary and the Jews?

Pray today in Adoration for the ways in which Jesus relates to people! He doesn't stay at arms length: he loves people, calls them his friends, weeps with them and is greatly troubled by their pain.

DAY TWO | Understand Their Story

Read John 11:38-57 and answer the following questions.

The rising action and climax:

- Why does Jesus pray to the Father according to verses 41-42?
- What happens as a result of his prayer according to verses v 43-44?
- What does John want us to be certain of, based on how he describes Lazarus in verses 39 and 44?
- There are two contradictory responses to this event. How would you describe each of them?
- What does John confirm about Jesus' future as he summarizes Caiphas' words in verses 49 - 52?
- How does this story end? What is the "resolution" or "new setting" according to verses 53 - 57?

Pray today in supplication. Ask God to open the eyes of people you know who may have 'seen the glory of God' (v 40) but still don't believe!

DAY THREE | Connect to His Story

Jesus is not the first person to bring someone back from the dead in Scripture, but the way in which Jesus accomplishes this is different from other prophets. Today we'll look at two other stories and compare them to John 11.

- Read 1 Kings 17:7-24. How does Elijah raise the boy to life in this story? What role does prayer play in the rising of the boy?
- Read 2 Kings 4:8-37. How does Elisha raise the boy to life in this story? What role does prayer play in the raising of the boy?
- Now consider Jesus' actions in John 11:38-44.
 - How does Jesus' prayer differ from that of Elijah and Elisha?
 - How does Jesus' action differ from that of Elijah and Elisha?
 - What do these differences seem to indicate about the power and nature of who Jesus is?

Pray today in adoration. Thank God that he has power over life and death. Praise Jesus that he IS the resurrection and the life (John 11:25)!

DAY FOUR | Connect to His Story

Resurrection is only hinted at explicitly a few times in the Old Testament. Look up the following passage and make a note of what will happen at the resurrection.

- Isaiah 26:19-21
- Daniel 12:1-3

One of the most comprehensive New Testament pictures of the resurrection is found in 1 Corinthians 15:12-28.

- How does belief in the resurrection fuel hope for what is to come?
- How does disbelief in the resurrection affect one's hope for the future?

Pray today in adoration. Sin and death plague us now, but they will not have the final word! "When the perishable put on the imperishable, and the mortal put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" (1 Cor 15:54-55)

DAY FIVE | Apply to your Story

Read John 11:1-57 in its entirety one more time.

- Jesus didn't answer Mary and Martha's requests in the way that they wanted, and yet they still entrusted themselves to him, and ran towards him (v 17-33). Is this your posture towards Jesus when he doesn't respond to your prayers or requests in the way you want? How does this story convict or challenge you today?
- The story of Jesus raising Lazarus from the grave is amazing, and seems like the perfect 'ending', but the reality is that Lazarus would eventually die again. Lazarus' resurrection in John 11 is NOT the same as the final resurrection that Jesus offers to all of those who believe in him. What will be different about our resurrection experience after Jesus' own resurrection (see John 11:25-26, and 1 Cor 15:42-44?)

Pray today in supplication for yourself and others; that you would have faith to believe that Jesus loves his people, and that he is the resurrection and the life, even as we experience pain and suffering in this world. Praise Jesus for giving us hope that is beyond this world.
