

Sermon Discussion Guide- Week of Nov 3, 2019
I've Got Questions: Do You Believe This?
Pastor Conway (8, 10:30 Traditional), Pastor Hall (9:15, 10:30 Selah)

Getting Started- Life Updates, Prayer Requests & Opening Question (15 min)

- Anything to share about personal events since you last met or about applying last week's message on I've Got Questions (and So Does God): Do You Still Not Understand (Mark 8:11-22)?
- Are there any joys or concerns that you would like to share with the group for the closing prayer time or for group members to hold in prayer during the week? (please note them below for later)

Opener Question: What is the most meaningful funeral you have attended? Care to share about it?

Review the Sermon (15 min)

Please read aloud the sermon scripture, John 11:17-27. Know that it is ok to skip some questions below in order to manage the time for discussions in each section.

¹⁷ On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. ¹⁸ Now Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁹ and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. ²⁰ When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home. ²¹ "Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²² But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask."

²³ Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." ²⁴ Martha answered, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." ²⁵ Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; ²⁶ and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?" ²⁷ "Yes, Lord," she replied, "I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."

- If you had to give a one-minute summary of the sermon message this week, what would you say?
- In Jewish burial customs, a final check on the body was made on the third day to confirm the body had not been revived and the stone was sealed for about a year so that the body could decay and the bones later be collected for preservation in an ossuary box. Earlier in Chapter 11, we learn that Jesus, when notified that Lazarus was sick, waited two additional days so that the miracle of raising him from the dead would be even more profound to those in mourning and move them and the disciples

toward belief in Him (11:6, 14-15). What does this decision signal to you about Jesus' values and priorities?

- As Martha went out to meet Jesus her first words to him were "if you had been here, my brother would not have died (vs 21)." Later when her sister Mary met with Jesus her first words to Him were the same (vs 32). What are we to make of these opening words of greeting- words of sadness or anger or faith or something else?
- Judging from Martha's conversation with Jesus that followed in these passages (vs 22-27), what can we say about her faith in Jesus and what she might have expected Him to do?
- 11:33 reads "When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled," and verse 35 says simply "He wept." How do these verses validate for you the value of emotions in human relationships and grief?
- How do they affect the way you view Jesus Christ as Lord and King?
- Jesus first prayed publicly (vs 41-42) and then called forth Lazarus from the tomb and out he came wearing his grave clothes (vs 43-44). What do you believe the ancient Jews interpreted this miracle to mean about Jesus?
- How was the resurrection of Jesus different than the raising of Lazarus?

Other Related Readings (10 min)

- Would a volunteer please read aloud 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.
- According to these verses, how is how believers in Christ grieve the loss of loved ones unique compared to the rest of the world (vs 13)?
- How is "falling asleep" in Jesus a natural metaphor for when Christians die (vs 14)?
- How is it they shall be awoken (vs 16)?
- How are these words encouraging to you (vs 18)?
- How might you encourage others with them?

Personalizing and Applying The Message (10 min)

- As you reflect upon the sermon and the additional readings above, what are points of encouragement or challenge for you personally?
- Jesus claimed to be the resurrection and that those who believed in Him would never die (vs 25) and then asked Martha, "Do you believe this?" What is your response to this question?
- What does "believe" mean to you?
- What does it look like to "live by believing in Him" today (vs 26)?
- Has today's scriptures and message helped you to entrust a loved one into the Lord's hands? How so?

Witness & Closing Prayer (5-10 min)

- How do you think most people come to believe in Jesus?
- How might you be a part in the process of someone coming to believe in Jesus this week?
- The group leader or another volunteer who took notes on the prayer requests shared earlier in the meeting, may now lead the group in closing prayer