

## Small Group Bible Study Questions

- A) Throughout the passage leading up to Lazarus' resurrection from the dead, different people have "intelligent misunderstandings" about Jesus Christ. They are not completely wrong, but their knowledge of Christ actually gets in the way of experiencing Christ. Do you ever sense your knowledge impeding your experience of Jesus Christ?
- B) On three different occasions (John 11:21, 32, 37), people commented that if Christ would have been there, things would have been different... Have you ever experienced that kind of emotion about the presence of God in your life and circumstances? Have you ever felt the absence of God?
- C) Some of us have been Christians for a very long time... There are sins which we have been working through and struggling against for what seems like a lifetime. In the midst of our struggle, we sometimes decide that God will never give us victory over our struggles. Yet, into that kind of thinking, we find Jesus Christ weeping over our bondage and offering us power over sin and death. Is there an issue you just "live with," that your small group could be praying with you about for freedom and "new life?"
- D) In John 11:16 ("Doubting" Thomas) & 11:21-22 ("Busy" Martha) we have two reversals of opinion which are notable. It would seem that these two characters have their labels "redefined" in these verses. Are you known (labeled) for something that you wish God would "redefine" in your life? Share with your group and spend some time praying together for accountability and a commitment to "resurrection" living!

# Ticking Off Jesus

Long Beach Alliance Church • April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005 • Pastor Chris Lankford

**JESUS SAID TO HER, "I AM THE  
RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE; HE  
WHO BELIEVES IN ME WILL LIVE EVEN  
IF HE DIES, AND EVERYONE WHO LIVES  
AND BELIEVES IN ME WILL NEVER DIE.  
DO YOU BELIEVE THIS?"  
~JOHN 11:25-26 (NASB)**

## **1) Faith & Frustration**

- A) Martha, in both faith and frustration, recognizes that when Christ is present, things turn out differently because of His relationship with God the Father (John 11:21-22).
- B) Jesus, who has clearly come to "awaken" Lazarus (11:11), is 'intelligently misunderstood' by Martha as to the timing and nature of Lazarus' resurrection from the dead (11:23-24).
- C) Jesus, in one of His famous "I Am" statements (cf. John 6:35, 8:12, 10:7 & 9, 10:11 & 14, 11:25, 14:6, 15:1 & 5), has His intentions 'intelligently misunderstood' once again in a remarkable response of passionate faith (11:25-27).

- D) Martha privately tells Mary that "the Teacher"\* is waiting to speak with her (11:28). Mary quickly (urgently?) goes to Jesus, who is discreetly waiting for her (11:29-30).
  
- E) The Jews who were mourning with her, seeing her rapid departure and thinking she was heading to see Lazarus' tomb, follow Mary to assist in her mourning (11:31).
  
- F) Mary (like Martha), in both faith and frustration, recognizes that if Christ had been there, things could have been different (11:32). Christ's response, though, is very different...

## 2) The Outrage Of Jesus Christ

- A) Jesus, taking in the whole scene of wailing, mourning, consoling, loud tears, etc., responds with a deeply passionate (in spirit) burning of frustrated anger (troubled), and asks with clear intention, "Where have you laid him?" (11:33-34).
  
- B) Jesus, expressing His deep frustration and emotion over the grip which death and sin have over the people, quietly weeps (11:35; cf. Luke 19:41). The people 'intelligently misunderstand' Christ's tears (11:36).
  
- C) Some of the mourners are deeply confused by Christ's tears

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\* It is important to notice the use of "The Teacher" in this verse by a woman. The rabbis refused to instruct women (cf. John 4:27), but Jesus took a very different view. Jesus Christ consistently raised the level of a woman's value in His culture. Quoted in part from Leon Morris, *The Gospel According To John*, NICNT, Page 491.

(there is no textual indication of frustration) and wonder aloud why Christ had not been there to save Lazarus (11:37).

- D) Once again, Christ is "deeply moved" (the same word as in 11:33) by the words of the mourners, and becomes much more aggressive in His demands.

## 3) Just Get Out Of My Way...

- A) Despite objections from Martha, Jesus demands that the stone be removed from the tomb of Lazarus (11:39). Jesus, becoming increasingly more vocal, thunders home that the glory of God will be seen by those who believe (11:40).
  
- B) In a loud public prayer, Jesus recognizes that it is God who is the "power of the Son" and that all of this is so that people will believe in God through the Son (11:41-42).
  
- C) Jesus cries out for Lazarus to "come forth" (11:43). As Lazarus "hops and shuffles" (D.A. Carson, 419) up the steps of his former tomb, Jesus tells the people to unbind him from his wrappings (11:44).
  
- D) Many of the mourners, there for a job, believed in Christ that day because they saw the amazing miracle of Lazarus' resurrection from the dead (11:45). But others, "saw Lazarus come from the grave but never saw the glory of God" (11:46) (D. Guthrie, *Bible Guide To John's Gospel*).