



Big Idea: The Resurrection & the Life (John 11)

Pastor Chris Smeltz - Part 7

“But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.” John 21:31

This week Pastor Chris unpacked John 11 in our summer series, The Gospel According to John. It’s the story of Jesus’ friend Lazarus, who was sick and dying. How Jesus responded to this news was unexpected. “So, when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was for two more days.” (John 11:6) Why? **God uses suffering to produce in us something that only suffering can produce.** Jesus is going to allow Lazarus, Martha, and Mary to suffer so that he can produce something in them, and through them that they and their community need. There are times that we are going to experience uncomfortable circumstances so we can learn something we could not have learned any other way. **God is far more concerned with your character than he is your comfort.** In times of suffering God is producing something in us. (Romans 5:3-4)

In times of suffering, we need to run to Jesus. Suffering is rarely neutral; it will push us somewhere. The question is, does our suffering push us towards Jesus or do we drift away from Jesus? Read John 11:33-35. What a sobering thought... **God is deeply moved by our pain.** Don’t believe for a minute that he does not care! His life, death and resurrection proved how much he cares. Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?” John 11:25-26. **Because Jesus is the resurrection, we will see the glory of God.**

Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life. John 5:24

Discussion Questions

- Share with the group how suffering has produced good fruit in your life?
- Be honest... have you ever ran to the wrong things when life gets difficult? Discuss the result.
- Do you believe that God cares about your circumstance? Why or why not? Share a story.
- Have you committed your life to Jesus? Share your resurrection story.

Prayer Focus

Father, thank You for Your amazing grace that is sufficient in our most difficult moments. Help us be aware of the ways You are carrying us when we go through painful seasons, and help us develop healthy relationships so that we have a safe place to share our struggles. Show us how we can lean on Your power in our weakness. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Next Steps

Ask In what ways will this story change the way you respond to a personal difficulty or a time when you feel God is not responding? Focus on a specific incident that you or a friend is going through where you need to trust God to work it out. Write it down on a card or piece of paper. If you feel comfortable doing so, share it with another person in your group and ask them to pray along with you. Keep a record of how God responds and works in this situation.

Leader Tip

Remember to stablish that your group is a safe place for everyone to share their weaknesses. Be open and share an area of your life where you could use prayer and support, and encourage others to share as well.