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## GROWTH GROUP WINTER 2019 – ONE ON ONE WITH JESUS WEEK 5 – APRIL 7, 2019 - JOHN 11:17-37

### GETTING TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER

1) Share a time in your life when you were grieving over the loss of a friend or loved one.

### SETTING THE CONTEXT

How often do we say... “if only” this...or “if only” that... “If only” I had made a different decision, or “if only” I had taken that job and moved. Our story today contains the same sort of idea. Both Mary and Martha say almost the exact same thing. Jesus... “if only” you had been here...our brother would not have died.

Jesus responds to Martha’s “if only” by telling her to look to the future. He speaks of the future resurrection. Yet, he also wants her to see that the “future” has become a “present” reality.

The first thing Jesus does is point to the future. See Isaiah 65 and 66. The Jews believed in a new heaven and new earth and a bodily resurrection. Only the Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection. The Jews knew that one day there would be a new creation. Martha believed that as well, but at the moment it really wasn’t that helpful. Her brother was dead. And so Jesus tells her, “I am the resurrection and the life.” This is present tense. He is right in front of her and asking her to trust in him.

Martha returns home and tells Mary that Jesus is asking for her. You can read Luke 10:38-42 for another story about Mary and Martha. As Mary approaches Jesus we now need to visualize the scene. Mary is not alone. There are many others who are grieving with her who follow her as she makes her way to Jesus. It is almost like a funeral procession.

Jesus, who will one day bear all of our griefs, sees this processional and weeps. Eventually Jesus will raise Lazarus from the dead, but in this present moment he shows that he is acquainted with our grief. See Isaiah 53. It is encouraging to realize that Jesus knows what it feels like to experience loss. Notice also the similarities in verse 34 with the burial story of Jesus. A couple of weeks later, Mary Magdalene will ask the same question about Jesus. See John 20:13.

This text reminds us that Jesus will meet us in the midst of our problems. He “breaks” into the present with his power and his grace. His kingdom is not just something that will happen one day in the future. Rather, amidst the messiness and brokenness, his kingdom is amongst us today.



# EXPLORING THE TEXT

## Read John 11:17-37

<sup>17</sup> On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. <sup>18</sup> Now Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, <sup>19</sup> and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. <sup>20</sup> When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home. <sup>21</sup> "Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died. <sup>22</sup> But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask." <sup>23</sup> Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." <sup>24</sup> Martha answered, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." <sup>25</sup> Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; <sup>26</sup> and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?" <sup>27</sup> "Yes, Lord," she replied, "I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world." <sup>28</sup> After she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary aside. "The Teacher is here," she said, "and is asking for you." <sup>29</sup> When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to him. <sup>30</sup> Now Jesus had not yet entered the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. <sup>31</sup> When the Jews who had been with Mary in the house, comforting her, noticed how quickly she got up and went out, they followed her, supposing she was going to the tomb to mourn there. <sup>32</sup> When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." <sup>33</sup> When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. <sup>34</sup> "Where have you laid him?" he asked. "Come and see, Lord," they replied. <sup>35</sup> Jesus wept. <sup>36</sup> Then the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" <sup>37</sup> But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

- 2) John 11:14 - Why do you think Jesus took so long to travel to Mary and Martha?
- 3) John 11:17-21 - Martha heard Jesus was coming and she went out to meet him but Mary stayed at home. How would you describe the emotional state of Martha? Of Mary?
- 4) John 11:22 - Martha acknowledges that God will give Jesus whatever he asks. Martha seems to be hinting that Jesus can still raise Lazarus from the dead. Share a time when you have asked God for something big, and had to have faith like Martha's?
- 5) John 11:23-25 - What does Jesus mean when he says he is "the resurrection and the life"?
- 6) John 11:35 - Why do you think Jesus wept? Do you think Jesus ever weeps for you?
- 7) John 11:37 - How would you explain the value we place on our earthly life and the lives of our loved ones? Do you think our society "over-values" this earthly life?

## BRINGING IT HOME

- 8) This is the fifth "one-on-one conversation we have looked at in the gospel of John. As you think about the five stories we have considered, is there a theme or story that has been meaningful or helpful for you?