

# come and see

## Week 8: Jesus and the Whole Mess of Life

John 11:1-44

### Summary

In John 11:1-44, the story of Jesus and Lazarus unfolds. As with so many of these Jesus stories, there's so much here. Exhibition of Jesus' power over death, his humanity on full display, and the profound nature of his ministry. When Lazarus dies, Jesus has inexplicably waited four days to respond to his learning that Lazarus is sick. His delay reveals deeper truths about faith and resurrection. By the time he arrives, his friends—Mary and Martha—are in the throes of the very real grief of losing Lazarus. Their faith—an up-close-and-personal faith—is strained. And Jesus is swept up in the mourning happening when he arrives. Jesus wept. The Son of the Living God wept. His heart broken and his spirit troubled. And then..."Lazarus, come out!" Jesus exhibits his power over death. By calling Lazarus back to life, Jesus not only demonstrates his divine authority but also foreshadows his own resurrection. This passage calls us to faith through the pain and mess of life, Jesus' participation in that mess of life, and the transformative power of Jesus' love.

### For you

1. In what ways does the story of Lazarus challenge your understanding of faith in difficult circumstances?
2. What does the resurrection of Lazarus teach you about hope and the possibility of new beginnings in your spiritual journey?
3. A Spiritual Practice to try: Breath Prayers
  - a. Sit quietly and comfortably. Start by praying for God to lead you and guide you.
  - b. Close your eyes and breathe deeply and slowly.
  - c. With each inhale breath, pray "Spirit of Christ..."
  - d. With each exhale breath, pray "Bring me back to life..."
  - e. Rest in the presence of the all-loving God. Stay open to the Holy Spirit's guidance.
  - f. After a while, simply end by telling God "thank you" for his ability to revive.

### For your work

- How can you embody the compassion that Jesus showed to Mary and Martha in your own relationships?
- Question for you and coworkers:
  - What experience in your life has tested your faith the most?
  - What difference do you think it makes to believe in the resurrection of the dead?
- How can your work be different in direct light of the hope of the resurrection?

### For Students (questions to have in your 'back pocket')

- When you experience sadness or grief, what would it look like for you to picture Jesus weeping with you?
- What situation or circumstance in your life do you need Jesus to speak life into?
- What would it take for you to believe that Jesus can bring life to something that feels hopeless?

How is this resource working for you? How is God using it to form you? Are there ways we can improve it?

How can we pray for you? If you've got questions or thoughts, we invite you to be in touch with us.

Send us an email at [campus-ministries@bethel.edu](mailto:campus-ministries@bethel.edu)

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