

Simply Jesus

The Life and Ministry of God's Son

Inductive: Lesson 19

Introduction

Each generation of life offers up questions about God, such as, "If He is so loving and good, why doesn't He prevent all the pain, sickness, suffering, death and sorrow?" One only need turn to the truth of God's Word for the answers. If you are someone who has asked such a question, here is one for you to ponder: *Would you be as ready to read your Bible, or as eager to pray, or as diligent to worship if your life's address was on "easy street"?* Would you have grown in your trust and love of God had you never experienced hard times? The Bible teaches that God never gives us more than we can handle; but do you ever find yourself arguing with God about how much you can handle?

The right question to ask is: aren't the difficulties and obstacles of life the very things that keep you in pursuit of God? When you humbly pray and earnestly seek Him, isn't it because you are in desperate need of Him? And if at times He chooses to delay His coming with the answers, the reason is because it is during those delays that you gain a clearer understanding, a greater revelation of who He is.

Whatever difficulty you find yourself dealing with currently, through your lesson this week may you draw closer to the One who is ever-ready to listen and reach out with exactly what you need—Himself. And be assured . . . you will never know that Jesus Christ is enough until you know times when He is all you have.

Did you know

Just outside of Jerusalem, on the back side of the Mount of Olives, is located the tiny town of Bethany. If you blink while passing through, you will miss it. Within earshot of the temple mount, it was possible to hear the goings on—the constant sacrifices being offered and the worship being sung. Small in size, it is known as the location for one of the most significant miracles Jesus ever performed. Mary, Martha and Lazarus lived there, the family who, apart from the disciples, were closest to Jesus. They had come to know Him and love Him, offering the comforts of their home and companionship to Him whenever He traveled in and out of Jerusalem. They followed Him and served Him at a time when it was not only difficult, it had become dangerous to do so; and it was their love for Him that gave them the hope of someone to turn to when life presented them with its greatest sorrow.

Open your Bible and lesson each day by beginning with a word of prayer.

Up Close ~

The chart below represents a reader's guide to the contents of this week's lesson. The topical teachings and/or events covered are followed by the primary scriptural text as well as the supportive parallel passages. You will be able to receive and grasp a well-rounded picture of the story narrative in the Gospel harmony by reading every passage. However, using the bolded text as your point of reference (your anchor text) will allow you to determine the facts, lessons, and personal applications necessary to formulate your own conclusions.

<u>Teaching / Event</u>	<u>Scripture Text</u>	<u>Parallel Passages</u>
The Death of Lazarus	John 11:1-16	
Jesus Comforts Mary and Martha	John 11:17-37	
Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead	John 11:38-44	
Religious Leaders Plot to Kill Jesus	John 11:45-57	

First Impressions: Group Discussion

Reflect for a moment on the passages you have just read.

Respond by recording your first impressions from your initial reading of the text. Be prepared to share one of your impressions with your discussion group.

Heartbeat: John 11:25-26 NKJV (Memory verse)

(Write it out once in the space below. **Practice it each time** you open your lesson.)

I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?

1 Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.

2 It was that Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair,
whose brother Lazarus was sick.

3 Therefore the sisters sent to Him, saying, 'Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick.'

4 When Jesus heard that, He said, 'This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God,
that the Son of God may be glorified through it.'

5 Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

6 So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was.

7 Then after this He said to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judea again.'

8 The disciples said to Him, 'Rabbi, lately the Jews sought to stone You,
and are You going there again?'

9 Jesus answered, 'Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day,
he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world.

10 But if one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.'

11 These things He said, and after that He said to them,
'Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up.'

12 Then His disciples said, 'Lord, if he sleeps he will get well.'

13 However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that
He was speaking about taking rest in sleep.

14 Then Jesus said to them plainly, 'Lazarus is dead.

15 And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe.
Nevertheless let us go to him.'

16 Then Thomas, who is called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples,
'Let us also go, that we may die with Him.'

17 So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days.

18 Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away.

19 And many of the Jews had joined the women around Martha and Mary,
to comfort them concerning their brother.

20 Now Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him,
but Mary was sitting in the house.

21 Now Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.

22 But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You.'

23 Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.'

24 Martha said to Him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.'

25 Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life.

He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.

26 And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?'

27 She said to Him, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ,
the Son of God, who is to come into the world.'

28 And when she had said these things, she went her way and secretly called Mary her sister,
saying, 'The Teacher has come and is calling for you.'

29 As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly and came to Him.

30 Now Jesus had not yet come into the town, but was in the place where Martha met Him.

31 Then the Jews who were with her in the house, and comforting her,
when they saw that Mary rose up quickly and went out,
followed her, saying, 'She is going to the tomb to weep there.'

32 Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to
Him, 'Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.'

33 Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping,

He groaned in the spirit and was troubled.

34 And He said, 'Where have you laid him?' They said to Him, 'Lord, come and see.'

35 Jesus wept.

36 Then the Jews said, 'See how He loved him!'

37 And some of them said, 'Could not this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind,
also have kept this man from dying?'

John 11:38–44 Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead

38 Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb.

It was a cave, and a stone lay against it.

39 Jesus said, 'Take away the stone.' Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him,
'Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days.'

40 Jesus said to her, 'Did I not say to you that if you would believe
you would see the glory of God?'

41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying.

And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, 'Father, I thank You that You have heard Me.

42 And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by
I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me.

43 Now when He had said these things, He cried with aloud voice,
'Lazarus, come forth!'

44 And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes,
and his face was wrapped with a cloth.

Jesus said to them, 'Loose him, and let him go.'

(Scripture from the New King James Bible, © 1980 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission.)

Observation: Look!

Pray. Read the Bible passage several times, trying to get a big picture of what is going on.

Left Column (Facts): Following the writer in the order he tells the story, briefly describe who is involved, what is happening, when and where the events are taking place.

Right Column (Observations): Look closely to observe details. Some questions you may ask:

- What do you know about the people involved in the story? What questions does the story raise? What sources of conflict do you see? What does Jesus identify as true and important to life?
- Put yourself in the Biblical character's shoes. What were his ambitions? How did the character relate to others or to God? What problem did he think he faced? Did Jesus identify a different problem in his life? What did he discover about God? How did he respond?
- Are there any words that you are not familiar with? Look up the definition.
- Are there words or phrases that are repeated or emphasized? Why are they key?
- Identify comparisons, such as "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven..." What do you know about leaven (yeast)? Identify contrasts, such as "You have heard it said...but I say to you..."
- Extra: Record information you may find in Bible dictionaries, maps, handbooks, or encyclopedias. Understanding the culture/time in which Jesus lived will help you discover the meaning of the text.

John 11:1–16

The Death of Lazarus

What does it say? (Facts from passage)

What do I see? (Personal research/observations)

John 11:38–44

Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead

What does it say? (Facts from passage)

What do I see? (Personal research/observations)

Interpretation: What does it mean?

Pray. The more time you take to observe the passage, the more you will have a basis for understanding what God's Word means. Interpretation **always** seeks to answer the questions, "What was God saying to the original audience?" and then, "How does that same truth relate to life today?" Asking yourself questions will help you see the spiritual lesson in the text: What does this teach me is true about God? What does it teach me is true about mankind? Is there a command to obey? Is there a promise to claim? Is there a condition to the promise? Is there an example I should follow or avoid? A spiritual lesson is a timeless truth that points to God and speaks to the heart of man. Stating the lesson in a sentence of 10 words or less will help you keep it simple and memorable.

Application: How does it apply to me? Pray. Practicing Biblical truth day-to-day is the only way to grow in Christ and reflect the glory of God. To apply the spiritual lesson you have learned from the text, you have to take deliberate action. Take the time to examine yourself, and ask: Does this spiritual lesson point out error in my thoughts about God? Does it point to error in my attitude or actions? How does this lesson relate to my home life, my work, my relationships, how I spend my time, etc? What change is required? What practical steps will I take to make that change? Write your application in the form of a question to help make it personal.

John 11:1–16

Lesson:

Application: _____

John 11:17–37

Lesson:

Application: _____

John 11:38–44

Lesson:

Application: _____

Behold & Be Transformed

What did you see as you beheld God's Son?

How does beholding (looking upon) Him, motivate you to change your thoughts, habit, attitude, speech or actions?

Pause . . . What is the most significant lesson you have learned this week?

Ponder . . . How will you put it into practice?

Pray . . . Write out your prayer and be specific.

Notes
