

Study Guide for Feb. 7th, 2010. Comforting the Bereaved: John 11:17-36.

Introduction: Describe a time someone gave meaningful comfort to you when you were grieving the loss of a loved one. What specifically did the person do that was helpful?

I. A Scene of Death: (John 11:17-19)

1. How long had Lazarus been in the tomb? Why is this highlighted?
2. Where is Bethany located? Why is this highlighted?
3. Who, besides the family, was on the scene? Why is this highlighted?

II. A Conversation about Life & A Confession of Hope: (John 11:20-27)

1. What does Martha say when she goes out to greet Jesus? Evaluate her words.
2. In what sense is Jesus' response (vs. 23) . . . comforting? . . . ambiguous?
3. Evaluate Martha's statement (vs. 24). Describe her hope at this point.
4. Write out Jesus affirmation (vs. 25-26). What significance and comfort does it give?
5. How does Martha answer Jesus' question posed to her in vs. 26? (see John 20:31)
6. How would you respond to Jesus' question in vs. 26? What gives you comfort?

III. An Expression of Empathy & A Cry of Lament: (John 11:28-35)

1. What does Martha do after her dialogue with Jesus?
2. Who accompanies Mary as she goes out to greet Jesus? Why is this highlighted?
3. What does Mary say when she goes out to greet Jesus? Evaluate her words.
4. Contrast what Jesus says / does to comfort Mary with the comfort to Martha.
5. Why, if Jesus knew he would resuscitate Lazarus (vs. 11), does he weep? (vs. 35)

IV. A Division of Opinions: (John 11:36—37)

1. What conclusions are drawn by the Jews who witness Jesus at this event?
2. What conclusions do you draw from reading this account about Jesus?