



Navigators Discipleship Tool



How to Grieve in Light of Resurrection Power

Learn how to grieve with Mary and Martha as they face the death of their brother in this Bible study from John 11. Discover their encounter with Jesus and how He meets them in their pain. Lean into their conversation as Jesus reminds them of the life and hope found in God alone. Invite a friend or even your small group to join you for this Bible study.

[Read John 11:1-44.](#)

Asking, “Why?” as You Grieve

Jesus knew that death would not be the end of Lazarus’s story, but His disciples didn’t understand how He knew what lay ahead. What they did know was that Jesus loved this family — both Lazarus, who was sick, and his sisters, who had notified Jesus. His love for this family — which John makes clear was undying and unconditional — was an intimate kind of friendship love, so it’s surprising that Jesus waited two more days before going to Bethany.

By the time they arrived, Lazarus had indeed died. As Jesus and His disciples approached, Mary, who had previously sat at the Lord’s feet, stayed in the house, perhaps to continue to grieve. Martha, on the other hand, hurriedly left the house to meet Jesus on the road, where the two of them had an important and impassioned conversation: “Martha said, ‘Master, if you’d been here, my brother wouldn’t have died. Even now, I know that whatever you ask God he will give you’” John 11:21-22 (MSG).

Reflect:

When was the last time you had an important and impassioned conversation with Jesus? What do you need to talk to Him about right now?

Discovering Hope While Learning How to Grieve

Martha spoke honestly from a place of grief. Her sorrow was real. But Jesus spoke from a place of hope. In the end, His hope would triumph and heal her of her grieving heart.



“You don’t have to wait for the End. I am, right now, Resurrection and Life. The one who believes in Me, even though he or she dies, will live. And everyone who lives believing in Me does not ultimately die at all. Do you believe this?”
John 11:25-26 (MSG).

Reflect:

How does Jesus’ declaration that He is “Resurrection and Life” give you hope when you consider the shortness of life?

Why do followers of Jesus sometimes wrestle with believing Jesus when they walk through suffering and grief?

Accepting God’s Invitation for How to Grieve and Believe

The future had broken into the present. The resurrection coming at the end of time was now standing right in front of Martha. Not only would Jesus be raised from the dead by the power of the Holy Spirit in the future (Romans 1:4); Jesus stood before Martha as the power of life and resurrection in human flesh then.

Jesus invites us to new life through His resurrection, and Jesus embodied this new life in His incarnation. When Jesus proclaimed the hope of new life on the other side of death, He invited Martha into the tension between grief and trust. Would she have the capacity to believe this?

“Yes, Master. All along I have believed that you are the Messiah, the Son of God who comes into the world” John 11:27 (MSG).

Reflect:

How have you struggled with hope in the face of death?

How does the hope of resurrection change how you pray for your neighbors?

Prayer: Believing While Grieving

Lord Jesus, we believe You are, right now, “Resurrection and Life.” We believe You are the King who has come into the world to vanquish death and embody new life. We want to participate in what You are doing in our neighborhoods, to offer life in the face of death, love in the face of fear, and hope in the face of despair. Form us into life-giving resurrection people. We ask this for Your name’s sake. Amen.